

From: steve brown
Sent: 23 December 2008 20:28
To: liz.kirk@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Subject: consultation on forestry provisions in the scottish climate change bill

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. There is potential for Forestry Commissioners to enter into joint ventures in renewable energy programmes based on woodfuel.

However erecting massive windmills all over some of Scotlands finest scenery to transport variable electricity supply to the central belt is madness. Forestry Commissioners should be concentrating on small scale wood biofuels industries that are integrated into new housing and commercial developments and not the planned massive plants that will take huge supplies of raw material all over the country using up carbon miles.

2. A bad idea.

The Forestry Commission we are often told runs a tight ship. It is bound by UKWAS and adheres to carefully thought out design plans and works closely with health and safety regulations. Timber prices are crashing and unlikely to return in the near future. Why would a private company lease FCS land, a big overhead to start with and then expect to run it more efficiently than FCS and still follow the aforementioned guidelines. I do not think it possible. Why would FCS lease out land now when the market is less than buoyant, they will get a poor price anyway so why bother. I suspect the government has been approached with this idea and have been sold a pig in a poke.

3. Cannot see any benefit to the people of Scotland in any of the three points made here.

4. SRDP is deeply flawed, bureaucratic and cumbersome and will not deliver high quality woodland creation schemes either in farming or forestry. Farmers generally are deeply suspicious of trees and do not have a tradition of management of woodland unlike our cousins on the continent. They need to be persuaded that it is a good idea and they need sound simple advice from an authority that is free and unbiased. I can think of one such authority but they have been completely sidelined by SGRIPID and are by now probably completely deflated by the constant changes in the grant system and moral is poor. Give Forestry Commissioners a budget to manage woodland creation appropriately, some teeth and some backing and above all reasonable and targeted grants and FCS will deliver good quality woods for our future. Only political dogma is keeping SRDP alive. Our political masters do not like egg on face and most are too small minded to admit mistakes so I feel that this consultation is a fait accompli but hey ho better to have tried and lost than not to have tried at all.

Merry Christmas.

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