



# Grant Aid for Native Pinewoods under the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS)



## Why are native pinewoods so special?

The semi-natural pinewoods of the Scottish Highlands are usually referred to as native pinewoods or Caledonian pinewoods. Although they have been exploited and managed to a considerable extent, these woods are among the least modified in Britain. They are an irreplaceable reservoir of adapted genetic stock of plants and animals, in some parts representing an unbroken link with the natural forest which developed after the end of the last ice age, some 8000 years ago.

## How should native pinewoods be managed?

The Forestry Commission introduced specific guidelines for native pinewoods within the Woodland Grant Scheme in 1989. These have now been replaced by 'Forestry Practice Guide 7, The Management of Semi-Natural Woodlands, Native Pinewoods' which should now be applied to all native pinewoods included on the Caledonian Pinewood Inventory.

If one of the pinewoods which is listed in the Forestry Commission inventory is to be regenerated or management work is to be carried out, then the application should be accompanied by a management plan for the pinewood in the format detailed in the 'Forestry Practice Guide 7'. Further details are available from your local Forestry Commission office. 'The Management of Semi-Natural Woodlands', includes a useful checklist on what may be required.

## How should native pinewoods be extended?

Advice on establishing new native pinewoods is included in Forestry Commission Bulletin 112, 'Creating New Native Woodlands' which describes how to create new areas of woodland made up of communities of native tree and shrub species appropriate to the site.

For pinewoods, some additional conditions are applied to ensure that their genetic integrity is conserved. An outline of these is given below and more details can be obtained from the Forestry Commission, Scotland.

New native pinewoods should be created within the native range of Scots pine, on areas consisting mainly of semi-natural heaths with suitable precursor vegetation and also suitable sites adjacent to existing pinewoods.

## Where is Scots pine native?

Scots pine is native to the Grampians and western Highlands of Scotland. (see map opposite) It is found on strongly leached soils in drier areas and on peats where the rainfall is over 2000mm.

The Caledonian Pinewood Inventory gives information on location and extent of those genuinely native pinewoods where the trees have regenerated themselves since their establishment following the last ice age.



● Areas Eligible for Native Pinewood Grants



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## Preserving the local genetic diversity

### PLANTING OR REGENERATION?

Where natural regeneration is practical, this will be strongly preferred to planting and we may decide not to grant-aid planting on such sites.

Planting of pine will not normally be acceptable in an existing native pinewood until after all reasonable steps to encourage regeneration have been tried and failed. This means that we will not normally grant-aid planting of pine until natural regeneration has been attempted.

### ORIGIN OF PLANTING STOCK

If we agree that planting is appropriate, then the planting stock used should be as local as possible.

It has long been apparent that there are significant differences between pinewoods in Scotland. Recent research on the chemical constituents of pine trees has shown that the Scottish population can be divided into 7 regions. These regions of biochemical similarity are shown on the map below. Further explanation is given in Appendix 2 of 'Forestry Practice Guide 7' and in the 'Caledonian Pinewood Inventory' leaflet.

If pinewoods are to be restocked or extended by planting, any planting stock must come from within the local region to conserve the genetic integrity of the woods in the area. In the north-west and south-west regions, we will only allow planting of stock from within that region. In the other 5 regions, planting stock must derive from within that region but we may accept modest transfer near the boundaries.

### DISTRIBUTION OF PLANTS


In planted areas, the aim should be to create a natural distribution of plants on the site. Thus a clumped distribution is preferred, reflecting site features. Within the area to be planted there must be at least 1100 trees per hectare, but on certain sites more may be required.

In naturally regenerated areas, an average of at least 1100 trees per hectare is also required before the Fixed Payment element of the regeneration grant can be paid. Planting should not be used to fill gaps in areas of regeneration. However, it may be necessary to plant species other than pine in areas of regeneration, if these are appropriate to the site conditions and unlikely to appear naturally. Examples might be juniper or aspen.

In addition to the planted areas, open ground which is desirable for environmental reasons may be grant-aided up to a limit of 20% of the area getting grant-aid.

### SEPARATION ZONES

Pinewoods on the Caledonian Pinewood Inventory have a regeneration zone of about 100m round the existing boundary. Any extension within that zone must be by natural regeneration. Beyond the regeneration zone there is a buffer zone of 500m and any Scots pine planting in that zone must be of native origin to qualify for grant-aid.

 Biochemical Regional Boundary



If there is an area nearby to the pinewood, or the proposed new pinewood, which contains pine trees which may not be native, you must keep an adequate separation between the two areas.

### OTHER SPECIES

Native pinewoods are found associated with birch, rowan and other broadleaved trees and any proposals should take account of the natural mix of species. Normally, at least 15% of the area of new native pinewoods should be native trees and shrubs other than pine. We may pay grant for tall woody shrubs such as juniper, hazel, holly and native shrub willows, up to a limit of 10% of the whole area getting grant.

On suitable sites, we may agree to proposals to convert parts of broadleaved woodlands to pinewood. Scots pine of local origin can be planted into birchwoods on suitable soils, where they are close to native pinewoods, and provided planting is on a small scale.

Proposals to plant Native Pinewoods at higher elevations will need to be supported by an Ecological Site Classification (RIN 260 Sept 1995) and DAMS score report.

## Grants available

### WHAT GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR NATIVE PINEWOODS?

Where there are higher grants under WGS for broadleaves, these will also be paid for native Scots pine in the Highlands. Native pine is also treated in the same way as broadleaves under the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme.

The higher grant for pine applies to the creation of new native pinewoods on suitable sites, and to the restocking of native pinewoods by natural regeneration or, if necessary, by planting. The higher grants can also be paid for the conversion of other types of planted forest to pinewood on appropriate sites, so long as there is no risk of contamination by pine from other areas.

Other pine plantations, not planted and managed as native pinewoods, are grant-aided as conifers.

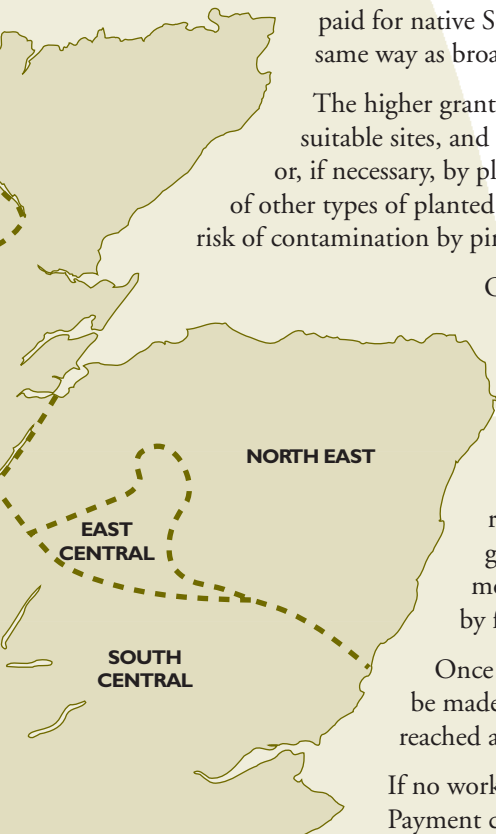
### NATURAL REGENERATION

The Discretionary Payment for natural regeneration pays 50% of the agreed costs of work necessary to encourage the regeneration. The aim should be to obtain natural regeneration with minimum intervention. We may however pay grant to help towards the costs of scarifying or creating low mounds. Work to reduce the impact of grazing animals, whether by fencing or shooting, may also be eligible.

Once adequate stocking is achieved a Fixed Payment of £525/ha can be made for the regeneration. We would expect the plants to have reached a size equivalent to newly planted areas.

If no work is required to encourage the regeneration, no Discretionary Payment can be paid. However, the Fixed Payment may be made once sufficient trees are present.

Areas of existing regeneration may be eligible for a Discretionary Payment for work required to ensure that the area becomes an established woodland. This may include protection measures or respacing of regeneration. The Fixed Payment is not paid for these areas.



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## ANNUAL MANAGEMENT GRANT (AMG)

Native pinewoods are of special environmental value for nature conservation and also landscape. You may qualify for Annual Management Grant if you do work which will safeguard or enhance that special value. If the expected costs are less than the grant, you may not be eligible.

For example, AMG may be paid in native pinewoods for protection measures or the removal of exotic species and non-native origins of pine.

## LIVESTOCK EXCLUSION ANNUAL PREMIUM (LEAP)

You may be eligible for LEAP to compensate for the loss of revenue from excluding agricultural stock from the woodland. The grant is paid for up to 10 years at £80 per hectare per year.

To be eligible for LEAP, the pinewood must be a Less Favoured Area and agricultural stock must be preventing the regeneration of the woodland, or the development of a woodland field layer. More details are given in the WGS booklet.

## If you want to know more

Contact the Forestry Commission Scotland.

Scottish National Office 0131 314 6156

Highland Conservancy 01349 862144

Grampian Conservancy 01466 794542

Perth Conservancy 01738 442830

Strathclyde Conservancy 0141 941 2611

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