

# Grouse Shooting, Moorland Management and Local Communities



**Cairngorms research  
seminar,  
21<sup>st</sup> October 2015**

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**Scottish  
Moorland  
Group**

Part of  
Scottish  
Land & Estates



University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
**Perth College**

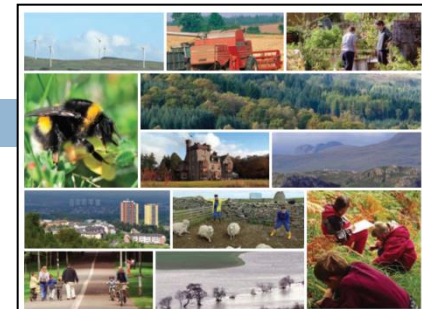
Centre for  
Mountain Studies



# Project Background

2

- An uncertain future for the grouse shooting industry – land use change/policy changes
- Land Use Strategy - objectives for community involvement in decision making around land
- Limited information about community perceptions of grouse shooting
- Previous economic assessments highlighted economic benefits of industry



Getting the best from our land  
A land use strategy for Scotland

Economic Contribution of Estates in Scotland:  
An Economic Assessment for Scottish Land & Estates



April 2014

Hindle R, Thomson S, Skerratt S, McMorran R & Onea P.

# Tomintoul/Strathdon (2009)

3

- Grouse shooting has social benefits
- Community strongly supportive/recognise benefits
- Significant employment (15-20% dependant) and business benefits
- Decline in local awareness/involvement
- Work often seasonal/low pay.....estate diversification potentially important
- Communication, awareness raising and dialogue important for the future

## Red grouse and the Tomintoul and Strathdon Communities



The benefits and impacts of the grouse shooting industry from the rural community perspective - A case study of the Strathdon and Tomintoul communities in the Cairngorms National Park

Research conducted by: Centre for Mountain Studies UHI-Perth College

Funding body: The Scottish Countryside Alliance Educational Trust



*This report should be cited as:  
McMorran, R. (2009). Red grouse and the Tomintoul and Strathdon communities - The benefits and impacts of the grouse shooting industry from the rural community perspective; a case study of the Strathdon and Tomintoul communities in the Cairngorms National Park. The Scottish Countryside Alliance Educational Trust Commissioned Report.*

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# 2015 Project objectives

4

- Assess:
  - Extent of grouse shooting/moorland management in 2 case study areas
  - Objectives of grouse shooting estates and future priorities
- **Assess direct (and indirect) benefits and impacts of grouse shooting on local communities, businesses and economies**
- **Determine local community perceptions of the grouse shooting industry**
- Explore possible future trends

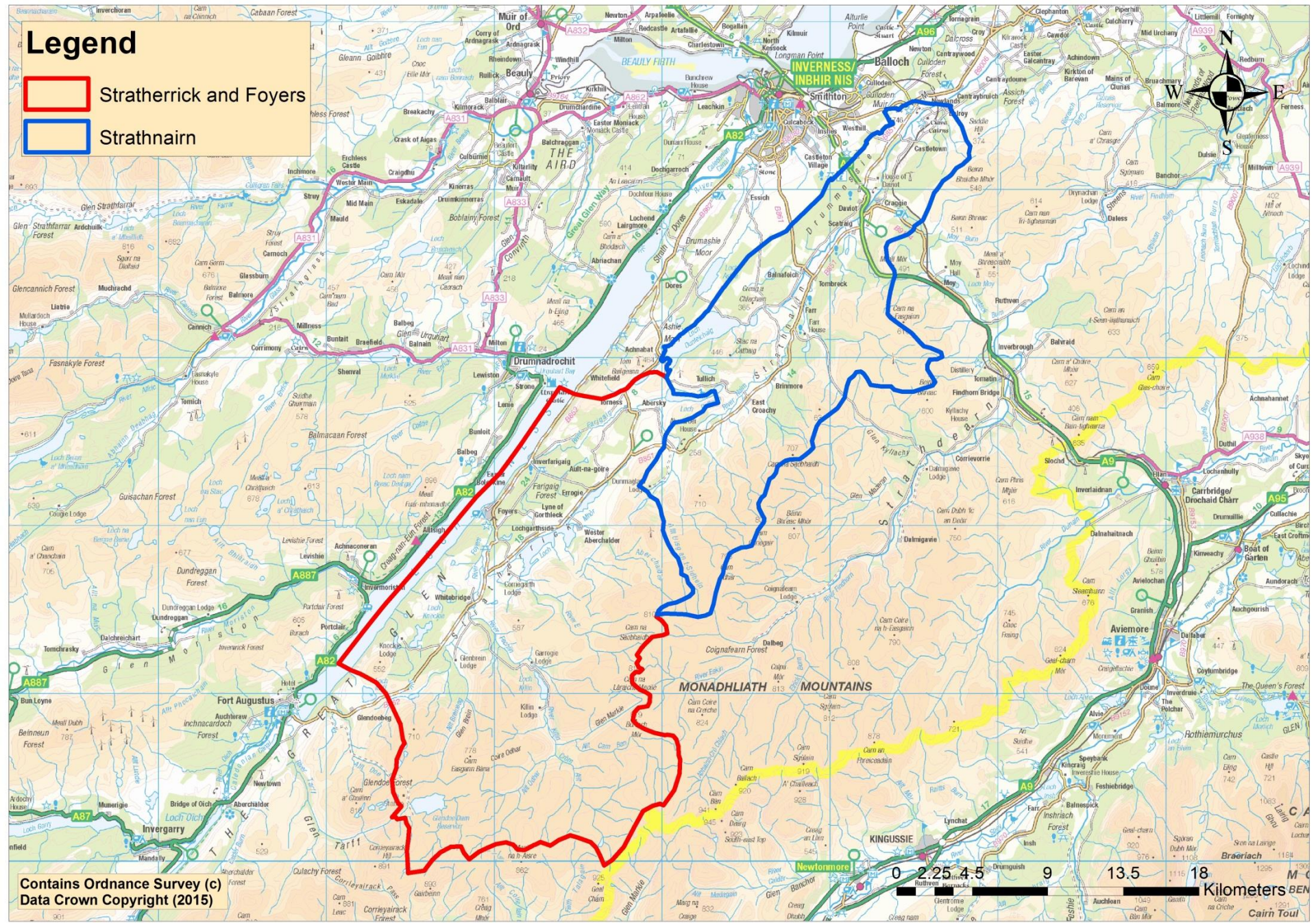
# Two Study Sites

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- Angus Glens and the Monadhliath (North West)
- Size allows survey of whole community/all owners
- Grouse moor management established in both areas
- Topographically distinct regions
- Consistent socio-economic contexts (not honeypots)
- Both areas include multiple small settlements

# Legend

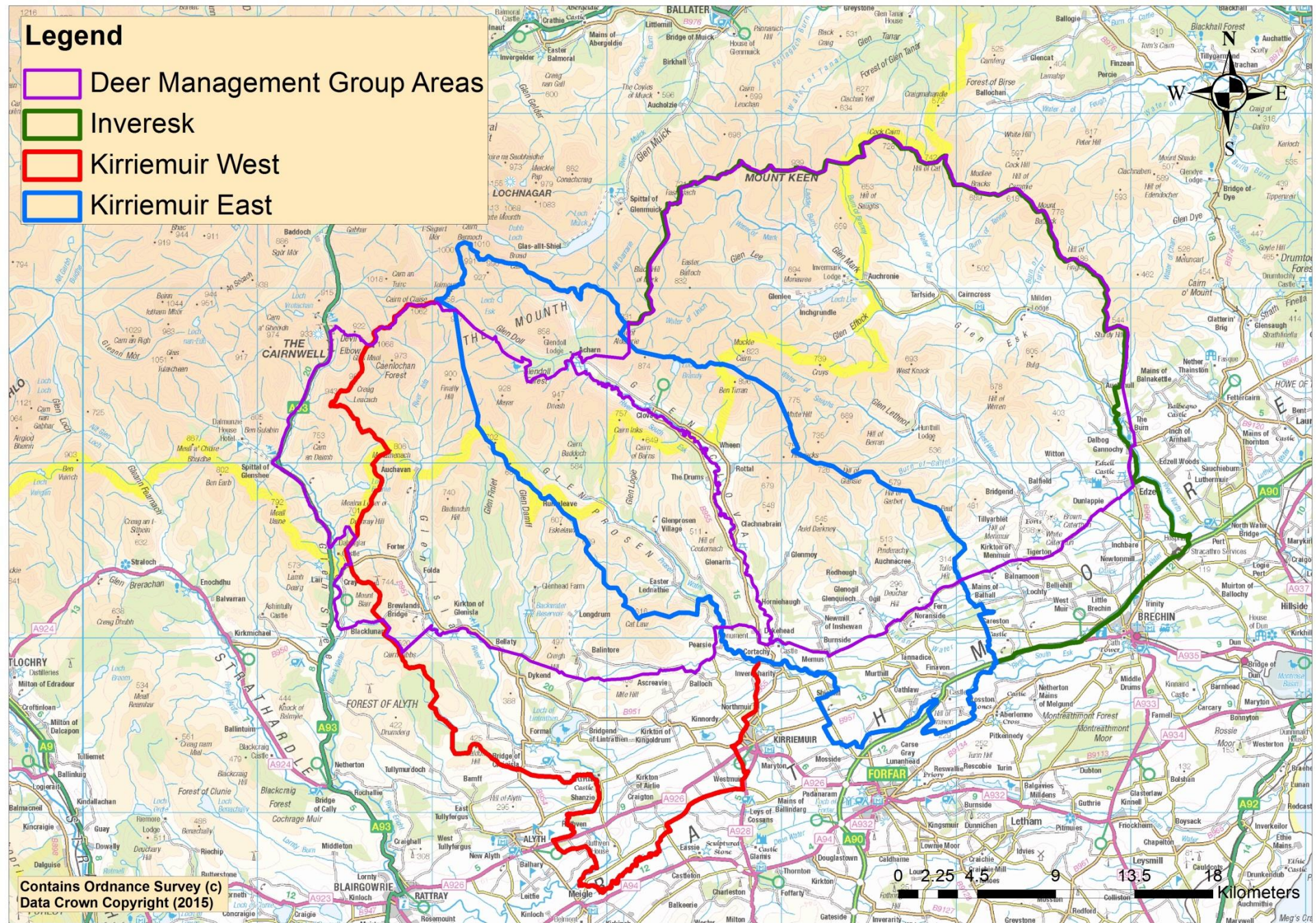
- Stratherrick and Foyers
- Strathnairn



Contains Ordnance Survey (c)  
Data Crown Copyright (2015)

# Legend

- Deer Management Group Areas
- Inveresk
- Kirriemuir West
- Kirriemuir East



Contains Ordnance Survey (c)  
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0 2.25 4.5 9 13.5 18 Kilometers

# Methods/Approach

- **Community Survey**
  - Perceptions of benefits/impacts, employment, use of moors, awareness etc.
  - Sent to 1378 – 19% return rate (266)
- **Community interviews (10+10)**
  - Community representatives/land managers/schools/gamekeepers etc.
  - Expansion of survey topics
- **Business interviews (10+10)**
  - Importance of grouse shooting
  - Direct and indirect links (farmers, shops, garages, tradesmen etc.
- **Landowner survey**
  - Sporting activity, employment, spend etc.
  - Majority responded



## Grouse Shooting, Moorland Management and Local Communities

A survey in the Monadhliath and Angus Glens to obtain your views on the benefits and impacts of Moorland Management and Grouse Shooting



This is a household questionnaire survey; one response should be returned per household. If you would like to speak to someone about your response please contact the research team:

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# Majority report benefits in Angus Glens but views are divided in Monadhliath

Does grouse shooting and moorland management have....	Angus Glens	Monadhliath
Positive effects for you personally?	Yes: 49% No: 49%	Yes: 26% No: 60%
Positive effects for your local community and economy?	Yes: 70% No: 8%	Yes: 53% No: 15%
Does your livelihood depend on the grouse shooting industry (directly or indirectly)?...	Angus Glens	Monadhliath
	Yes: 35%	Yes: 21%

Benefits	Angus Glens		Monadhliath	
	Personal	Community/Economy	Personal	Community/Economy
Local employment	13	52	16	48
Local economy	9	62	10	35
Postive effects of management on environment/wildlife	15	8	11	15
Local facilities and infrastructure	5	9	0	7
Way of life	5	0	10	1
Keeping people in the area	4	6	2	3
Sense of community/social cohesion	3	5	2	5
Enhanced recreational access	6	1	2	0
Beating opporunities	3	1	2	3
Recreation	1	2	3	1
Estate Housing	2	3	0	1
Education	2	0	0	1
Tradition	0	1	2	0
Use of grouse moors	2	0	1	0
Local security	1	0	0	0
Production of food		1	0	0
Positive effects on other land uses	0	0	1	0
<b>Negative Impacts</b>				
Envrionmental damage	5	4	17	6
Acess restriction	8	4	5	2
Increase in disturbance/damage	7	1	5	4
Low contribution to local economy	0	2	3	10
Concerns about estate culture and attitudes	0	1	9	3
Impacts on other land uses and developments	0	2	5	5
Negative social interactions	5	2	2	0
Animal welfare concerns	2	0	3	1
Lack of engagement of estate with community	0	4	0	1
Domination of housing/land market by estates	1	0	1	1
Low quality of estate management	2	0	0	0
Public safety concerns	0	0	0	1

# Estates run at a cost

## Estates Survey: Sporting Revenue

2014	Angus	Monadhliath	Both study areas combined
Number of estates providing revenue and total revenue on these estates	£2.6M (10) (£2M from grouse)	£545K (7) (207K from grouse)	£3.1M (17)
Average revenue per/ha for estates providing data	£76.59	£15.63	£45.90

## Sporting Expenditure

2014	Angus	Monadhliath	Study areas combined
Number of estates providing sporting costs data and total costs on these estates	£6M (12)	£1.7M (8)	£7.8M (20)
Average costs per/ha of estates	£105.33	£39.55	£92.56
Estimated total costs for all survey respondent estates	£7M	£1.9M	£8.9M

# Impacts on local businesses

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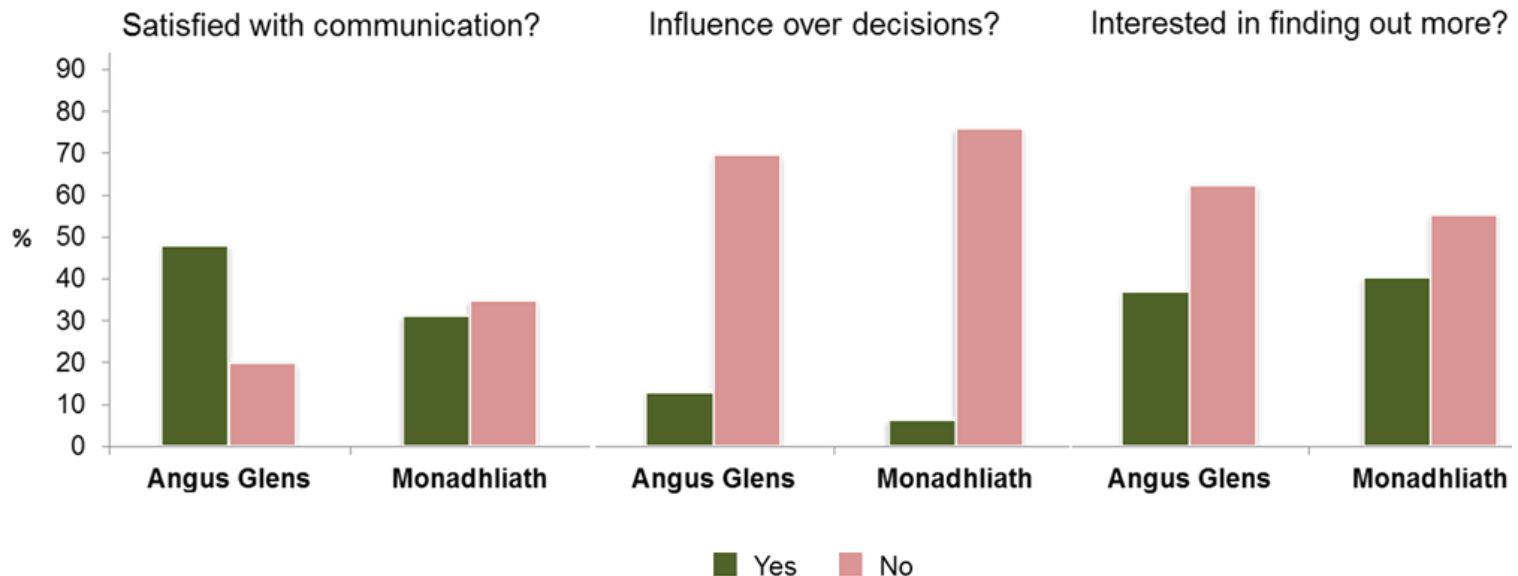
- A very wide range of businesses utilised, many out with survey area
- Impacts on businesses evident in both areas, including accommodation use
- Spend by estates/staff/customers in garages, sporting goods suppliers, butchers and tradesmen
- Impacts more prevalent in Angus; in the Monadhliath there is lower spending, and a lack of local businesses
- Grouse shooting tends to make up small % of overall business revenue but wider moorland activities e.g. stalking also contribute
- Gamekeepers and their families recognised as valued community members contributing to economy and retention of services.



# Communities would like more communication with estates

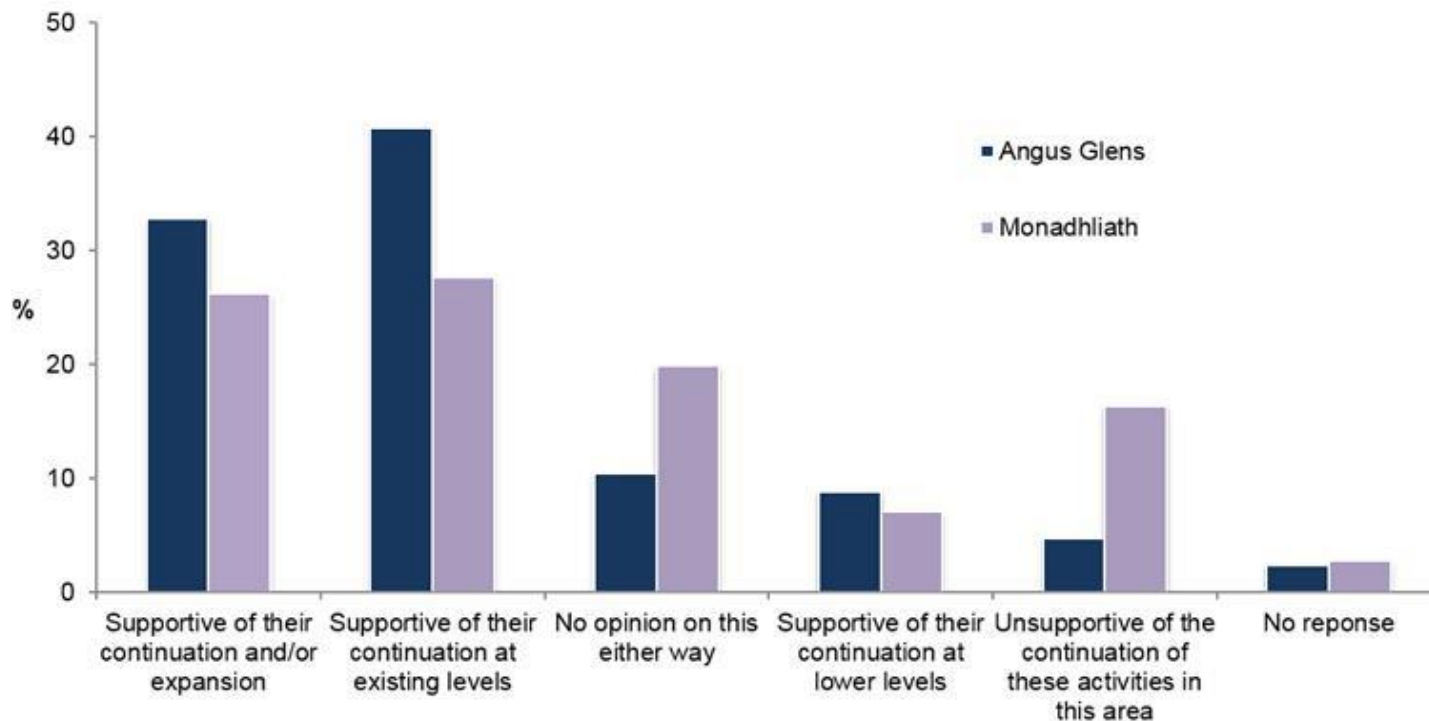
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- More respondents in Angus were satisfied (48%) with the level of communication between estates and communities than unsatisfied (20%)
- Opinion more divided in the Monadhliath (31% satisfied, 35% unsatisfied)
- Perceived 'disconnect', between estates and communities evident in both areas; 40% interested in learning more about grouse shooting



# Grouse shooting and the future

- Support for continuation or expansion of grouse shooting: (74% Angus, 52% Monadhliath)
- Support for continuation at lower levels: (9% Angus, 7% Monadhliath)
- Unsupportive of continuation of grouse shooting: (5% Angus, 16% Monadhliath)



# Conclusions

- Wide range of socio-economic benefits - disproportionately significant in the marginal, remote communities of the case study areas
- Negative impacts also evident with very mixed views on some issues
- Reported benefits/impacts likely to be concentrated in high activity areas close to communities. In other areas they may be absent/more dispersed, dependent on land cover and presence of estates

# Recommendations

Transparent, constructive dialogue between the industry and wider stakeholders remains critical to long-term development of grouse shooting in Scotland.

Opportunities include:

- i) estate engagement with local primary and secondary schools through school visits
- ii) establishing estate 'demonstration days'
- iii) increased estate engagement with local community councils;
- iv) increased emphasis on recruitment of beaters and loaders from local communities.





# Challenges for researchers and practitioners

- Understand impacts of land use and land use change on socio-economics of local communities
- Can there be more shared activities and decision making between estates and communities in the Cairngorms?



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# Thank You!

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