

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: **An Integrated Land Management Strategy Framework**

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Purpose

To seek Board approval for a proposed strategy framework through which the CNPA will work with a wide range of public sector partners, land managers and other interests in order to deliver an integrated approach to land management that delivers the four aims of the Cairngorms National Park (CNP).

Recommendations

The board is asked to agree the following:

- that the CNPA should work towards a long term vision for the area in which land is managed in an integrated manner in order to deliver a wide range of private and public interest management objectives in line with the aims for the CNP set down by government in the founding legislation;
- that in order to achieve this the CNPA should work with land managers and other interests in order to achieve an effective dialogue between all interests so as to agree management objectives for individual management units through an inclusive and transparent consultative process;
- that in order to enable delivery of these management objectives, the CNPA should work with partner agencies and other interests in order to achieve effective publicly (and perhaps privately) funded incentive schemes across all land use types in the CNP; and
- that further more detailed strategy and policy papers arising from this framework paper should be developed by staff and brought to the board in due course.

Executive Summary

The activities of all land managers influence the delivery of the CNP aims. This Board paper proposes an integrated land management strategy framework which aims to expand the delivery of public benefits by land managers. To achieve this, the CNPA will work with a variety of partners to:

- review the way management objectives are set; and
 - the ways in which their delivery is supported.
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AN INTEGRATED LAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Background and Introduction

1. In many parts of the CNP land management is already quite well integrated, often delivering a range of private and public benefits. Land managers already help to further the four statutory aims of the CNP in a variety of ways. The challenge for the CNPA is to build on this through identifying public benefits and developing effective support mechanisms to enhance their delivery.
2. Essential to this process is the process whereby management objectives are set and communicated. In many cases, local communities and the wider public who have a legitimate interest in land management in the CNP feel that they have very little influence over what management objectives are set. A further explanation for the development of an Integrated Land Management Strategy Framework can be found in Annex 1.
3. The immediate task for the CNPA is to develop and articulate a clear long-term vision for integrated land management in the CNP based on its statutory aims and the prevailing wider public policy context. This will then provide a basic framework strategy for further work, particularly by the Natural Resources Group but also by other staff, that will determine short-term actions and eventually lead to development of the first National Park Plan and Local Plan. This paper sets out that framework strategy for Board's consideration.

Long Term Vision

4. If land management in the CNP is to deliver the four statutory aims, then there is a need to expand the delivery of public benefits by land managers. To achieve this, the way in which management objectives are set and the ways in which their delivery is then supported need to be developed.
5. The long term vision should be for an active and varied land management sector which balances business and private objectives with the delivery of public goods. To achieve this, management objectives for individual units are set through inclusive and transparent consultative process, involving all legitimate interests and based on a full understanding by all parties as to the complexities involved. This process should distinguish clearly between legitimate private interests and legitimate public interests, and will involve a challenging process of dialogue and consensus building among all parties. The scale of consultation will depend on the size and opportunity offered by the unit.
6. In order for management objectives to be set that further the public interest and would not otherwise occur, the long-term vision must also involve development of highly effective support mechanisms including financial incentives, provision of advice, and training. For the most part, these will need to be publicly funded, although some private/charitable finance may also be involved. Support, advice and training will also be provided for the development of business and private objectives.

7. **Recommendation:**
- a) **That the CNPA should work towards a long term vision for the area in which land is managed in an integrated manner in order to deliver a wide range of private and public interest management objectives in line with the CNP aims.**
 - b) **That in order to achieve this the CNPA should work with land managers and other interests in order to achieve an effective dialogue between all interests so as to agree management objectives for individual management units through an inclusive and transparent consultative process.**
 - c) **That in order to enable delivery of these management objectives, the CNPA should work with partner agencies and other interests in order to achieve effective publicly (and perhaps privately) funded support mechanisms across all land use types in the CNP.**

Strategic Aims

8. The long-term vision implies three broad strategic aims for the CNPA. These are:
- a) to develop processes of identifying public goods necessary to deliver the CNP aims;
 - b) to develop effective collaborative mechanisms across the CNP for setting land management objectives in an inclusive and transparent manner; and
 - c) to develop effective publicly and privately funded support mechanisms to enable the delivery of management objectives that are in the public and private interest.
9. Implicit in these are a number of subsidiary strategic aims:
- a) To develop support for the long-term vision among those who currently control and undertake land management.
 - b) To develop a good understanding of the practicalities of land management among those who should be involved in setting its objectives for delivering public benefits.
 - c) To develop an overall climate of goodwill and co-operation among all those with a legitimate interest in land management in the CNP.
 - d) To define more clearly those objectives which may be in the public interest, and what incentive arrangements (finance, training, advice) may be required to secure their delivery.

Strategy and Policy Implications for the CNPA

10. The development of integrated land management is an ambitious objective, which will be developed over the long term. The strategic aims will be developed through implementing the current Corporate plan and will be incorporated into the Corporate and Operational Plans for the CNPA in the coming year and beyond.
11. In addition to this, the framework strategy outlined above will require development of more specific and focused strategies and policies that will be brought to the Board as thinking is developed with partners and the Integrated Land Management Advisory Forum. Much of this will also influence development of the National Park Plan and Local Plan. Examples include:

- a) a policy statement on land management objective setting on units in the CNP, recognising the diversity of units;
 - b) a policy statement on the identification of public benefits;
 - c) a policy statement on collaborative deer management planning in the CNP;
 - d) a policy statement on collaborative access management planning in the CNP;
 - e) LMCs – a strategy for delivering integrated land management from a starting point of farmed areas of the CNP;
 - f) a strategy for resourcing integrated land management on the open hill areas of the CNP; and
 - g) a policy statement for delivering integrated land management through catchment management planning.
12. We will need to ensure that the delivery of public benefits by land managers meet our international, national and local commitments for nature conservation. The delivery will need to protect and enhance the special qualities of the area. A paper will be brought to Board in January 2005, explaining our developing work with a range of partners to deliver this. These include land managers, but also other, businesses, visitors and local and national communities.
13. **Recommendation:**
- a) **That further more detailed strategy and policy papers arising from this framework should be developed and brought to the Board in due course.**

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The Current Situation

1. This appendix provides a further explanation for the development of an Integrated Land Management¹ Strategy Framework.
2. As well as the sustainable use of natural resources, land managers influence the delivery of the other CNP aims:
 - a) cultural heritage. Indeed, much of our special heritage depends on their management;
 - b) tourism, depends on landscape, wildlife and recreation opportunities they provide; and
 - c) they influence the economic and social development of the area's communities, for example, through the provision of employment and housing.
3. Many land managers already deliver public benefits. Many tell us that they wish to do more. They are constrained by the support available:
 - a) it is sectorally-organised, inflexible, and run by many different organisations;
 - b) gaps exist for certain land areas and habitat types;
 - c) many of the schemes are inadequately funded and designed;
 - d) very few schemes identify the public benefits delivered, or show an indication of value for money for the public purse; and
 - e) provision of advice and training is inadequate and unintegrated.
4. Land managers have legitimate business and private interests. These can also provide public benefits. Some land managers do not always recognise the public benefits they produce. However, some land managers only focus on their business and private objectives. This creates barriers to the integrated delivery of the CNP aims; prevents collaborative land management, and reduces public support. An integrated approach also enables us to better understand the values of business and private and public objectives. This informs the incentivisation of priorities.
5. Communication by land managers varies across the CNP. Many land managers make great efforts and devote time and resources to communicate through open days, newsletters, websites and direct engagement with local communities. Others do not have the resources and expertise to explain what they contribute. A third group do not recognise the valuable contribution they make to the CNP aims, and the benefits of communicating this contribution.
6. As with communication, many land managers make it a priority to consult with a variety of audiences about their public and business and private objectives. Others wish to do so but do not have the capacity. A final group are reluctant to engage in public consultation over their activities.

¹ The definition of land management, includes activities undertaken by land managers such as estate owners, factors, farmers (owner occupier and tenant), crofters, foresters, public agencies, NGOs and community groups. It can be related to business and private objectives, such as food and timber production, and public benefits, such as provision of access, management from wildlife and landscape, flood control and energy production. We recognise that there is no such thing as a typical land manager, and the situation of each is unique.

7. Land management public policy is moving towards more integration and efficiency. This is influenced by national public policy priorities, such as community empowerment and social justice (including environmental justice). These changes are reflected in land management policy development such as the introduction of the access legislation and the implementation of Common Agricultural Policy reform.

8. Land managers are under pressure from fluctuating markets and changes in the physical processes of the CNP, for example through climate change. Further information on the current situation of integrated land management will be provided by the State of the Park Report

9. Communicating, consulting and delivering public benefits will secure long-term support for the activities of land managers. This requires time and resources and we propose that we have a role to play in building capacity with land managers. The designation of the CNP has placed a national and international spotlight on the activities of land managers. We see this as an opportunity to showcase and attract support for beneficial management.