

**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK
CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE PARK
ADVISORY FORUM**

**Draft Minute of Meeting 11 June 2008
The Lecht Ski Centre**

Present

Alistair MacLennan	CNPA - Chair
Chris Hewitt	NTS
Hebe Carus	MCofS/ Scottish Environment Link
James Scott	BASC
John Moffat	SG RPID Inverness
Kirsty Blackstock	Macaulay Institute
Richard Wallace	FC
Stuart Benn	RSPB
Eleanor Mackintosh	CNPA Board
Sue Walker	CNPA Board
David Hetherington	CNPA
Gavin Miles	CNPA
Gordon McConachie	CNPA
Hamish Trench	CNPA
Matthew Hawkins	CNPA
Stephanie Bungay	CNPA

Apologies

Adam Smith	Game Conservancy trust
Mark Young	Aberdeen University
Roger Knight	Spey Fisheries Board
Simon Thorp	The Heather Trust
Steff Ferguson	FWAG Grampian
Steve North	SNH
Thomas MacDonnell	Glen Feshie Estate
Ian Hope	DCS
Geva Blackett	CNPA
Lucy Grant	CNPA

Welcome

Alistair MacLennan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Gavin Miles reiterated that the purpose of the Advisory Forums was to provide feedback and advice on the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Plan. For this advisory forum, it was to provide that feedback from the perspective of Conserving and Enhancing the Park. Gavin also explained the roles of the CNPA staff who would always attend the advisory forum meetings:

- Gavin Miles, Strategic Planning & Policy Officer, providing the secretariat and support for all the advisory forums and an overview of the National Park Plan process;
- Hamish Trench, Head of Heritage & Land Management Team, providing the Conserving and Enhancing the Park Advisory Forum with a link to the CNPA management team and to the National Park Plan Priority for Action delivery teams.

Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

National Park Plan Implementation Progress, Paper 1

Gavin Miles introduced Paper 1 on progress of the implementation of the National Park Plan. The CNPA was seeking the views of the Advisory Forum on whether:

- significant progress with delivery was being made
- the information provided demonstrates good progress
- there are any priorities for action where progress is not being made or is less obvious

Gavin confirmed that updates on progress would be provided for every Advisory Forum meeting.

The general view of the forum was that progress was being made across all priorities for action.

The following points were raised:

- The progress report needed to be read in conjunction with National Park Plan to assess what progress had been made.
- There was concern that the public would not be aware of any progress or delivery.
- The public need to be informed of why some outcomes are being delivered in future years rather than within the first two.

National Park Plan Monitoring Framework, Paper 2

Gavin Miles introduced Paper 2 on the National Park Plan monitoring framework. The CNPA was seeking the Advisory Forum's comments on the set of indicators for the priority for action 5-year outcomes.

The following points were raised:

- There should be indicators on economy in addition to employment indicators which will help to monitor and address progress of sustainable development. Possible examples could include numbers of cattle, sheep, crops, timber etc per annum.
- A broader range of indicators are needed to cover each element of the PFA outcomes
- There was some confusion about the indicator on length of paths in 'favourable condition' due to both the terminology and assumptions that this would mean a standard measurement for all paths. The term 'appropriate condition' was suggested as a less contentious option.
- The choice of the indicator reflecting complaints on signage was questioned. The CNPA outdoor access team would review the indicators relating to paths in favourable condition and signage complaints
- It was felt that the indicators on more opportunities and fewer perceived barriers for a wider range of people to enjoy deer stalking would not provide enough information on the socio-economic background of participants and whether barriers were being reduced.
- The forum agreed that the indicators relating to the proportion of economic activity related to the special qualities of the Park needed to be reviewed. There was a suggestion that SAC's farmers Accounts information might contribute to an indicator here.
- There was a suggestion that the indicators linked to housing should reflect the availability of houses for those retiring from jobs with tied houses.

The Strategic Review of National Parks, Paper 3

Gavin Miles updated the Advisory Forum on the strategic review of National Parks and would provide more feedback at the next meeting.

Developing a Landscape Framework for the Park, Paper 4

Matthew Hawkins introduced paper 4 and sought the forum's advice on the framework's development. It will be a policy document, setting guidelines on conserving and enhancing the Park.

The following points were raised:

- The framework must take other policies into consideration and how they will impact on one another, particularly the Less Favoured Area Support Scheme

A Biological Recording System for the Park, Paper 5

David Hetherington introduced Paper 5 and sought the forum's advice on the development of the system.

The following points were raised:

- Consideration needs to be taken in terms of publication/release of data as it will include information on location of many at risk species
- Land managers need to be trained to know where and how to access the information

Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP), Paper 6

Hamish Trench introduced paper 6 and updated the forum on the delivery of SRDP in the Park. He also introduced Gordon McConachie, one of the CNPA's two Land Management Support Officers.

The following points were raised:

- There will be a number of roadshows and public meetings held over the coming months for the public to learn about SRDP and its application process
- The LMSO will work with farmers, land managers crofters and estates.
- The Park's two community development officers will work with community and special interest groups.

Proposals to maintain effectiveness of Advisory Forums

Gavin Miles explained that the CNPA wanted the Advisory Forums to continue to be effective and that the afternoon's discussion had provided very useful feedback. However a number of members had stopped attending the Forum. The CNPA wanted to invite new members onto the forum. It also wanted forum members to set future agendas and for them to deliver papers.

The following points were raised:

- Feedback on why people are not attending forums would be useful;
- It would be beneficial for members of the forums to be involved in the earlier stages of project or programme design;
- Members suggested restructuring the forums so that they form wider groups. The day could be split into a field visit in the morning and a meeting in the afternoon. The afternoon session could focus on a particular issue such as protected species and Habitats and Water Framework Directive

Date and place of next meeting:

9th October 2008 – time and venue to be confirmed