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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### FOR INFORMATION

**Title:** Research: Developing a Research Web Portal for the Cairngorms National Park

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#### **Purpose**

To update the board on progress in developing a web-based hub for research in the Park.

#### **Recommendations**

That the board note that a project is now underway to deliver a web-based hub for connecting research in the Park, an early action that will contribute to delivery of the next National Park Plan.

#### **Executive Summary**

Following the 2010 Cairngorms National Park Knowledge Exchange event we are working with the UHI Centre for Mountain Studies to develop a web-based research hub for the National Park. This will help to draw together the wide community of researchers carrying out work in and around the Park, and help to connect research to the management needs of the Park.

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## RESEARCH: DEVELOPING A RESEARCH WEB PORTAL FOR THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK - FOR INFORMATION

### Background

1. The Cairngorms National Park is a well-established place for carrying out research. There is a long history of natural science research using the Cairngorms as a focus or case study and there is an increasing focus from the socio-economic research community. As well as the inherent characteristics of the area, the institutional and management model of the National Park is of interest to researchers.
2. This research can provide a wealth of information to inform management of the Park. As we do with other stakeholder groups, we are working with the research community to stimulate more collaboration and to encourage researchers to engage in the National Park as both a place and a way of working. In particular we would like to achieve better connection between research disciplines and better connections between research, policy and practice.

### Research Web Portal

3. In October 2010 CNPA and the UHI Centre for Mountain Studies held a successful 'Knowledge Exchange' event which drew together 60 participants from research and practice active in the Cairngorms, to make connections and identify research needs and opportunities that would contribute to the management of the Park.
4. One of the actions arising from this event was to establish a web-based 'hub' for researchers with an interest in the Cairngorms to share information, connect researchers and match potential projects to research needs in the Park. The goal is to provide organised and centralised knowledge about research in the Cairngorms in a simple and easily digestible language for all interested users.
5. This action is included in the draft National Park Plan 2012-17 as an integral part of helping more people to learn about, enjoy and help to conserve and enhance the Park.
6. We have now agreed a package of work jointly funded by the UHI Centre for Enterprise, through which the Centre for Mountain Studies will develop this website. The web portal will be designed to link from and complement [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) (including use of the brand). It will be compatible with our own web management systems so that in due course the site can be managed as an integral part of our web presence.
7. The web portal will include:
  - a) Research News page
  - b) Research Events calendar
  - c) Searchable database of organisations, institutions
  - d) Searchable database of projects
  - e) Searchable database of publications and where possible including the documents

- f) Users (profiles and latest activities)
  - g) Discussion Forums and Discussion Groups
  - h) Maps (e.g. Embedded from Google Maps/ Earth)
  - i) Student Research Dating Site/Market – for advertising potential student projects
8. The web portal is scheduled to be ready to go live by May 2012.
9. To support the portal we will also establish a research steering group, drawing representatives of key research institutions together to ensure that the web portal is used to its potential and also to develop further initiatives for research collaboration.

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