



ECMP Partners' meeting

Hybrid meeting at Glenlivet Estate Office, Tomintoul, and online on 30 Sept. 2025

Present: Colin McClean (Chair, CNPA), David Frew (Mar Lodge), Joel Paterson (agent for Glenlivet), Mark Nicolson (Mar), Ross Ewing (SLE), Catriona Walker (agent for Mar), Jos Milner (ECMP), Chris Cassels (CES, online), Faye Gonzalez (agent for Abergeldie, online).

Apologies: Andy Ford (CNPA), Andrew Young (Glenavon), Clive Meikle (Glenavon).

1. Minutes of last meeting & matters arising

Discussed

Action

- All actions from previous meeting (Mar. 2025) were discharged except the following:
- To ascertain NatureScot's plan regarding their programme for monitoring designated sites. C/F
- The number of rural businesses supported by ECMP estates. It was agreed to keep the focus on existing targets included in 5-y Action Plan, as discussed in item 5 below.

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2. Action Plan progress

Discussed

Action

- Each partner gave an overview of recent or on-going activities that are contributing to progress with the Partnership's action plan, including an imminent submission of an FGS application under the natural regeneration option, removal of sitka spruce regeneration from a peatland site, completion of a large wood structure river restoration project, and discussion around the use of SSEN funding for woodland creation / protection.
- Measurement of peat depths for muirburn – recent changes have been made to guidance on NatureScot website following our joint site visit day, but have caused confusion as amendments have not been dated. Partners agreed to share learning and experiences of the licensing application process. It was also suggested that membership of ECMP be included in applications.

Estates



- Mar offered estate staff from other ECMP estates the opportunity to gain further muirburn experience on the hill with them. Any takers to contact Mar or JM.

Estate staff

3. 10 years of ECMP

Discussed

- JM presented slides covering the main achievements of the Partnership. Partners wanted opportunity to provide feedback on the presentation with a view to making it more widely accessible. This should include information on activities that contribute to ECMP targets that not currently mentioned. **Deadline for comments to JM: 24/10/25.**
- Under Research & Monitoring, MN asked about outcomes of Naomi Housego's PhD which included fieldwork on Mar. Papers to be circulated.
- There was also a request for the scientific evidence that muirburn dries out peatlands.

Action

Estates

JM

JM

4. Future of ECMP & next National Park Partnership Plan

Discussed

- Partners felt that 10 y achievements show that Partnership is worthwhile. All estates present were keen to continue involvement. The pros & cons of increasing the membership (new energy but increased difficulty of delivering projects, respectively) was discussed. It was also felt that ECMP estates could work positively with neighbours without them necessarily being members.
- Opportunity to form a Wildlife Estates Scotland (WES) Cluster of neighbouring estates, including both ECMP members and non-members. Partners agreed further thought and discussion was required.
- Estates seemed keen to do more together, e.g. collaborate on projects close to marches. Estates should propose suitable opportunities.
- Site visit with NatureScot on muirburn licencing was viewed as a success. Find opportunities for other similar events.

Action

All

Estates

CNPA / JM

5. Ardtornish Impact Report

Discussed

- It was agreed that this was a very interesting report but there was also recognition of the huge amount of work to collate the data. ECMP does not have capacity to do the

Action



same but 10 year achievements could serve well to demonstrate impacts. See Action in 3. above.

6. AOB

Discussed

- ECMP minutes to be made publicly available on Park Authority website.
- Dates of future meetings to be shared as digital calendar appointments.

Action

JM

JM