

# Cross-Party Group on Sustainable Upland Management

Thursday 17 November 2022, 18.30-20.00

Minute

Present

MSPs

Paul McLennan MSP

Invited guests

Dr Daniel Hoffman (Game Conservancy Deutschland)

Jessica Findlay (NatureScot)

Andrew Montgomery (Glenogil Estate)

Danny Lawson (Glenogil Estate)

Non-MSP Group Members

Andrew Midgeley (RSPB)

Anne Gray (Heather Trust / Moorland Forum)

Danny Carden (Ramblers Scotland)

Davy McCracken (SRUC)

Dee Ward (Scottish Land & Estates)

Lucy Colquhoun (RSPB)

Max Wiszniewski (Revive)

Steven McGinty (Scottish Conservatives Researcher)

Mike Daniels (John Muir Trust)

Nadia Flaherty (Scottish Land & Estates)

Peter Clark (BASC)

Apologies

Brian Whittle MSP

Jenni Minto MSP

Alexander Burnett MSP

Jim Fairlie MSP

Edward Mountain MSP

Chris Wernham (British Trust for Ornithology)

Sarah Cowie (NFU Scotland)

Gemma Cooper (NFU Scotland)

Helen Todd (Ramblers Scotland)  
Jake Swindells (Scottish Countryside Alliance)  
Robbie Douglas Miller (The Hopes Estate)  
Rosalind Bryce (Centre for Mountain Studies)  
Stephen Young (Scottish Land & Estates)

## Agenda item 1

Apologies were recorded as above.

## Agenda item 2

Minutes of the last meeting (8 February 2022) were proposed by Ross Ewing and seconded by Paul McLennan.

The convenor welcomed everyone and said a lot of work had done into organising some excellent speakers for this evening's meeting. Convenor proposed we keep all Q&A to the end of the two presentations, and this is reported here as a separate agenda item (6).

## Agenda item 3

### Annual General Meeting

The Convenor (Paul McLennan) pointed out that the meeting tonight did not have sufficient MSPs present to permit an AGM/election to take place as planned. However, it was advised to those present that both Co-Convenors (Paul McLennan MSP and Alexander Burnett MSP), and the secretariat (Scottish Land & Estates) were happy to continue in these roles. It was also noted that we believe the deputy Convenor (Edward Mountain MSP) is content to remain in this role, though we undertook to check this. It was put to those present that all current office bearers would like to stay in post – and all present were content with this, with no objections.

The Convenor confirmed that we would seek further guidance on how to satisfy the AGM requirement formally, but advised that we would now proceed with the presentations and the rest of the meeting as planned.

## Agenda item 4

***Game Conservancy Deutschland – A comparison of approaches to wildlife management policy: Scotland v Germany*** by Dr Daniel Hoffman

## Agenda item 5

**NatureScot – Wildlife Management** by Jessica Findlay

## Agenda item 6

### Q&A

A discussion followed about the three presentations. Attendees made the following points/questions:

- It is so important to foster trust on all “sides” of the wildlife management debate wherever possible.
- waders are still in severe decline across Scotland. Although grouse moor management can help, we need more action elsewhere in Scotland to help wading birds.
- to what extent does NatureScot look abroad for inspiration on policy? And could Scotland make the same mistakes as Germany re predator control? Answer: it does look abroad, and is always learning from approaches elsewhere.
- Concerns about greenwashing.
- What efforts has Germany made to bridge the gap between the hunting community and conservation interests? Answer: some but there remains ample room for improvement.
- Are restored peatland areas (particularly those that can revert to near natural blanket bog) not a real positive for expanding good wader habitat? Answer: yes.
- Carbon markets are evolving and include lots of opportunities. There are public objectives for carbon sequestration and on biodiversity in Scotland – but shooting is not part of those objectives. Is the situation similar in Germany? Answer: attitudes to shooting are similar in Germany.
- Germany is known for having progressive access rights – are there problems there with access leading to disturbance of ground nesting birds: Answer – perhaps - but this can be discussed via email in more depth.
- Both Daniel and Jessica agreed to have their email address shared for any follow-up questions or development of their answers.

## Agenda item 7

### MSP update

The update was limited to discussion of possible future business.

## Agenda item 8

### Date and topic(s) of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 9 February 2023. An agenda will follow in due course.

Possible topics for discussion could include green finance and rural policy hierarchies.