



Northern  
Periphery  
Programme

2007–2013

Innovatively investing  
in Europe's Northern  
Periphery for a sustainable  
and prosperous future

## **Scottish Consultative Group on Sustainable Hunting**

Minutes from 1<sup>st</sup> meeting 3 July 2009 at the Scottish Game Fair, Scone Palace

### **Present**

Scottish Countryside Alliance  
Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
John Muir Trust  
Scottish Gamekeepers Association  
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
Deer Commission for Scotland  
Forestry Commission  
Scottish Natural Heritage  
National Farmers Union for Scotland  
Scottish Country Sports and Tourism Group

Tim Baynes  
Kathy Fletcher  
Will Boyd-Wallis  
Mike Daniels  
Ross McLeod  
Duncan Orr-Ewing  
Robbie Kernahan  
Derek McAskill and Willie Lamont  
Jenny Bryce  
Jonnie Hall  
Ian Robertson

Macaulay Institute

Simon Thirgood, Justin Irvine,  
Anke Fischer, Sally Huband and  
Amy Turner  
Steve Redpath  
Rehema White

University of Aberdeen  
University of St Andrews

### **Apologies**

British Association for Shooting and  
Conservation  
Scottish Rural Property and Business  
Association  
Association of Deer Management Groups

Nicole Upton

Luke Borwick  
Finlay Clark

## **Introduction to “HUNTING for Sustainability” and “North Hunt” projects.**

Simon Thirgood gave a Powerpoint presentation on the background and objectives of the HUNTING for Sustainability and North Hunt projects (available on request – 10 MB).

There was a discussion about the opportunities for the projects to feed back to policy makers at a European level e.g. working with FACE (Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation in the EU) or with the European Parliament Inter Groups on ‘Sustainable Development’ and ‘Sustainable Hunting Biodiversity and Countryside Activities’

It was also felt to be important to build upon and tie in with existing relevant work at the Macaulay (e.g. RELU Collaborative Deer Management Project and Scottish Government Rural Land Use Study) and other UK institutions.

## **Discussion on research priorities for sustainable hunting in Scotland.**

The following hour was spent in a very productive, facilitated discussion about research priorities for sustainable hunting in Scotland. These can be summarised as:

### **A. Wider land use issues**

- Where does hunting fit into the wider land use debate? This reflects the shift in policy from single to multifunctional land use.
- One priority is to provide an understanding of how different land uses relate to each other – farming, field sports and forestry.
- How can land used for hunting be managed in balance with other interests, including public interests?
- Explore how compatible field sports are with other land uses e.g. recreation and biodiversity. Can the research assess whether land primarily used for hunting can be multifunctional whether in terms of recreation, water quality, carbon storage etc?
- Hunting needs to be marketed in terms of the wider habitat values and not just as a recreational activity.

### **B. Legislative issues**

- Important to understand the different legislative frameworks in different countries and the influence, where relevant, of EU legislation, on national frameworks.

These need to be understood, keeping in mind that they are constantly evolving so that the cultural and economic drivers of hunting can be separated out for evaluation.

### **C. Ecological issues**

- Where does hunting and conservation overlap?
- Deer density, there is a perception that you have to maintain a high density of stags to sustain economic viability but is there a different market e.g. conservation hunting?
- Explore how habitat quality influences the number of deer.
- Investigate the long term consequences of muir burn for carbon dynamics.
- Predator control e.g. examine what 'sustainable' predator control means.
- Examine the issue of high input - high output grouse moor management versus low input - low output – what are the ecological, economic and social consequences?

### **D. Economic issues**

- There is now plenty of information on the balance of grazing and biodiversity for example, but it remains difficult to quantify differences in land management in terms of economic and social impacts. One answer might be to evaluate per square kilometre of 'hunting habitat' e.g. jobs, carbon sequestration etc
- There has been a change in the demographics of hunting, shooting and fishing in that it is now more family based and not so narrowly focused. People are after a broad package. The majority of European hunting tourists want a Scottish package, something which encapsulates the Scottish identity, whether grouse shooting or deer stalking but also shopping, golf and cities. This is not necessarily understood by the hunting industry. Hunting now needs to be marketed for the whole family not just to the male of the family.

### **E. Cultural and Social issues**

- Explore why people hunt and why different reasons interact to influence their decisions

- Understand the differences between e.g. land agents and traditional family sporting estates, some of the latter now having to commercialise. Poor management may be resulting from the switch from traditional to commercial.
- Be careful to distinguish between motivations of provider and the user.

### **Discussion on future meetings of the Consultative Group**

The meeting was felt to have been interesting and useful from the perspectives of most stakeholders. It was felt that holding the meeting as an adjunct to the Scottish Game Fair was a very efficient use of time as most stakeholder groups would be attending the Fair thus ensuring good attendance (nb HUNT and North Hunt together with the RELU Collaborative Deer Management Project had a stand at the Fair which received considerable interest from stakeholders and the general public).

It was suggested that the HUNT and North Hunt projects take a stand at the 2010 Game Fair, possibly in conjunction with other upland biodiversity and management orientated projects at the Macaulay Institute.

The next meeting of the Scottish Consultative Group on Sustainable Hunting will therefore be held on **Friday, July 2, 2010.**

Please note that further information and updates on progress on these two projects can be found on the project websites:

<http://fp7hunt.net/>

<http://north-hunt.org>

A summary of other work conducted at the Macaulay relevant to sustainable use of the Scottish uplands can be downloaded from the Macaulay website:

<http://www.macaulay.ac.uk/upland/>