

# LINK eBulletin April 2008

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## Task Force Updates and Future Priorities

### Agriculture TF: Mandy Gloyer

**SRDP:** Time has been spent on the finalisation of the SRDP, which passed through the Rural Development Committee in Brussels on 23rd January, and was formally approved by the European Commission in early March. Scottish legislation is being created, and schemes are expected to open in April 2008. ATF has been involved in the development of the SRDP through stakeholder and bilateral meetings with ScotGov, and in contact with European Commission officials, as well as MSPs including the ministerial team.

**RDCs:** the ATF has been involved in the ongoing development of RDCs which will provide the delivery vehicle for SRDP funding, including the agri-environment and forestry programmes. Work is ongoing to set up the regional priorities for 11 Scottish 'On the Ground' regions.

**Less Favoured Areas (LFA):** An interim LFA scheme is scheduled to operate in Scotland until 2010, although there is potential for further delay to full reform, possibly until 2013. ATF lobbied on the lack of environmental delivery of the interim scheme along with other stakeholders and the government will now review the scheme for 2008 and 2009.

**Climate change and agriculture:** The ATF has continued input to the Agriculture and Climate Change group and its report and recommendations are expected by April.

**CAP 'Health Check':** The latest round of CAP reform has begun with EC proposals for the so-called 'Health Check'. LINK has been invited on to the ScotGov CAP reform stakeholder group, and submitted a response to the European Commission's first public consultation. Revised EC proposals are due in May, with a further consultation period before legislative proposals are adopted, probably before the end of the year.

**Set-aside:** ATF has led on attempting to find ways to mitigate for the loss of set-aside in 2007-08 and instigated meetings with ScotGov, SNH and NFUS, resulting in further research by SG, and joint advice to farmers from NFUS and RSPB.

**LEADER:** Input to the development of LEADER for the new SRDP, through LEADER stakeholder group, has continued.

**Scottish Biodiversity Strategy Implementation Plans:** The ATF has been working through the Rural Working Group to improve the next SBS Rural Implementation Plan, and its actions. This process continues to be frustrated by lack

of action in the RLUWG and ScotGov. Consultation on the plans is currently underway.

### **Biodiversity TF: Deborah Long**

The BTF have submitted responses to the BRIG paper on the UKBAP review; the BRIG paper on UKBAP species signposting; and the government guidance on preventing spread of ragwort. The BTF attended two SNH steering groups on 2005 UKBAP reporting round report and UKBAP targets report; the SNH steering group for Hambrey contract assessing biodiversity delivery mechanisms in Scotland and a BRIG meeting in March.

The BTF have commissioned a case study report on NGO action to conserve biodiversity. The aim is to demonstrate value for money in NGO delivery of biodiversity and to illustrate NGO partnerships delivery in new UKBAP and new Scottish biodiversity structures (both of which are still under discussion).

### **Climate TF: Clifton Bain**

The Climate Change Bill consultation is underway and everyone, individuals and organisations are encouraged to respond.

The CTF has been jointly working with Stop Climate Chaos Scotland to develop policy. Following the meeting in November, a new LINK leaflet is being produced to give LINK's updated and revised policy on climate change. The CTF has been overseeing the work on a report given guidance for LINK members on reducing workplace carbon emissions. The CTF gave input to the government review on guidance on windfarms and peatlands, and is now on the Scottish Soils Strategy group.

### **Deer TF: Duncan Orr-Ewing**

The DTF gave a response to joint agency Strategy for Wild Deer and to the proposed merger between DCS and SNH. The DTF has had meetings with the DCS, the DCS Deer Management Round Table, SNH and Scottish government.

### **Freshwater TF: Andrea Johnstonova or Mike Donaghy**

**Flooding Bill and Parliamentary Flooding Inquiry:** the FTF submitted written evidence and provided oral evidence to the E&RA Committee on the Flooding Inquiry, and has actively contributed to the drafting of the Flooding Bill, and members of the Flooding Bill Advisory Group.

**Water Framework Directive:** the FTF continues its involvement including on the practical side of the Directive's implementation (RBMPs, SWMI reports) and the ongoing development of relevant policies.

**Diffuse pollution:** there have been some positive outcomes on developing a wider strategy on tackling diffuse pollution problem from rural land use and work in this group will commence later in the year.

**Water industry:** the FTF is planning further engagement in future with Scottish Water, Waterwatch and Waterwise.

### **Landscape TF: Helen McDade and Jonathan Wordsworth**

Monitoring of Landscape concerns in NPPG 14 continues. Member bodies continued to raise landscape concerns at the Beaulieu-Denny Public Inquiry, the proposed Trump development in Aberdeenshire and remain concerned about windfarm developments on the Isle of Lewis.

The LTF continues to work towards the development of a future role for the SLF and the better integration of landscape interests in both rural and urban planning and in

integrated policies developed by the Scottish Government, in particular Climate Change Policy, SRDP and NPF2 and GPDOS.

#### **Marine TF: Calum Duncan**

The MTF has been engaged in the Scottish Government Sustainable Seas Task Force workshops and plenary meetings during January – March 2008. In March 2008, the BMTF submitted a response to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy 2008-10 Marine Biodiversity Implementation Plan. The MTF met with Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead in November 2007, and has had three Meetings with the Government Marine Management Division, and with MSPs and researchers of all the main political parties. In December 2007, the MTF met with the marine task forces from England, Wales and Northern Ireland regarding joint up action on Marine Bill. The MTF has attended events organised by Scottish Renewables and MCCIP, and has held fringe meetings at the spring party conferences.

#### **Planning TF: Anne McCall and Paul F Gallagher**

The PTF has been preparing its response to the NPF 2 to be submitted in April 2008, and continues its involvement with the NPPG 14 Natural Heritage stakeholder group and preparations for the Trump planning inquiry due to start in May.

#### **Scottish Environmental Fundraising Forum (SEFF): Steven Gardner**

SEFF meetings continue to attract a high calibre of speaker and provide a valuable forum for information exchange and networking. At the March 2008 meeting Deirdre Harte HLF-S gave a presentation on their new Strategic Plan which will be launched in April 2008. Jason Watt from SNH also gave a short briefing on the current changes taking place within the SNH grant making programme.

The group are continuing to work on two joint funding approaches to Corporate funders, HBoS Foundation and Diageo, which may involve an element of corporate volunteering.

We are concerned about the diminishing amount of funding available to support biodiversity work - SEFF members are all reporting an increasing focus is being placed upon people centred projects with the environment coming in a poor second place

#### **Sustainable Scotland TF: Dan Barlow**

The SSTF is currently in abeyance.

#### **Woodlands TF: Angus Yarwood**

The WTF prepared a briefing paper, 'Forestry policy and carbon sequestration in Scotland' for its meeting with Michael Russell in January and met informally with Hugh Clayden Policy Advisor, FCS to discuss development of FCS's policy on disposals, background to policy development and timetable at FCS, compensatory planting.

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##### **Meeting CoSLA**

LINK's Chair, John Mayhew will be meeting Cllr Alison Hay, Regeneration &

Sustainable Development leader at CoSLA - any convenors whose taskforce has issues they would like John to raise please contact **John** or **Jen** by end April.

### **Ministers' Summer Tours**

Members with venues/issues/places to include in plans for the summer tours should contact **Gaby Pieraccini**, Business Development Manager, Environment Directorate as soon as possible.

### **National Conversation**

LINK board and staff have been looking at how to respond to the **National Conversation** and plans for a Scottish Constitutional Commission, and whether a seminar for LINK members should be organised, similar to the one SCVO held in March 2008. Please let **Jen** or **Eilidh** know if you think this would be useful.

### **Joint UK Links Seminar on Devolution**

The next joint UK Links Seminar on Devolution will be held in Birmingham on 8-9 October, to continue discussion of two years ago on the practicalities of devolution and consider how this is impacting our work, via case studies. Please contact **Jen** if you are interested in attending.

### **Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) SEA Workshops, May 2008**

A series of three workshops to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of Strategic Environmental Assessment in Scotland. All are held at 5-7pm at the University of Strathclyde, David Livingstone Centre for Sustainability, Graham Hills Building.

**14 May** - Session One: Setting the Baseline

**21 May** - Session Two: Setting the Scope

**28 May** - Session Three: Setting the Alternatives

More information is available from the **IEMA website**.

### **Report of the Cairngorms National Park Strategy Group meeting, 14 March**

John Mayhew's report is available on the LINK website. The meeting appeared to be aimed at demonstrating unity of purpose and common agendas between all the public agencies involved in national parks, particularly as Michael Russell MSP also attended the meeting, and possibly as a result of fear of change arising out of the forthcoming review.

### **Parliamentary Training**

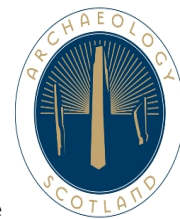
A parliamentary training session or day is being planned for the summer. If you are interested or have suggestions for topics, please email **Eilidh**.

### **Update on HEACS**

At the end of January the First Minister announced the Government's decision to abolish all advisory councils as part of its proposals for streamlining the public sector, including the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland (HEACS). The Minister subsequently asked HEACS to continue and complete its current work programme. HEACS will now continue in being until May 2009, and will undertake a study tour of Caithness in June and will hold a public meeting in Edinburgh in September. It will submit its final reports to the Minister by the end of 2008 will hold a final conference in Edinburgh in May 2009 to discuss the results of its work and to outline its vision for the future.

### **New name and logo for Council for Scottish Archaeology**

As from 1 April 2008, the CSA have new name, Archaeology Scotland (AS) and logo.



### **Consultations**

You can sign up to **seConsult**, the Executive weekly email alert service to tell you of new consultations and provides brief descriptions and web

links.

### In addition to the Scottish Government consultations on the proposed Climate Change Bill, Flooding, Water Services and National Planning Framework 2:

Scottish Government Public Health Directorate	Taking Forward the Government Economic Strategy (GES) Discussion Paper on Tackling Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation Contact the <b>LINK Perth office</b> if you wish to see the paper.	<b>2 May 2008</b>  <b>mike.palmer@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</b>
Scottish Historic Environment Policy on the Marine Historic Environment	<b>The SHEP consultation</b> sets out proposals for Scottish Ministers' policies for the Marine Historic Environment, and also proposals for new legislation to protect the marine historic environment in Scotland, following publication by the Department of Culture Media and Sport in March 2007 of a <b>White Paper, Heritage Protection for the 21st century</b>	<b>30 May</b>  <b>hs.shep@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</b>
Forestry Commission Scotland	Draft Climate Change Action Plan, available at <b>www.forestry.gov.uk/ccapscotland.</b>	<b>6 June</b>  <b>fcs.climatechange@forestry.gsi.gov.uk</b>

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### LINK Diary

2008

<b>April</b>	<b>24</b>	Board meeting, morning, Perth
<b>May</b>	<b>7</b>	Meeting with Minister, Edinburgh
<b>June</b>	<b>26 am</b>	Board meeting - Venue TBC
<b>June</b>	<b>26 pm</b>	Board and Convenors Networking meeting - Venue TBC
<b>June</b>	<b>26 pm</b>	AGM late afternoon with buffet and guest speaker - Venue TBC
<b>October</b>	<b>23</b>	Board meeting, morning Perth.
	<b>30</b>	Annual Review and Forward Planning, all day - probably
Edinburgh		
<b>November</b>	<b>TBC</b>	Annual Members' Congress - Venue TBC
<b>December</b>	<b>17</b>	Festive Reception, evening, Edinburgh. <b>All welcome and Guests.</b>