

LINK Members' eBulletin October 2008

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Task Force Updates and Future Priorities

Agriculture TF: Katrina Marsden

SRDP: The ATF continues its active involvement in SRDP implementation, with places on the programme monitoring committee and implementation group. There are concerns over the complexity of the scheme and LINK is engaged in constructive dialogue with the Government and other stakeholders to ensure that any teething problems are dealt with.

RDCs: Over the last three months, we have finally seen the new agri-environment scheme, Rural Priorities, open to applicants. There have been some initial problems including concern over the complexity of the scheme. LINK is engaging constructively with the Government and other stakeholders to ensure that the scheme achieves its environmental aims.

Less Favoured Areas (LFA): The ATF has continued to engage with the LFASS stakeholder group and will respond to the current consultation.

CAP 'Health Check': The ATF responded to consultation on the 'CAP Healthcheck' and produced a report "Beyond the CAP: towards a sustainable land use policy that works for Scotland" to start a discussion on how real changes to land use policy could work for Scotland, land managers and the environment.

Scottish Soil Framework: Following the LINK Soil Workshop held in early August in Perth, the ATF contributed to the LINK response on the Scottish Soil Framework submitted in September.

Biodiversity TF: Deborah Long

The BTF case study report on NGO action to conserve biodiversity is now complete and plans are being made for a suitable occasion to launch it. The taskforce have put forward names of representatives for the various Scottish biodiversity committees and subgroups and have attended meetings with the Scottish Government as part of the setting up of the new structures.

Climate TF: convenorship vacant

Scottish Climate Change Bill: The CTF continued engagement on the Scottish Climate Change Bill working alongside Stop Climate Chaos Scotland has helped demonstrate a united front to Government. Future work will largely be focussed on the Parliamentary progress of the Climate Change Bill through the early half of 2009. Additional areas of work likely to include peatlands, promoting an energy hierarchy, sustainable adaptation strategies and supporting wider Link work on changing behaviour to reduce emissions.

LINK Climate Statement: During the last couple of months, LINK members have been consulted on revisions and updates to our climate position statement and the new publication, 'Time to act on Climate Change' is now being circulated to the wider network and selected others and MSPs.

Deer TF: Duncan Orr-Ewing

The DTF continue to monitor the DCS/SNH Merger and is part of a wider DCS reference group on the merger issue.

Freshwater TF: Andrea Johnstonova and Mike Donaghy

Flooding Bill: The Bill was introduced to Parliament at the end of September. LINK is an active member of the Flooding Bill Advisory group, and our view is that the Bill could be strengthened in a number of key areas, as stated in our new publication, **A Vital Step for Scotland**.

Water Framework Directive: The River Basin Management Planning is also reaching a crucial stage, with the publication of draft RBMPs due later this year. In our response to the draft RBMPs, we expressed concerns over the low level of ambition in the Plan to achieve the WFD's aims and targets.

Diffuse pollution: The Scottish government introduced new regulations in the form of General binding Rules (GBRs) and new measures as part of the SRDP. However, these are still not enough to address the complex problem of diffuse pollution, and our work is on-going.

Coastal flooding: LINK is a member of the steering group with research being led by Dundee University, funded by the Scottish Government, SEPA and SNH, and the final report on coastal flooding was released in September. This report gives a mapping tool to assist local authorities in planning for future changes in the occurrence of coastal floods.

Landscape TF: Helen McDade and Jonathan Wordsworth

The LTF has been working closely with SNH and the Scottish Government on developing the Scottish Landscape Forum's vision statement, Charter for Landscape, which was proposed by Environment Minister Mike Russell MSP as a final action for the SLF. The LTF has also been supporting the web-based project for people to share their impressions about their special places through poetry, prose, images, video, sculpture or music, **Placebook Scotland**.

Marine TF: Calum Duncan

The MTF **Marine Bill campaign** has been underway throughout the summer with displays and signature collections undertaken in over 30 events including the Edinburgh Book Festival, Glasgow River Festival, the Big Tent Festival, Kelvingrove Museum and the Scottish Seabird Centre as well as farmers markets and street displays. Over 4,400 signatures were presented to Richard Lochhead MSP when the MTF meet with him on 1 October. Members of the MTF attended useful discussions meetings with the other UK links in Belfast in July.

In September, the MTF responded to **consultation on the Scottish Marine Bill** and jointly with the other UK links to the **Defra High Level Marine Objectives consultation**.

Planning TF: Anne McCall and Paul F Gallagher

Since August when the convenor and vice-convenor of the PTF moved on to other jobs, the PTF has been in abeyance. This is under review until others volunteer for the roles and the taskforce decide on its future agenda.

Scottish Environmental Fundraising Forum (SEFF): Steven Gardner

SEFF continued its format of quarterly meetings with about 10-12 people attending each time. In May, Steven Watson, SNH Strategic Grants Manager gave an overview of their priorities.

In September, Iain Matheson of the Scottish Government gave an overview and update on LEADER funding and Sara Daniels, Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER Local

Action Group, discussed the priorities and targets in her LAG. SEFF are making plans to be represented at SEW 2009 in February.

Woodlands TF: Angus Yarwood

The WTF has participated in the early stages of the Review Group for Planning Circular 9/1999 on Indicative Forestry Strategies. This process is ongoing. The Scottish Forestry Strategy Implementation Plans are in place and the taskforce will be monitoring delivery progress.

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LINK NEWS

New LINK Publications, September 2008

New LINK position statement - 'Time to Act on Climate Change'  3.7Mb

This statement sets out LINK's views on the main issues to be addressed if climate change is to be tackled effectively in Scotland. September 2008.



Beyond the CAP  3.3Mb

The LINK Agriculture Taskforce presents the case for transforming it into a European Sustainable Land Management Policy. It lays out our vision for how CAP funding could, in future, be retained for rural areas, help maintain land managers' livelihoods and provide significant public goods.



Leaflet - 'A Vital Step for Scotland'  848Kb

New legislation represents a new opportunity to introduce sustainable management of flood risk. However, it will only be achieved if three key principles are placed at the heart of the new legislation. This leaflet produced by the LINK Freshwater Taskforce outlines the required principles.



LINK Review Report - Natural Flood Management  774Kb

Natural Flood Management (NFM), part of a Sustainable Flood Management is not new and most of the techniques are components of best practices in farming, forestry, river restoration and natural habitat management. A major element is the production of a Catchment Flood Management Plan enabling most of the current land uses to continue while introducing flood controls in key areas. This literature review looks at what can be learned from past studies and experiences in other countries.



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Parliamentary Officer's Report

Scottish Marine Bill Campaign: A series of three marine seminars were held in the Parliament during September; focusing on Marine Ecosystem Objectives, Planning and Nature Conservation; the events were well attended with many MSPs and researchers coming along.

Party Conferences: LINK Parliamentary staff and member body representatives had a stall at the Green Party autumn party conference in Glasgow in September, and will attend the Liberal Democrats conference in Edinburgh and the SNP's in Perth, both in October.

Scottish Environment Week preparations: The date of next year's Scottish Environment Week has been set for the week beginning the 23rd February; the LINK Parliamentary Office is working with Taskforces to plan the week's programme of events and seminars.

In September, LINK staff attended the Sustainable Scotland Conference at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh where Jim Mather MSP, Richard Wakeford, Maf Smith (SDCS), Professor Colin Galbraith (SNH), Steven Stewart (Stagecoach Group) and Julia Sturrock (SEPA) gave presentations, and two masterclasses covered Climate Change and Energy and Sustainable Communities.

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Consultations

Sign up to [seConsult](#), the Scottish Government weekly email alert service to tell you of new consultations and provides brief descriptions and web links.

In addition to the Scottish Government consultations

Forestry Commission

Consultation on proposed [FC Race Equality Scheme](#).

If this is of interest, please respond before 28 November to diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

More information is available from Val McHale on 0131 314 6575.

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Events and Seminars

11 October

SPT, Glasgow

Transform Scotland AGM

Cllr. Alistair Watson, Chair of SPT will be speaking on the transport implications of the 2014 Commonwealth Games. [Email](#) for more information

14 October

5.30pm

Dynamic Earth

"Reducing Carbon Emissions -the View from 2050"

Seminar and discussion, part of the [David Hume Institute's](#) regular programme on policy research.

29- 31 October

Scottish Natural Heritage

iSNH Conference on 'Species Management: Challenges and Solutions for the 21st Century'

Heriot-Watt University
Edinburgh

[More details](#) or [email Helen King](#).

13-14 NovemberSSN
Annual Conference

Sustainable Scotland Network Annual Conference 'Accounting for Sustainable Development'.

Dynamic Earth
Edinburgh

The conference is aimed principally at local government officers and elected members responsible for financial management, procurement, climate change and sustainable development.

[More information](#) or [to book a place](#).

14 November

7pm - 1am

Edinburgh

Friends of the Earth Scotland's 30th Birthday Celebration Ceilidh.

Starring Hud Yer Wheest and friends

Roxy Art House, Roxburgh Place
Edinburgh EH8 9EB

29 November
7.30pm
Stirling
Scottish Wild Land
Group - AGM

The Scottish Wild Land Group's post-holders are standing down at their AGM and the organisation will be wound up if no successor volunteers come forward. Everything is going well and a hand-over period is planned.

After the usual business, if there are no new nominations for the postholders then a motion will be proposed to wind up the group. If approved, all remaining assets would be distributed to charities with like-minded aims.

For more information contact **Alistair Cant**, Co-ordinator, telephone 0131-229 2094.

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LINK Diary 2008

October 23 Board meeting, morning Perth.
30/31 LINK Congress and Annual Review and Forward Planning,
Birnam.

November 11 LINK Ministerial Meeting, Edinburgh. Email **Jen** for details.
November TBC LINK Strategy Workshop with Bruce Britton. Venue TBA.

Autumn TBC Possible LINK Workshop on SEA. Venue TBC.
Autumn TBC Possible LINK Workshop on National Parks Review. Venue TBC.

December TBC LINK Workshop on Management of Task Force Workload.
Venue TBA.

December 17 Festive Evening Reception, St Augustine's Church, Edinburgh.

2009

January 22 Board meeting, am. Board and Convenors/Members
Networking pm. Perth.

February 23-27 LINK Scottish Environment Week, Holyrood.

April 23 Board meeting, am. Board and Convenors/Members Networking
pm.

June 25 Board meeting, am. Board and Convenors/Members Networking
pm.

October 22 Board meeting, am. Board and Convenors/Members Networking
pm.

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Publications Received

The State of UK Birds 2007

The ninth in a series of annual reporting on the UK's birds, giving information on breeding and wintering populations.

Published jointly by RSPB, BTO, WWT, CCW, NE, NIEA and SNH.



The Built Environment Forum Scotland Strategy 2008-11

Six priorities are given for BEFS's collective vision of successful, sustainable place-making.

