

To R MacIntosh
Sylvan House
Email copy



Farm Woodland Forum
Glendale
Doune
Road
Dunblane
FK15 9AR

Dear Bob

The Review of the Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme within the new Scottish Rural Development Plan

The Farm Woodland Forum is a UK organisation representing a membership active in research, education, consultancy and working within government agencies associated with land management issues. We welcome the opportunities offered by review of all land management activities through the combination of CAP reform, the new Scottish Rural Development Plan, together with the revisions of the Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture and the Scottish Forestry Strategy. We appreciate the details of the implementation on the ground will lie with the new Scottish Forestry Grant Schemes, integrated with other land management measures in the new Land Management Contracts.

Given the previous recent history of FCS to seek innovative and forward looking opportunities (e.g. the new pilot SFGS for adding value to farm woodlands, woodland grazing, the woodland options in LMC's), the Forum is very disappointed by what appears to be a failure to develop the forestry options required within the European enabling measure, the EAFRD (often referred to as the RDR), which informs what Member States they shall do. In particular, the EAFRD (EC 1698/2005), under Article 44 (as laid down earlier in Article 36) requires that;

'Support shall be granted.....to farmers to create agroforestry systems combining extensive agriculture and forestry systems. Support shall cover the establishment costs'

And further that *'Agroforestry systems refer to land use systems in which trees are grown in combination with agriculture on the same land'*

In the recent round of SFGS consultation meetings there was no mention by FCS or SEERAD staff of this opportunity within the RDR. Indeed in a slide covering 'opportunities' this option was not even listed. In correspondence with FCS staff, the lack of time before the need to provide a consultation draft has been given as a reason why options based on this Clause may not to be offered for consultation. Frankly, this is not good enough. This is exactly the time to implement new approaches, even if only a pilot scale, given the sea change occurring in land management through CAP reform.

The attached papers summarise the pertinent issues for livestock based agro-forestry in Scotland. The most important are that the approach works technically, providing opportunities for quality timber and improved agricultural output, which is exactly the requirement as Scottish farmers decouple from agricultural support, and provide increased public benefit..

The most fundamental need of the new SFGS is to be able to find means to support woodlands within the 'policy gap' of below 1100 stems for hectare and above 50 (the RSS maximum), whether these be for forest environmental measures or new (agro)forestry on agricultural land. Land managers need greatly flexibility, not re-enforcement of old thresholds that have so separated agriculture and forestry, against the strong thrust for better integration within recent policy from FCS.

There are many details of the RDR for which the Forum and its members are happy to await the main RDR consultation, but we request that action is taken now to include agro-forestry in the consultation draft. We understand this takes staff time and resources and the Forum would be happy to assist in any way possible, including drafting text for the consultation draft.

Yours sincerely

Tony Waterhouse, representing the Farm Woodland Forum