

Save Our Forests campaign

Answers to questions tabled in the Scottish Parliament by MSPs Elaine Murray and Peter Peacock

12th. December 2008

Forestry

Elaine Murray: To ask the Scottish Executive whether it has made an assessment of the impact on black grouse in Dumfries and Galloway of leasing out parts of the national forest estate and whether it will publish any such assessment.

Michael Russell: Offering management leases and cutting rights is a potential option for releasing capital from the national forest estate which could be used to fund woodland creation projects to help mitigate climate change. This option is included in a public consultation currently being carried out on *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate*

The consultation closes on 27 January 2009. All responses will be carefully considered and will be taken into account as part of a wider options review being carried out by Forestry Commission Scotland.

No assessment has been made of the impact on black grouse in Dumfries and Galloway. However, the consultation exercise and options review will help inform Forestry Commission Scotland's deliberations on the potential impact on all biodiversity and wildlife within the national forest estate, and this will help determine the range and nature of safeguards to be included in any leases.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive whether it has made an assessment of the impact on fisheries of leasing out parts of the national forest estate in Dumfries and Galloway and whether it will publish any such assessment.

Michael Russell: Offering management leases and cutting rights is a potential option for releasing capital from the national forest estate which could be used to fund woodland creation projects to help mitigate climate change. This option is included in a public consultation currently being carried out on *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate*

The consultation closes on 27 January 2009. All responses will be carefully considered and will be taken into account as part of a wider options review being carried out by Forestry Commission Scotland. No assessment has been made of the impact on fisheries in Dumfries and Galloway. However, the consultation exercise and options review will help inform Forestry Commission Scotland's deliberations on the potential impact on all biodiversity and wildlife within the national forest estate, and this will help determine the range and nature of safeguards to be included in any leases.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive what the income was to Forest Enterprise Scotland from sales of timber in (a) 2003-04, (b) 2004-05, (c) 2005-06, (d) 2006-07 and (e) 2007-08.

Michael Russell: Details of Forest Enterprise Scotland's income from sales of timber in the past five years are listed in the following table:

Income from Timber Sales

Year	Amount
2003-04	£32.3 million
2004-05	£35.4 million
2005-06	£34.9 million
2006-07	£36.7 million

2007-08

£42.1 million

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive what the projected income is to Forest Enterprise Scotland from sales of timber in (a) 2008-09, (b) 2009-10 and (c) 2010-11.

Michael Russell: Details of Forest Enterprise Scotland's projected income from sales of timber in the next three years, as set out in Forestry Commission Scotland's Corporate Plan 2008-11, are listed in the following table:

Projected Income from Timber Sales

Year	Amount
2008-09	£42.8 million
2009-0	£42.6 million
2010-11	£44.0 million

The current economic downturn will, of course, influence these forecasts.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive whether it intends to transfer responsibility for forest planning under the lease arrangements proposed in its paper *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate - Consultation on forestry provision in the Scottish Climate Change Bill*.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive whether it intends to transfer responsibility for upkeep and development of forest roads under the lease arrangements proposed in its paper *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate - Consultation on forestry provisions in the Scottish Climate Change Bill*.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive whether it intends to transfer responsibility for forest protection and maintenance under the lease arrangements proposed in its paper *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate - Consultation on forestry provisions in the Scottish Climate Change Bill*.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive whether it intends to transfer responsibility for management and development of the forest estate under the lease arrangements proposed in its paper *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate - Consultation on forestry provisions in the Scottish Climate Change Bill*.

Michael Russell: Offering management leases and cutting rights is a potential option for releasing capital from the national forest estate which could be used to fund woodland creation projects to help mitigate climate change. This option is included in a public consultation currently being carried out on *Climate Change and the National Forest Estate*

The consultation closes on 27 January 2009. All responses will be carefully considered and will be taken into account as part of a wider options review being carried out by Forestry Commission Scotland. The consultation exercise and options review will help inform Forestry Commission Scotland's deliberations on the detail of lease arrangements, should the option be taken forward.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive how many hectares of new woodlands have been created in each of the last five years by the (a) public and (b) private sector.

Michael Russell: The total amount of hectares of new woodland that have been created in each of the last five years are listed in the following tables. Figures for restocking are also shown.

Public Sector

Year	New Planting	Restocking	Total (1,000 Hectares)
2003-04	0.1	5.3	5.4
2004-05	0.1	6.2	6.3
2005-06	0.1	5.2	5.3
2006-07	-	6.4	6.4
2007-08	-	5.9	5.9

Private Sector

Year	New Planting	Restocking	Total (1,000 Hectares)
2003-04	6.7	3.6	10.3

2004-05	5.6	4.2	9.8
2005-06	3.9	3.8	7.7
2006-07	6.6	6.0	12.6
2007-08	4.2	6.7	10.8

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive what it estimates to be the gross value added from direct visitor spend attributable to woodland visits in the public forest estate.

Michael Russell: The estimated total spend per year by visitors to the national forest estate in Scotland is £38.9 million. This figure was calculated from the All Forests Visitor Monitoring Survey which was carried out between June 2004 and June 2007.

Elaine Murray : To ask the Scottish Executive how many people are employed in the public forest estate.

Michael Russell: The number of staff currently employed by Forest Enterprise Scotland, the part of Forestry Commission Scotland which manages the national forest estate, is 779.

Peter Peacock: To ask the Scottish Executive how many people Forestry Commission Scotland directly employs.

Michael Russell: Forestry Commission Scotland currently has 943 direct employees.