

**Review of the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement: a consultation**

# Respondent Information Form

**Please Note** this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy: <https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Individual

Organisation

Full name or organisation’s name

01796 470080

John Muir Trust

Phone number

Address

Tower House, Station Road, Pitlochry

Postcode

PH16 5AN

rosie.simpson@johnmuirtrust.org

Email

**Information for organisations:**

The option 'Publish response only (without name)’ is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

The Scottish Government would like your

permission to publish your consultation

response. Please indicate your publishing

preference:

Publish response with name

Publish response only (without name)

Do not publish response

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

No

# Annex A – Questions in this consultation

[Q1 Do you think that the revised vision reflects the outcomes that we need to achieve?](#_Toc85815157)

A) Yes B) No C) **To some exten**t D) I don’t know E) I do not have enough information

[Q2 If you have answered ‘no’ or ‘to some extent’, what key changes would you like to see to the vision?](#_Toc85815158)

We certainly welcome the inclusion in the vision of ‘and supports a just transition to net zero’. We have interpreted the reference to ‘natural capital’ as an acknowledgment of the fundamental life-sustaining value of nature. We have answered ‘to some extent’ because we would like to see the sense of fairness, which comes through the principles, more adequately reflected in the vision. Perhaps this could be achieved by adding the word ‘equitable’ into the vision, so it reads ‘A Scotland with a strong, dynamic and equitable relationship between its land and people...’

[Q3 Do you think that the principles are still relevant to current Scottish land issues?](#_Toc85815160)

Principle 1: Yes/**No**

Principle 2: **Yes**/No

Principle 3: **Yes**/No

Principle 4: Yes/**No**

Principle 5: **Yes**/No

Principle 6: **Yes**/No

[Q4 If you think that the principles could be made more relevant, or that there are any issues that they do not address, please outline this. Please make sure you state clearly which existing principle each suggestion relates to, if applicable.](#_Toc85815161)

Principle 1: overall, we agree with this principle, but community interests should be included in principle 1, alongside public and private interests.

Principle 4: overall, we agree with this principle, but we would like to see clearly defined, public standards that all landowners must adhere to. These standards must be set by the Scottish Government. Principle 4 should be referring to these standards to have a benchmark to measure against.

Overall comment: Land valuation, an unregulated land market and the high prices of land in Scotland have a bearing on how effective principle 1 (fulfilling and respecting human rights in relation to land) and principle 2 (a more diverse pattern of land ownership) translate into practice. The speed at which private land purchase can take place can undermine these two principles. The revised Statement could reflect or acknowledge this context more explicitly. Doing so could give the Scottish Land Commission a basis for consulting on new processes or timeframes through which land sales of a certain size or of a certain local or strategic importance must be subject to, ensuring a fairer playing field for land sale transactions in the future for all.

We commend the important work of the Scottish Land Commission in implementing the Statement to date.

[Q5 Do you have any proposals as to how to measure change as a result of implementation of the Statement, including suggestions for indicators of progress? Please provide details.](#_Toc85815162)

Clearly defined public standards, set by the Scottish Government, would provide indicators and help the government to measure progress and change. A measurement could be provided by the amount of land meeting such a standard.

To help track progress against all six principles, landowners or managers should have to provide engagement and consultation plans to Scottish Land Commission prior to land sales and land use changes. We recommend that these be approved by the Scottish Land Commission and made publicly available (which would help to implement principle 5).

[Q6 Do you think that there is a need for regular reporting on implementation of the Principles of the Statement?](#_Toc85815163)

**Yes**/No

[Q7 If you think that there is a need for regular reporting, how do you think this should be done and by whom?](#_Toc85815164)

There should be a statutory requirement for landowners to provide regular reporting.

[Q8 If you would like to submit a case study, please provide details of a specific example. You may submit more than one case study.](#_Toc85815165)

Heart of Scotland Forest Partnership and the Langholm Community Buyout.

[Q9 Are there any changes that should be made to the Advisory notes to make it more clear, relevant or reflective of current context? If your comment relates to a specific principle please flag that.](#_Toc85815166)

[Q10 Do you have any comments on the layout of the Statement?](#_Toc85815167)

[Q11 Please tell us about any sectors you perceive to have lower awareness of the Statement.](#_Toc85815168)

We perceive the private landowning sector as having a lower awareness of the Statement, the Principles and the Protocols. Of course some private landowners are very in tune with land owning rights and responsibilities and leading the way in many respects, but others are not aware nor familiar with what is required of them and undertake next to no consultation. If all land is to contribute to a modern and successful Scotland, we need all landowners to be aware and engaged and to know their responsibilities.

[Q12 Do you have any suggestions of ways to engage with sectors who do not currently see the Statement as relevant to them?](#_Toc85815169)

There is a big emphasis on consultation around changes to land management practices, which is right and proper. But, in the context of the climate and biodiversity crises we all know big changes are required, so there should be some emphasis on landowners that choose to maintain the status quo – that is still an active choice in the face of everything we know about biodiversity loss and a changing climate. People who own land have a natural asset that can contribute significantly to making Scotland a more biodiverse and healthy country in which to live, work, raise a family. There is funding available for restoring habitats and managing land sustainably. There are partnerships and networks of expertise around the country for landowners to acquire knowledge and apply it. Whilst some landowners may face constraints of time, people or finances, this should not get in the way of their engagement with the implementation of the Statement nor prevent communities from being able to comment on their land management.

[Q13 Do you have any ideas for other ways that adoption of the Statement could be promoted?](#_Toc85815170)

[Q14 Are you aware of any examples of how the proposals in this consultation might impact, positively or negatively, on island communities in a way that is different from the impact on mainland areas?](#_Toc85815171)

[Q15 Are you aware of any examples of particular current or future impacts, positive or negative, on young people, (children, pupils, and young adults up to the age of 26) of any aspect of the proposals in this consultation?](#_Toc85815172)

[Q16 Are you aware of any examples of how the proposals in this consultation may impact, either positively or negatively, on those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation)?](#_Toc85815173)

[Q17 Are you aware of any examples of potential impacts, either positive or negative, that you consider that any of the proposals in this consultation may have on the environment?](#_Toc85815174)

[Q18 Are you aware of any examples of how the proposals in this consultation might impact, positively or negatively, on groups or areas at socioeconomic disadvantage (such as income, low wealth or area deprivation)?](#_Toc85815175)

[Q19 Are you aware of any potential costs and burdens that you think may arise as a result of the proposals within this consultation?](#_Toc85815176)

[Q20 Are you aware of any impacts, positive or negative, of the proposals in this consultation on data protection or privacy?](#_Toc85815177)