

10 December 2020

Dear consultation team,

Environment, natural resources and agriculture research - draft strategy: consultation

I am writing in response to the Scottish Government's draft strategy consultation for the next cycle of research on the environment, natural resources and agriculture, which starts in 2022.

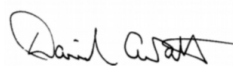
As a group we would highlight three key areas which we feel should helpfully guide future RESAS research priorities. These priorities have been discussed in the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital Steering Group, but should not be taken as representing the views of, or any endorsement by, individual members. As the consultation informs a Scottish Government programme, Forum members who are Scottish Government staff, or research providers, have not contributed to the comments.

- All research priorities should be coherent with: a) Scotland's commitment to reach Net Zero by 2045; b) the First Minister's statement that protecting and enhancing our stock of natural capital is fundamental to a healthy and resilient economy; and c) Scotland's ambitions for a wellbeing economy that promotes the wellbeing of people and planet.
- Research should focus on ways to better incorporate natural capital approaches into decision-making processes, across public, private and voluntary sectors. This is a fundamental question, and one recently relayed to the Scottish Forum, from our annual Public Sector Roundtable with NatureScot.
- Research should be taken forward that enables Scotland to leverage private sector finance for investment in natural capital, as outlined in the '[Route Map to £1 Billion](#)'. The Scottish Forum has established a new working group, the Scottish Conservation Finance Pioneers, with an online collaborative hub on [Basecamp](#). There are a number of potential research opportunities within this space, including delivery mechanisms for individual pillars, and the development of a common metric for our enabling framework. The Basecamp group of 80+ members would be well placed to recommend specific research areas.

We believe that future research focussed in these three areas responds to the needs of government and business and are coherent with current policy priorities for the Scottish Government. That includes our current focus on a "green recovery", and the longer-term climate and biodiversity emergencies.

We hope you will consider our suggestions as important research priorities in the future.

Yours sincerely,



David C Watt
Chair, Scottish Forum on Natural Capital

