



NEWS RELEASE

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SCF PRAISE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT DILIGENCE

The SCF have welcomed the publication of the Scottish parliament Rural Affairs and Environment Committee's report on their Stage 1 scrutiny of the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Bill.

Marina Dennis, Convenor of the SCF crofting reform working group, said "We are pleased that the conclusion is that legislation should proceed. The Parliamentary Committee have clearly put a great deal of effort into the scrutiny of this Bill and reported back with due diligence. The report shows that the committee have listened to what crofters have been saying and have paid attention to the SCF, the crofters' representative organisation.

We are particularly satisfied that they acknowledge that regulation alone will not ensure crofting's viability and that wider issues such as the rural economy, agricultural support and payment for public goods must be taken into account. This reflects SCF assertions and must be integrated in wider policy initiatives such as the Pack inquiry. We have been consistent in saying that there has to be 'carrot' as well as 'stick'.

We are also pleased with the broad agreement on the SCF proposed voluntary community-led mapping which would be a very positive initiative compared to the government suggestion of compulsory 'trigger point' mapping. Democracy is central to this legislation and community involvement in mapping, crofting regulation and the running of the crofting commission is essential.

Ms Dennis continued, "the lack of concurrence between committee members on some important points is disappointing but does show how legislating on crofting is not a simple matter. We urge the committee members to work with the SCF and the government in finding workable and acceptable ways forward for the Bill.

END

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Notes to editors

- The report can be found at:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/rae/reports-10/ruR10-04.pdf>
- Pictures can be found at: <http://www.crofting.org>

