

ANNEX 1 – SNH Core Areas of Wild Land 2013 Map Response Form

Q.1. What is your view on the Core Areas of Wild Land 2013 map?

These days crofters view with great suspicion anything emanating from SNH, however innocent it may seem at first glance. This is especially true for something that could be used in future to impose a further layer of designation and restriction to land use.

Further designations will erode the influence and local control which is essential if crofting communities are to thrive in the future. Contemporary human use can not only include grazing, but peatland, wetland and woodland management, and the creation of new crofts.

Q.2. Do you have specific comments on any of the areas of wild land identified?

A quick look at the SNH map of core areas of “wild land” suggests that vast areas of the crofting common grazings are seen as areas of “wild land” in SNH’s eyes. In fact most of these “wild” areas mapped are found within the Crofting Counties. The reason for wanting to call this land “wild” is unclear and disturbing.

When SNH say “evidence of past and contemporary uses of these areas is relatively light” alarm bells ring. The bulk of this land is not “wildness”, whatever that may be. Very little is as God laid it down, and these areas have been managed and sustained by generations of crofters and their families over centuries, often creating land of High Nature Value because of the human activity.

Q.3. Are there any other issues regarding the Core Areas of Wild Land 2013 map, or its preparation, that you would like to raise?

It is only possible to even think of it as “wild land” because of inappropriate land management policies and lack of investment in our rural economy. Perhaps if the mandarins had bothered to lift their sights above short term budgets and patchwork policy we might actually have a thriving landscape. The current CAP has effectively caused a “retreat from the hills” only for those with alternate interests to now label those same hills “wild”.

As usual it is claimed that these changes will not affect future development but in reality, once approved, they can have a huge impact on what happens in the future. This is, as yet, not “designation” but “advice”. However, once planning authorities have started to use this advice it is a short walk to it becoming “guidance”, which is mandatory and must be followed by public bodies.

This idea of a great untouched “wildness” being good for us is nonsense. When the controlled burning, the grazing, the peat cutting and various other management regimes are stopped, the hills will be covered in whins and bracken, which is not what anyone wants, not even SNH.

In conclusion, crofters think your definition of “wildness” is misguided, misplaced, and offensive.

Respondent Information Form

Please complete the two forms below and return with your consultation response. Your contact details are held solely for the purpose of the consultation.

Name or Organisation	Scottish Crofting Federation
Title	Mr
Forename	Patrick
Surname	Krause
Address	Unit 26 Kyle Industrial Estate, Kyle, Ross-shire
Postcode	IV40 8AX
Email	patrick@crofting.org

Release of information contained in consultation responses

SNH will normally publish all consultation responses we receive, although personal data or other sensitive information will be redacted.

I am responding as an individual. No	I am responding on behalf of a group or organisation. Yes
Do you agree to your name being made available when we publish your consultation response? Yes	The name of your organisation will be published along with your consultation response.