



NEWS RELEASE

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CROFTING FEDERATION JOINS NEW SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROGRAMME FOR CROFTER-LED AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) has joined a funded partnership of seven organisations that is working together to facilitate knowledge-exchange on nature-friendly agricultural practices.

"Low-intensity management of crofting land has significant potential for biodiversity, and, with the right support, crofting can provide a viable and exemplary land use model" said Donna Smith, SCF Chief Executive. "SCF has a strong track record in supporting knowledge exchange and skills development in the crofting counties. We are excited to bring our experience to the partnership and support the development of crofter-led peer-to-peer learning groups and webinars".

The knowledge-exchange project called 'Agroecology: Strengthening Livelihoods' is one of four projects funded by the Scottish Government's Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund (KTIF). The project will run until March 2024, and it involves two general and six regional working groups, as well as a webinar series. The 'Crofting Township Group' in Caithness and Sutherland and the 'Supporting Biodiversity within Island-Based Farming & Crofting Group' on Islay, Jura, Gigha and Colonsay are run by the Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN) with support from SCF. The two crofter-led regional working groups are still open to new applications.

"Sharing local knowledge on interactions between crofting and nature is key to development of diverse crofting businesses," explained Phil Knott, Scotland Vice Chair of the NFFN. "It is also increasingly important in the context of agricultural policy reform which is geared towards climate and biodiversity outcomes. I am looking forward to working with SCF to provide crofters with an inclusive and safe space to revitalise old regenerative practices and to share new ideas".

Ms Smith concluded, "SCF is committed to providing crofters with the tools and knowledge to lead an agenda for sustainable agriculture and food in the Highlands and Islands. Conventional advisory services are simply not enough. Innovative knowledge-transfer approaches are needed for crofters to be able to take on leadership roles. I, therefore, strongly encourage crofters to share their knowledge and take the opportunities provided by this new KTIF-funded project".
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