



MCofS News Release

16th December 2011

For immediate release

No Place for the Mountain Landscape in Scotland's Future Vision

The MCofS believes that unless there is an urgent change of policy, Scotland's mountain landscape will be sacrificed to the interests of energy developers and landowners, due to the UK government's renewable energy policy, and Scottish Ministers' planning policy which currently favours large-scale land-based wind farm developments.

Speaking in advance of The Highland Council's meeting to consider the Allt Duine Wind Farm planning application on 20th December, MCofS President Brian Linington said:

"The MCofS believes that Scotland's mountain landscape is a valuable asset which belongs to the Scottish people. That mountain landscape has a scenic, cultural, economic and iconic value to the Scottish nation, which is worth significantly more than its economic value to renewables investors for power generation developments."

"We are pro-renewable energy and believe that Scotland's renewables targets can be achieved without recourse to the extensive development of mountain areas, areas which have international recognition as landscapes of outstanding natural beauty. Scotland's mountains are a venue for recreation, exercise and a wide range of outdoor sports which are growing in popularity, with consequent benefits for the nation's health and wellbeing, so benefitting the economy long-term through preventative measures which come at no cost to the government."

"They are an asset for the tourism industry with its vital importance to the rural economy, sustainably supporting thousands of local jobs in the Highlands, in comparison to the transient job creation schemes represented by wind farm developments. The mountains benefit the majority, rather than the minority who benefit disproportionately from the profits and subsidies made by and to the multi-national wind power generation industry and landowners; subsidies which are paid for by electricity consumers through increasingly crippling bills."

“Whilst the final decision on Allt Duine ultimately rests with Scottish Ministers, any decision other than rejection of the proposals by the Highland Council will send a clear signal that there is no local opposition to further and extensive wind farm developments in the Monadh Liath Mountains, including those proposed at Corriegarth and Stronelairg.”

“We call on the Scottish Government to recognise the value of our upland landscape and revise its policy of wholesale planning approval for large-scale wind farm developments in the mountains, or be recognised by both the Scottish people and internationally as the decision-makers responsible for permanently scarring Scotland’s wonderful mountain landscapes.”

For further information contact David Gibson on davidg@mcofs.org.uk or on 01738 493 947 or 07845 919 150.

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Notes for Editors:

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering.

MCofS is a membership organisation with 11,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions; non-governmental grants; and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain weather information services, mountain leader training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities. MCofS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.