



## THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND

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9/6/11

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Dear Tom

### **Corrour Long-term Forest Plan - Scoping**

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) is recognised by the Scottish Government as the representative body for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers. We have over 10,000 members, and represent the interests of all approximately 400,000 mountaineers. On behalf of the MCofS, I would like to thank you for consulting with us as the proposal is located in an important area for mountaineering. The landscape quality of this area is high, hence the most landscape-sensitive techniques should be used to achieve objectives. The MCofS welcomes forestry restructuring to enhance landscape and biodiversity. We are also interested in access to and through forestry.

The MCofS is a strong proponent for species and structural diversification, and in general commercial forestry blocks could always contribute more to these aim, but we recognise the balance that is required between public benefits and timber productivity.

We welcome the removal of trees along watercourses in line with the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act (2003). We also welcome the plans for the open and peat areas. We would however urge consideration of removal of the remnant failed and stunted trees that will continue to affect the hydrology of the peat area should they remain. This measure along with drain blocking would greatly benefit the potential restoration of this habitat. The MCofS also welcomes plans for “softer margins,” and believe this measure, if implemented around the whole forest, will make a large contribution to long-term reduction in landscape impacts as well as benefit edge species such as black grouse. The diversification of age classes is also welcomed as is the statement that there are, “no plans to create new roads within this area.”

The scoping report does not however address some important issues. Although we welcome the access-positive statement, we would look for reassurance that during felling operations, access would be retained along the existing popular routes to open hill land. Primarily this is along the track from Fersit towards the east to join the path at approximately NN358779, and on the A86 at NN342830 to continue along the track in the direction of Binnien Shuas diverging from the likely forestry traffic route at NN434828. The issue of fencing also needs addressed, particularly in terms of potential bird strikes from black grouse as marking can have significant landscape implications.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely

Hebe Carus (Ms)  
Access & Conservation Officer