

science policy success



Responding to
Climate Change

Protecting
Biodiversity

Environmental,
Social and
Economic
Sustainability

Health and
Wellbeing

A knowledgescotland conference and workshop

We aim to provide an expert briefing for Scottish Government staff and those working for Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services...and a little science entertainment.

Our Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh

Wednesday 7 October and Thursday 8 October

Admission is free. Choose the sessions that interest you. All we require is your registration. Visit www.knowledgescotland.org or www.scri.ac.uk/events

Conference Guide and Programme

Final Programme Line-Up

Wednesday 7 October

08:45 Registration and refreshments – Ozone and Biosphere

09:25 Welcome – Quentin Cooper – Biosphere

09:30 Session 1

Joining Up Science & Policy

Professor Anne Glover, Chief Scientific Adviser, Scottish Government

Climate Change

Dr Robin Matthews, Macaulay Land Use Research Institute, Aberdeen

Climate change is widely recognised as the most serious environmental threat facing our planet today, and is rapidly becoming an integral part of policy-making and land-use decision-making. There is an urgent need for Scotland to make its contribution to reducing global net greenhouse emissions by moving to a low-carbon economy. In addition, recognising that some climate change will occur even if emissions are successfully reduced, it is also necessary to understand the likely impacts and plan the adaptive responses that will have to be made. The Scottish Climate Change Bill, which received Royal Assent on August 4 2009, sets a target of at least 80% reductions in GHG emissions by the year 2050, an interim target of at least 42% for the year 2020, and annual targets of at least 3% reduction per year from 2020 onwards. In addition, it requires the production of a land-use strategy, which must be revised at regular intervals. The challenge, therefore, is how these ambition targets will be achieved, and understanding the consequences of both climate change and human responses to it for Scotland's environment, land use systems, and rural communities. The session will discuss the policy relevant work in this area being conducted across the research institutes to address the Climate change challenge.

ON STAGE PANEL: Quentin Cooper, Anne Glover, Robin Matthews, Chris Ellis (RBGE) Q&A

11:00 Refreshments, networking, posters & displays – Ozone

11:30 Session 2

Making the Science Policy Connections

Hosted by Ben Craven

In a short space of time, a brilliantly-conceived, embarrassment-free speed-dating service for science and policy

13:00 Lunch, networking, posters & displays – Ozone

14:00 Session 3

Health & Wellbeing

Ron Stagg, Deputy Director, Research and Science Division, Scottish Government - Rural and Environment Research and Analysis Directorate

Professor Harry McArdle, Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health, University of Aberdeen

Scotland produces some of the most nutritious, healthy and high quality food in the world which relies on scientific research being conducted on human, animal and crop health and wellbeing. Paradoxically, the typical diet consumed by a significant proportion of the Scottish population is low in fibre, fruits and vegetables, high in saturated fat and energy, and low in fish and fish oils and is a poor source of vitamins, trace elements and other nutrients. Scotland has one of the highest incidence rates for obesity, heart disease and cancer in the developed world.

This session will be introduced by Professor Peter Morgan (RINH) and will open with a presentation from Dr Ron Stagg (RERAD) describing the importance and timeliness of high quality research to Scotland's Food and Drink policy. Professor Harry McArdle (RINH) will then describe the policy relevance of the current work carried out on human, crop and animal health and wellbeing under this theme and how each of the research providers is making a contribution. The major focus of this talk, and of a subsequent panel discussion/QA session with the speakers and representatives from all the MRPs, will be on how Scottish Government-funded research across the Institutes is evolving and the impact this will have on the health of the Scottish people.

ON STAGE PANEL: Quentin Cooper, Peter Morgan, Ron Stagg, Harry McArdle , Professor Willie Donachie, Moredun Research Institute Q&A

15:30 Refreshments, networking, posters & displays – Ozone

16:00 Keynote address

Science and Government in Partnership

Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Minister for Environment.

16:30 (approx) Session 4

Have I Got Science News for You!

A Science – Policy Entertainment!

18:00 Closing statements by the conference chair

Thursday 8 October

08:45 Registration and refreshments – Ozone and Biosphere

09:25 Welcome – Ken Rundle, SAC – Biosphere

09:30 Session 5

What is our common future?

Professor Paul R. van Gardingen

Director, Edinburgh International Development Centre, University of Edinburgh.

Sustainability

Professor David Hopkins, SCRI, Invergowrie

The long-term viability of farming and food production in Scotland depends on the sustainable management of our agricultural habitats. Over the past half a century, intensification of food production has led to the systematic erosion of biodiversity and the habitats degradation in many parts of the world. This has raised serious concerns about sustainability and long-term food security, particularly where intensive management has had negative impacts on the functioning of agricultural systems. In the present context, sustainability is the ability of a system to maintain stable food production and quality in the long-term without escalating requirements for agrochemical inputs to regulate the system. To achieve this, the habitat should be able to support stable populations of a range of food plants and livestock as well as indigenous communities of plants, animals (invertebrates and vertebrates) and microbes that perform essential system functions including decomposition and nutrient cycling, detoxification of chemical deposits, pollination, the control of crop pests and diseases, and provide sensitive indicators of change. As biodiversity is lost and these processes degrade, ever more inputs are required to compensate.

ON STAGE PANEL: Ken Rundle, Paul van Gardingen, David Hopkins

Q&A

11:00 Refreshments, networking, posters & displays – Ozone

11:30 Session 6

How can we improve the way we communicate complex and controversial science and science-supported policy to the public?

The Word on the Street

A short film by Gareth Jones, Glasgow Caledonian University

Don't shoot the Messenger

Lesley Riddoch, Author and Broadcaster

ON STAGE PANEL: Ken Rundle, Lesley Riddoch, Gareth Jones

Q&A

Thursday 8 October (contd.)

13:00 Lunch, networking, posters & displays – Ozone

14:00 Session 7

Biodiversity and Scotland's landscapes

Professor Des Thompson, Scottish Natural Heritage
Dr Rob Brooker, Macaulay Land Use Research Institute, Aberdeen

Biodiversity is our shared natural wealth generated over 3.8 billion years of evolution. Biodiversity is essential to maintaining healthy landscapes that deliver ecosystem services. However, biodiversity is a globally threatened resource. This session will start with a presentation by Prof. Des Thompson, SNH, on the importance of - and specific threats to - Scotland's biodiversity, and the research challenges that we face in conserving it. This will be followed with a presentation by Dr Rob Brooker to explain work currently being undertaken across the MRPs to address the conservation challenge. Dr Brooker will also explore the areas that we might target through future research, setting the scene for a panel discussion/Q&A session on the needs for future research work in this field.

ON STAGE PANEL: Des Thompson, Rob Brooker, Davy McCracken Q&A

15:30 Refreshments, networking, posters & displays – Ozone

16:00 Session 8

Scotland and the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Dr Ian D. Edwards, Head of Exhibitions and Events, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Dr Edwards will outline some of the expected Scottish highlights of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity which will be launched in January at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. He will also look forward to the programme of events at the newly opened John Hope Gateway building.



17:00 Closing statements by the conference chair

Evening reception organised by the British Ecological Society (Registration required)

The reception will be held at Our Dynamic Earth, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh on 8 October 2009.
17:00 – 19:00.

The purpose of the reception is to celebrate the work of ecologists in Scotland, many of whom will be members of the BES, and to forge links between ecologists and policy-makers. We are fortunate that Roseanna Cunningham, Minister for the Environment at the Scottish Government, Professor Anne Glover, Chief Scientific Advisor, and Professor Maggie Gill, Head of RERAD, have agreed to join us at the event.



Royal Botanic Garden
Edinburgh

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