

East Loch Lomond Management Forum

A photograph of a deer standing in a field of tall grass, looking towards the camera. The deer has a brown coat with a white patch on its hindquarters and small antlers. The background is a blurred landscape with green fields and distant hills.

Part 1: Deer Management Working Plan 2019 - 2024

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1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of the LMP

The purpose of the East Loch Lomond Land Management Forum (LMF) is to provide a round table forum to discuss the opportunities for a collaborative approach to aspects of land management on the east side of Loch Lomond, and the potential to achieve landscape scale delivery on a number of projects. Each land manager will have their own specific outcomes, but will co-ordinate delivery in order to achieve joint outcomes and efficient use of resources. Of particular interest is deer management, which is delivered on a collective basis, in accordance with the Scottish Government strategy (Scotland's Wild Deer: A National Approach, 2008), and the Code of Practice on Deer Management (The Deer Code 2012).

1.2. Land Management Plan Structure

- a) Part 1: **The Working Plan:** This Working Plan sets out the most up to date information on deer culls, counts and population targets as well as specific actions the Land Management Forum (LMF) will undertake throughout the life of the plan. The Working Plan will be reviewed at least annually, with a systematic review of the whole plan taking place at the end of the five year period.
- b) Part 2: **Land Management Plan Information.** This sets out background information in general, and also details the Public Interest and Actions to be carried out specifically relating to Deer Management. Information on individual landholdings is also contained here.
- a) Part 3: **Group Operation.** Contains information relating to the Operation and Functioning of the LMF.

2. Forum Objectives and Targets

- 1. To have implemented collaborative land management to ensure Designated Sites are in Favourable/Unfavourable Recovering Due to management status.

Within the LMF boundary, there are three main environmental objectives:

- a) To deliver favourable or recovering condition on designated sites.
 - b) To manage existing and new native woodland, as well as improving woodland condition where these are being impacted by deer.
 - c) To manage impacts in the wider non-designated area such as peatland.
- 2. Reduce deer populations to a sustainable level that meets the forums objectives.

3. Deer Counts

The ELL LMF is a new group with new members and new boundaries; historically however there was a previous DMG. Please note that the DMG and LMF have different MU's and boundaries. The DMG was roughly half the size (~16,000 ha) of the current LMF. Drawing comparisons between the DMG and LMF will not lead to like-for-like discussions.

Table 1: Count data for Red Deer on the Open Range.

Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	TOTAL
2000	382	1296	532	2210
2002	189	531	247	967

1.3. 2019

Helicopter

In March 2019, a helicopter count was conducted and lead by FLS over the area to the east of Loch Lomond and south of Loch Katrine - only open ground was counted.

Table 2: 2019 Helicopter Count of the open area immediately to the east of Loch Lomond.

Area	Stags	Hinds	Calves	TOTAL
Comer	9	317	81	407
Drumlean	10	171	65	246
South Loch Katrine	3	77	40	120
Montrose East to Ben Lomond	10	182	81	273
Total	32	747	267	1046

Foot

In January 2019, a thermal deer presence/absence count was carried out over a small sub-section of the boundary. The resulting data was not a record of deer density, but merely recording the presence or absence of deer, giving a 'snap-shot' picture of one night only. The full report can be requested by contacting SNH. A summary of the results is below:

- No Red deer were recorded, and only 14 Roe deer were recorded in total.
- These deer were all recorded between Milarrochy Bay and Salloch; no deer were recorded north of this point.
- There were large sections of the very dense woodland which were left uncounted as a result of being confined to the WHW path. In part, this may explain the low numbers of deer recorded in relation to the vast area covered. Alternatively, perhaps there were actually just very few deer, as the FES stalker has previously reported culling heavily in this area; he has reported that deer are now quite difficult to find.

Map 1: Locations and numbers of deer counted.



Table 1 links to the map above and shows the number of deer recorded at each location.

ID ref	Buck	Doe	Kid	Unclassified
1		2		
2		3		
3	1			
4		2		
5				1
6				1
7	1			
8				1
9				2
Total	2	7	0	5

4. Cull data

Table 3: Cull Returns from LMF Members

Year	Red				Roe				Sika	Goats	Fallow
	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Bucks	Does	Kids	Total	Total	Total	Total
2014-15	294	373	236	903	171	183	88	442			
2015-16	313	261	220	794	132	144	95	371			
2016-17	316	334	215	865	115	158	102	375			
2017-18	547	553	302	1402	198	250	134	582			
2018-19	403	478	271	1152	166	229	134	529	1	27	2
2019-20	348	340	161	849	147	171	101	419	2	49	3

Over the last 5 years, 95% of the Red Deer cull within the LMF area has been achieved by Forest & Land Scotland (FLS).

Table 4: Cull Returns for the Landholdings which are not yet part of the LMF

Year	Red				Roe				Sika	Goats	Fallow
	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Bucks	Does	Kids	Total	Total	Total	Total
2014-15	33	40	13	86	3	3	1	7			
2015-16	16	15	8	39	1	1	2	4			
2016-17	7	6	3	16	0	1	0	1			
2017-18	30	10	6	46	4	7	2	13			
2018-19	15	0	0	15	0	1	1	2	1	0	
2019-20	TBC										

The table above displays cull data for landholdings within the LMF boundary which do control deer, but they have not yet joined the LMF. Appendix A has a map showing the locations of these landholdings.

PUBLIC INTEREST ACTIONS

5. Actions to ensure Deer Welfare

Actions to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual animal and population level	When	Who	How
Agree and adopt welfare policy (Part 3 of the Plan)	Autumn 2019	LMF Members	Implemented through every day Best Practise in deer management
Monitoring and reporting of significant levels of winter mortality	Ongoing	LMF Members	Deer managers will provide information (figures and location on winter mortality)

6. Actions to control establishment of Non-native Species

Actions to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species	When	Who	How
Record invasive plant species and encourage their control	Annually	LMF Members	Members will inform DMG of invasive plant species at annual meetings and will report on control undertaken
Muntjac Deer managed as per the Non-native Species Policy (part 3 of this plan)	Ongoing	LMF Members	Members will contact local SNH Wildlife Management Officer immediately on suspected sighting of Muntjac
Sika Deer (as well as Feral Pigs and Goats) managed to prevent their establishment within the LMF area (and managed as per the non-native species policy, part 3 of this plan)	Ongoing	LMF Members	Members will report sightings to the LMF and will prevent their establishment.

7. Actions to develop mechanisms to manage Deer

Actions to develop mechanisms to manage deer	When	Who	How
Forum will encourage representation from the LMF at local community meetings.	Annually	LMF Members	The LMF will send a willing representative to attend relevant local community meetings
Final Plan and Minutes of meetings will be made publicly available and published on LDNS Website.	Winter 2019 and ongoing	LMF Secretary	Lowland Deer Network Scotland or LLTNPA Website
Group will carry out a review of deer movement within the LMF	Summer 2019 and ongoing	LMF Members	Deer count data from early 2019 will be reviewed (if any).
Working plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Management actions will be adjusted and agreed accordingly.	Annually	LMF Secretary and Members	Provision of data from LMF members in advance of and during annual meetings. Secretary will update Working Plan.
Culls of all species of deer will be delivered and reported on accurately. Cull targets will be set and agreed based on information relating to habitat condition, population census, deer welfare and any other additional information.	Annually	LMF Secretary and Members	Together the Forum will agree on future cull targets, and deliver them accordingly

8. Actions for Competence and Training

Actions to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management	When	Who	How
LMF will adopt the training policy statement (Part 3 of this plan)	Summer 2019	LMF Members	Adopted as part of the LMF
Ascertain training levels among LMF Members and report on progress on an annual basis.	Autumn Annually	LMF Secretary	All members asked to provide an initial summary of staff qualifications to LMF Secretary. Verbal report at Spring meetings.

9. Actions to ensure effective Communications

Actions to ensure effective communication on deer management issues	When	Who	How
Agree and adopt a LMF Communication Policy	Summer 2019	LMF Members	Adopted as part of LMP
LMF Constitution and ADMG Principles of Collaboration adopted (Part 3 of this plan)	Summer 2019	LMF Members	Adopted as part of LMP
Stakeholders consulted on draft plan	Summer 2019	LMF Secretary	Relevant stakeholders identified and invited to consult. Interested parties invited to attend a consultation meeting.
Final Plan and minutes of meetings will be published on LDNS or LLTNPA Website.	Winter 2019	LMF Secretary	LDNS or LLTNPA Website

10.Actions to protect designated historical and cultural features

Actions to protect designated historical and cultural features from being damaged by deer	When	Who	How
Identify any features within LMF area that may be impacted on by deer	By end of 2019	LMF Members	LMF members to report at Winter meeting on features identified.
If features identified, ensure the appropriate management is implemented and report to DMG.	Ongoing	LMF Members	Verbal report/update to LMF

11.Actions to maximise economic benefits associated with deer.

Actions to maximise economic benefits associated with deer	When	Who	How
Investigate opportunities for more effective collection of carcass and negotiation of prices. Members to seek opportunities to market venison locally.	Annually	LMF Members	LMF to discuss opportunities for development of venison processing facilities with FCS.

12.Actions to minimise the economic costs of deer

Actions to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective	When	Who	How
Implement actions to mitigate against DVC hotspots including localised deer management, use of signage, fencing etc.	Ongoing	LMF Members	Where hotspots occur, LMF to discuss appropriate actions at meetings.

DMG to consider the future costs of maintaining fences and financial provision for repairs	Ongoing	LMF Members	Those responsible for fences report on current condition and likely repair timetable
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13.Actions to identify and promote public health

Actions to identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing	When	Who	How
Investigate opportunities for awareness raising/educational events for the local community	Ongoing	LMF Members	LMF will explore opportunities to deliver/assist with events.
Raise awareness of threats relating to Chronic Wasting Disease and sign up to CWD Biosecurity Policy	Ongoing	LMF Members	LMF Members to raise awareness of CWD with clients and visitors from USA, Canada, and Norway.

14.Actions to improve Carbon storage and ecosystem health

Actions to improve Scotland's ability to store Carbon by maintaining or improving ecosystem health	When	Who	How
Using revised BPG set up plots and carry out a baseline habitat impact assessment (HIA) of the current grazing and trampling impacts on blanket bog and native woodland.	Spring 2020	LMF Members	As per Actions for woodland and managing impacts in the wider countryside. Members to provide existing survey reports or conduct baseline monitoring and reports
Potential areas for Peatland Restoration identified and options for Peatland restoration or management through P.A.F. promoted to LMF Members.	Ongoing	Everyone in the LMF	Members to use Blanket Bog monitoring results as well as assistance from SNH to I.D. opportunities for Peatland Restoration.

15.Actions to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside

Actions to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside	When	Who	How
Repeat HIA and management actions agreed	Summer 2022	LMF Members	Members will collect repeat monitoring data. Consultant will provide assistance with data analysis and the production of the report.
Using revised B.P.G undergo training, set up plots and carry out a baseline HIA of the current grazing/trampling on blanket bog and dwarf shrub heath.	Summer 2020	LMF Members and Consultant	Source a consultant to work with LMF to set up random plots and to provide assistance with data analysis and the production of a report.
Summary of habitat assessment results reported to LMF. Targets and management actions to be agreed.	ongoing	LMF Members	LMF will agree management decisions based on HIA reports

16.Actions to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve woodland condition

Actions to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve woodland condition	When	Who	How
For properties with SRDP Natural Regeneration Schemes in place, provide evidence of woodland condition in the form of an appropriate survey report if available.	By 2021	LMF Members	Woodland Survey Reports
To identify additional schemes which will contribute further to the national target.	By 2023	LMF Members	Members will consider new scheme and update the LMF with any plans

17.Actions to demonstrate DMG contribution to the S.G. woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover

Actions to demonstrate DMG contribution to S.G woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover	When	Who	How
To inform the LMF about any future woodland proposals and incorporate in the DMP - taking account of potential implications for deer management	Ongoing	LMF Members	Members will circulate/present proposals to LMF for discussion.

18.Actions to achieve Favourable Conditions for Designated features

Actions for the delivery of designated features into Favourable Condition	When	Who	How
Trossachs Woodland SAC: Increased deer management is required to work towards Favourable Condition.	Ongoing	Drumlean Estate & FES	The SAC is in a poor state due to high grazing pressure from deer; increased effort is required.
Rowardennan Woodland SSSI: FLS To continue to implement deer management; current status is Unfavourable Recovering	Ongoing	FLS	F.E are in the process of producing a new deer management plan.
Craig Royston Wood SSSI: Current management action required to maintain the status of Unfavourable Recovering Due To Management	Ongoing	FLS; and LLTNPA	Deer and Goats are the problem; FE will need to cull more - probably in the winter when there are less visitors to the area.
In areas where Designated Sites are believed to be under threat, to foster cooperation between neighbouring estates to manage deer numbers and densities as appropriate.	Ongoing	All DMG Members	Deer managers will communicate on an on-going basis with regards to deer movements and identify opportunities for collaborative management.

Properties to continue to target deer management on sensitive areas to reduce localised impacts.	Ongoing	All DMG Members	Deer managers will use local knowledge to target deer management where required.
Drumore Woods SSSI: FES to continue to implement deer management.	Ongoing	FLS	Katy Anderson of FES is currently re-writing the management plan for the site. She advises that FES needs to increase culling of red/roe.
Fairy Know and Doon Hill SSSI: FES will continue to manage this site; it is currently Unfavourable Recovering.	Ongoing	FLS	FES do have a woodland management plan in place, but will have to re-assess if higher cull targets should be implemented.
Gartfarran Woods SSSI: A significant increase in culling is required to bring this feature to Favourable Recovering.	Ongoing	Land owner Callum Hastie	Callum and/or his stalker should be culling substantially more Red/Roe deer in this SSSI. Suggested shoot on site policy.
Ben Lomond SSSI: FLS To continue to implement deer management; current status is Unfavourable.	Ongoing	National Trust Scotland &FLS	FES Cull on behalf on NTS. Culling on the open hill is near impossible, so FES will continue to focus efforts on the lower woodland area.

19. Monitoring and Review Schedule

Actions	Who?	Year 1 (2019-20)	Year 2 (2020-21)	Year 3 (2021-22)	Year 4 (2022-23)	Year 5 (2023-24)
Habitat Training	LMF Members		Summer			
Habitat Monitoring Blanket Bog	LMF Members		Spring			Summer
Habitat Monitoring Dwarf Shrub Heath	LMF Members		Summer			Summer
Habitat Monitoring Native Woodland Review	LMF Members			Summer		
Woodland Expansion Review	LMF Members					Summer
Review Habitat Results	LMF Members	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Set and agree Culls	LMF Members	Late Spring	Late Spring	Late Spring	Late Spring	Late Spring
Collate LMF information and review working plan actions	LMF Secretary	Bi-annually	Bi-annually	Bi-annually	Bi-annually	Bi-annually

1.4. Appendix A: Landholdings Map

Map 2: Landholdings who do control deer, but are not yet part of LMF.

Landholdings not yet part of the LMF (but they control deer)



East Loch Lomond Management Forum

Part 2: Land Management Plan Information



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May 2020

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1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of the LMP

The overall purpose of this Plan is:

- a) To provide a round table forum to discuss the opportunities for a collaborative approach to aspects of land management on the east side of Loch Lomond.
- b) To explore the potential to achieve landscape scale delivery on a number of projects.
- c) Of particular interest is deer management, which we deliver in a collective basis.

1.2. Land Management Plan Structure

- a) Part 1: ***The Working Plan***: This Working Plan sets out the most up to date information on deer culls, counts and population targets as well as specific actions the Land Management Forum (LMF) will undertake throughout the life of the plan. The Working Plan will be reviewed at least annually, with a systematic review of the whole plan taking place at the end of the five year period.
- b) Part 2: ***Land Management Plan Information***. This sets out background information in general, and also details the Public Interest and Actions to be carried out specifically relating to Deer Management. Information on individual landholdings is also contained here.
- a) Part 3: ***Group Operation***. Contains information relating to the Operation and Functioning of the LMF.

1.3. Land Management Plan Implementation

The Plan will identify specific actions for the Forum and targets to be delivered by 2024. These will be reviewed on an annual basis in the Working Plan. The LMF require information gathered from habitat monitoring, population census and cull reporting to agree and set culls on an annual basis using population modelling. Each management unit (i.e. landholding) is committed to implementing the necessary culls to achieve this; though it is accepted that there may be specific geographical areas within the LMF where deer management requires more focus. Collaboration is at the heart of the Forum; together we will deliver the objectives of the plan through meeting regularly to discuss land & deer management issues that arise in the local and wider area.

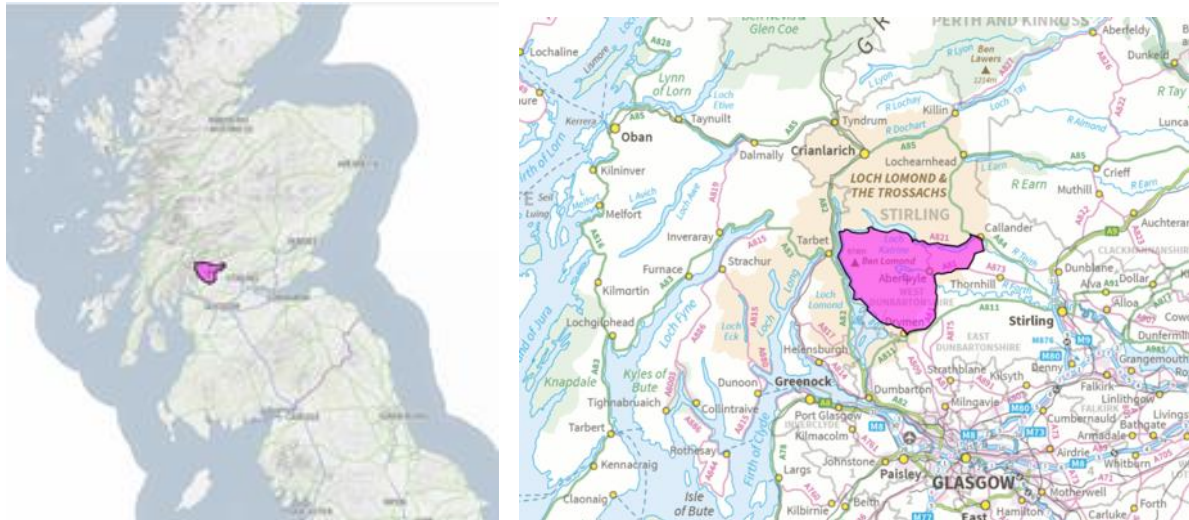
1.4. Land Management Plan Adoption and Consultation

This Land Management Plan has been formally adopted by all the Members of the Forum and will run from 2019 to 2024.

1.5. East Loch Lomond Land Management Forum

The East Loch Lomond Deer Management Forum (LMF) lies in central Scotland within the Stirling Region (Map 1). The Northern boundary stretches to Loch Arklet and Loch Katrine; the A821 and A81 mark the Eastern boundary, whilst the B837 and A811 mark the South. The Western boundary is dictated completely by the Eastern banks of Loch Lomond, running from Drymen to Inversnaid.

Map 1: Maps showing LMF Location within Scotland



1.6. Landholding/Management Units

The LMF covers an area roughly 32,000 ha and consists of 11 key memberships. Please refer to the map and table below, which illustrates each member's main objectives and landholdings. Holdings may be represented by more than one individual to cover the range of issues being discussed – the aim is to keep numbers to a minimum to keep the group manageable and focussed. Additional interested parties and their representatives may be invited to attend as required/suggested in advance of the following meeting. The working of the Forum will be guided by the LMF Plan, with actions points and strategies arising from that. At this moment in time there are no subscription fees for the Forum.

Map 2: LMF Boundary

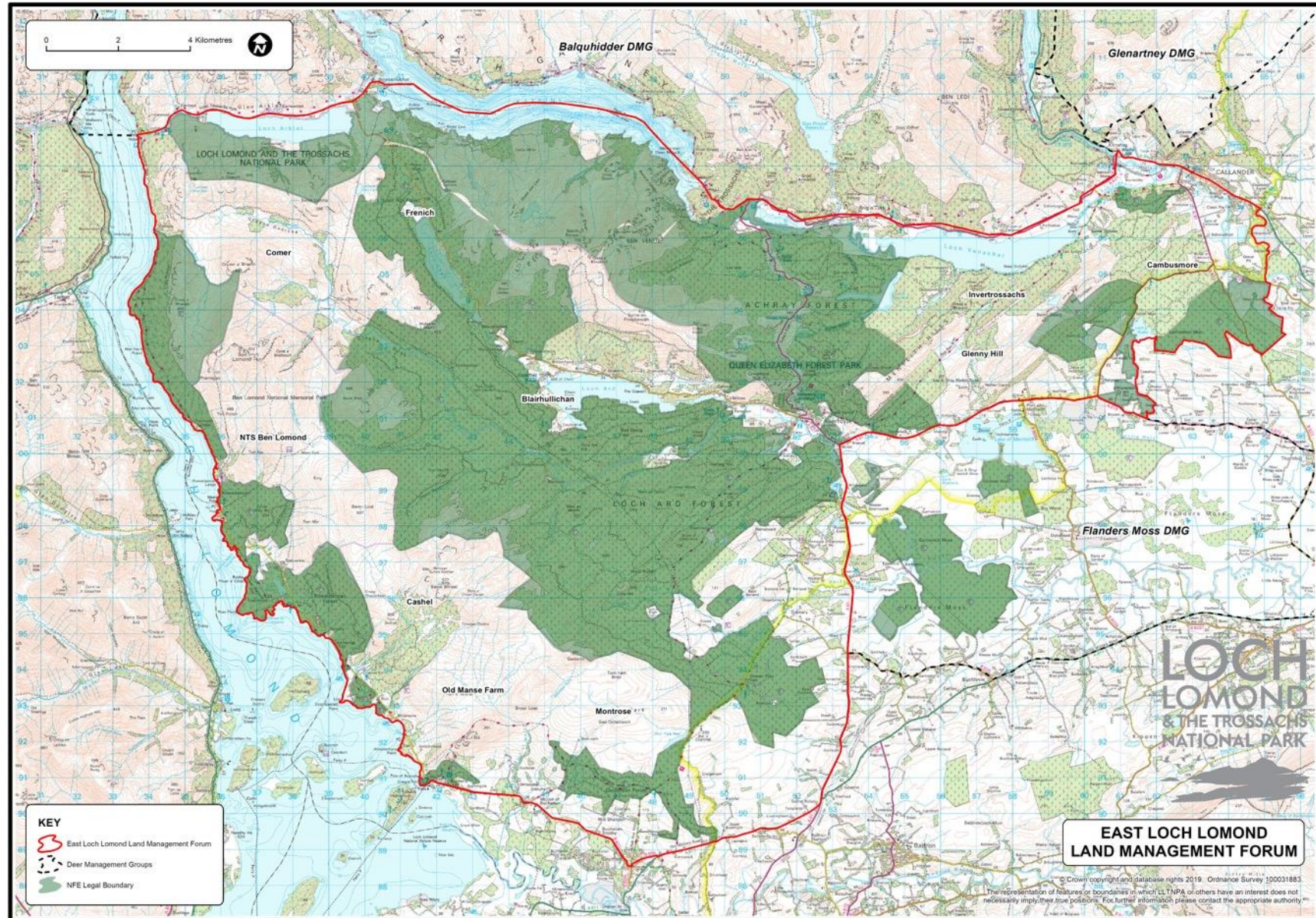


Table 1: LMF Members and their Management Objectives

Property	Main objective	Size (ha)
Montrose Estate	Montrose Estates runs a diversified rural business which contributes to strengthening the local community and the environment, presently underpinned by agriculture, renewable energy (hydro), leisure activities and some policy and commercial woodlands.	~392
Cashel Glen	Lying centrally within the Cashel property, Cashel Glen is Conifer Plantation owned and managed by Fountains Forestry Limited.	~76
Cashel	The long-term aim is “to demonstrate the restoration and regeneration of Scotland’s native woods through sound forestry practice for the benefit of the public.”	~1143
Frenich	A selection of 3 Holiday Cottages for rental.	~21
Invertrossachs	Family run country house offers a high standard of comfort in self-catering apartments located in the north wing of the Country House.	~868
Glenny Hill	Self-catering Holiday Cottages, Cattle Grazing and AECS	~887
NTS Ben Lomond	Protect the Natural and Cultural Heritage of Ben Lomond and ensure has the opportunity to enjoy and experience the mountain, whilst continuing to support local livelihoods.	~2268
Comer	Sale on Comer fell through (April 2020)	~2308
Old Manse Farm	Agriculture, livestock farming.	~2379
Blairhullichan	Self-Catering Holiday Cottage.	~19
Cambusmore	TBC	TBC
National Forest Estate	Timber production.	TBC

1.7. Sustainable Deer Management and the Public Interest

The management of deer at a landscape population level as set out in the Code of Practice on Deer Management (The Deer Code) <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/code-practice-deer-management> requires a collaborative approach. Deer are regarded as a natural resource and as such all those who manage them have a ‘responsibility’ to:

- a) Manage deer as a resource sustainably;
- b) Minimise negative deer impacts on public interest;
- c) Safeguard deer welfare;

The deer management objectives of members of the LMF currently contribute to delivering a wide range of public benefits as set out in The Deer Code. This plan will demonstrate how the LMF is currently contributing to sustainable deer management and will identify further opportunities to deliver the Public Interests.

2. Deer Populations, Movements and Management

2.1. Counts and Culls

Historically a DMG operated across the East side of Loch Lomond until 2002. Ultimately the DMG disbanded as a result of lack of local private interest; leaving Forest Enterprise Scotland and Deer Commission Scotland to pick up the pieces. When FES decided to step down from the Secretarial role, the DMG became defunct. Also around this time, FES carried out some major culling operations in this FES district that helped reduce the deer population at the time. This probably reduced the general feeling of need for a formal DMG to be in place.

The members of the LMF feel that the data collated by the old DMG is no longer of relevance, and as such we will not be using this historical data. Instead, we shall gather our own data and start with a fresh baseline. However, for the reader's consideration, we have archived the DMG data into the Appendix.

Due to the nature of the habitat, it is difficult to generate a reliable population estimates, however if and where possible and where resources allow, the LMF will attempt to count deer by foot, land vehicles, or helicopter.

The LMF will instead focus on habitat regeneration as the indicator of the herbivore population. Cull targets will thus be generated based on information gathered from habitat monitoring (Habitat Impact Assessments). It is accepted that there may be specific geographical areas within the LMF where deer management requires more focus.

At present, HIA results are not available for all landholdings; this is the information that we need to tailor our cull efforts. In the meantime, whilst we wait on the HIA updates, it is suggested that each landholding continues to cull at least as many deer as it has currently done in recent years.

2.2. Herbivore Impact Assessments

HIA methodology varies depending on the habitat; the following is an explanation of Woodlands HIA. 'Assessing Herbivore Impacts in Woodlands: A Subjective Method (Armstrong *et al* 2014)' is a method of assessing and monitoring the impact of large herbivores (cattle, sheep, deer, goats, pigs, horses) on habitats that are already wooded or may develop woodland. The method is subjective in that it is based on observations, not detailed measurements. Instead it depends on the observer paying close attention to the overall appearance of the habitat as well as to particular indicators within the habitat. The method is suitable for land managers wishing to monitor herbivore impacts on a regular basis with the aim of adjusting herbivore pressure, either by deer culling, or by adjusting the stock grazing regime, to achieve a particular woodland condition target.

The method described here involves looking at:

1. **woodland structure**
2. **current herbivore impacts**

Both of these indicators need to be determined whether or not the woodland is currently in an acceptable condition since, as well as helping to assess current condition, they will help to gauge how it might change in the future under current grazing /browsing levels. **Woodland structure** reflects current and past impacts on the woodland, including those of large herbivores, and is a good indicator of current habitat condition. **Current herbivore impacts** play a major role in determining how the woodland is going to change in the future. Current impact is normally, and most easily,

assessed on the most recent season's plant growth. If grazing (by domestic stock and /or deer) is occurring all year round, and the objective is to assess the pressure, overall grazing then the assessment should be carried out at the end of winter before new spring growth has started.

- The results of an HIA are recorded on a scale from **'no impact' to 'very high'**.
- Results from any future HIA will be analysed and compared against known cull data for the area. This will highlight any particular problems or hotspots that should be targeted. This information will be critical to inform annual cull targets.

Table 2 displays the results of WHIA conducted at the Designated Sites within the LMF.

Designated Site	2008	2015	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fairy Knowe	L/M	H	M	N/A	N/A	M/H
Doon Hill	L/M	H	N/A	H	N/A	M/H
Drumore Wood	N/A	M/H	N/A	M	N/A	N/A
Craig Royston Wood	N/A	H	N/A	N/A	H/VH	N/A
Rowardennan Salloch	N/A	L/M	N/A	N/A	L	N/A
Rowardennan Cashel	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	L	N/A
Rowardennan (Northern Strip)	N/A	VH	N/A	N/A	M	N/A
Conic Hill – Coille Ghlas	N/A	L	N/A	N/A	M/H	N/A
Conic Hill - Arrochymore	N/A	M	N/A	N/A	L	N/A
Gartfarran Woods	N/A	N/A	N/A	H	N/A	N/A
Cuilvona and Craigmore	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	M/H	N/A

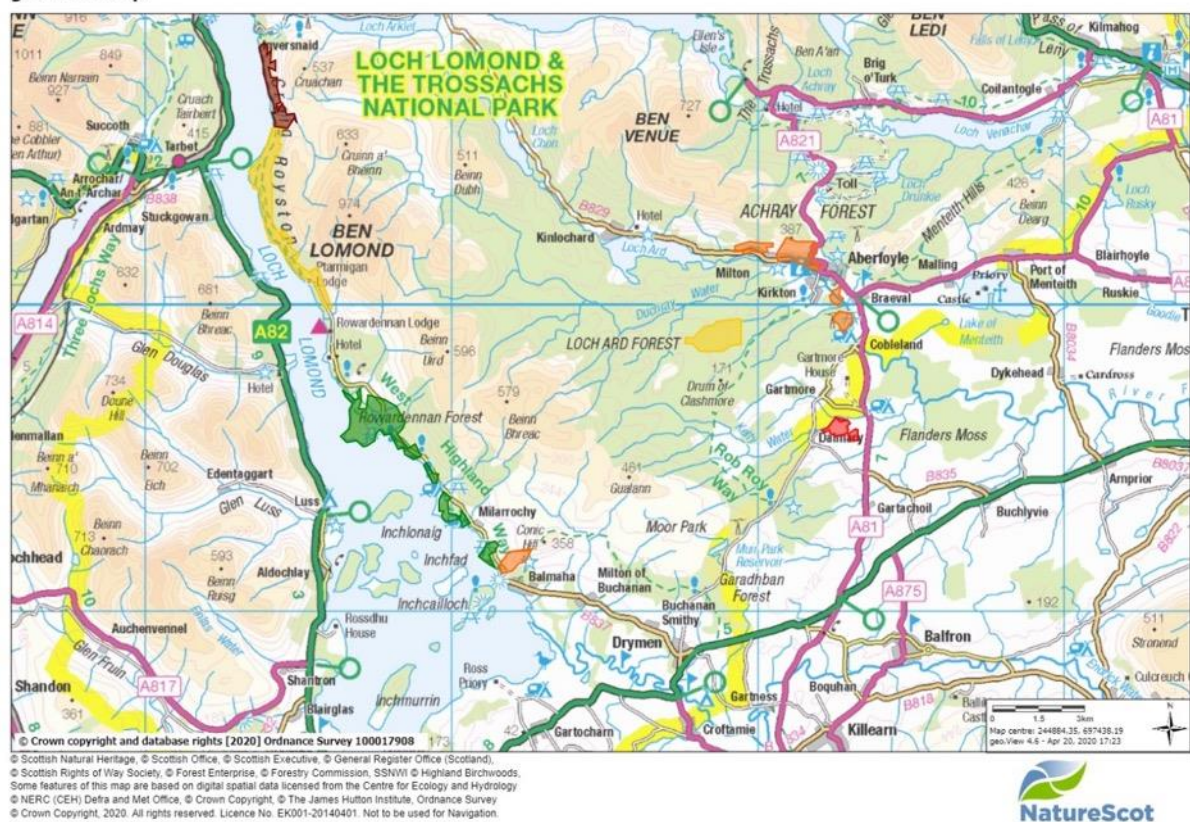
Only a score of 'Low' is considered acceptable. Therefore, all designated sites have failed their HIA.

As it currently stands (at May 2020) the LMF does not have HIA results for all landholdings. Moving forward it is vitally important that all landowners are conducting their own H.I.A for their respective habitats (as we will be basing deer management decisions on these results).

Map 3: HIA results of the designated sites within the LMF boundary.

The map below can be updated with results of future HIA at each landholding.

geo.View map



2.3. Other Herbivore Pressures

Across the forum area the level of livestock grazing is variable.

Currently, livestock are managed as follows:

- NTS Ben Lomond: Tennant grazing business carrying 1000 ewes plus followers on the hill, and 50 Galloway cattle plus followers on the lower slopes.

Additional herbivores across the LMF include Feral Goats, potentially Feral Pigs, Mountain Hares and Brown Hares. Feral goats roam along the Eastern banks of Loch Lomond, and are confirmed between Rowardennan to Glen Falloch. There is also another population of goats around the area of Loch Katrine.

3. Actions to ensure deer welfare is taken fully into account at individual animal and population level.

3.1. Background

The definition of welfare in relation to wild deer is 'concern for their physical and psychological well-being'. This definition refers to both the individual animal and at population level. Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance states that with increasing intervention (e.g. fencing, supplementary feeding, and culling) comes increasing responsibility for their welfare.

Fencing

The exclusion or prevention of deer movements to areas of natural areas of shelter in winter through the erection of enclosures or use of a strategic fence may pose a threat to welfare.

Supplementary Feeding

Within the LMF only Comer provides some level of supplementary specifically for deer.

Winter Mortality

Members should monitor and report any significant levels of winter mortality to the Forum, as well as any significant health issues encountered. It is considered that mortality within the forum is approximately 10% for calves, 5% hinds and stags.

3.2. Plan Objectives

LMF will promote and safeguard deer welfare through effective planning and the carrying out of deer management activity to Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance industry standards.

3.3. Current and future Delivery.

Members will continue to monitor and report on levels of winter mortality as well as any other significant health issues encountered.

4. Actions to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species

4.1. Background

Following the Ice Age (~10,000 years ago) after the ice melted, all plants and animals that were established in the UK were termed Native Species. An Invasive Non-native Species is any non-native animal or plants that have the ability to spread and cause damage to the environment, the economy, our health or the way we live.

Within the LMF there are several INNS both in terms of plants and animals. Animal wise, the LMF will focus on Sika and Muntjac deer. There are very low numbers of Sika deer within the immediate LMF area; recently there was 1 Sika shot at Blarnaboard in 2017/18. There has been no recorded sighting of Muntjac. With regards to INNS plants, the main concerns are Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, and American Skunk Cabbage. These plants have a patchy distribution across the LMF area.

4.2. Plan Objectives

LMF aim to reduce or mitigate the risk of establishment of invasive non-native species of deer (Sika and Muntjac) as well as plant species too.

4.3. Current Delivery.

The LMF reports on any sightings/culling of Sika & Muntjac.

Individual Landholdings currently treat plant INNS, but the LMF aspires to greater collaboration.

5. Actions to develop mechanisms to manage deer

5.1. Background

LMF is newly formed having been in operation since February 2017 and meets regularly. The landholdings in the LMF are a mixture of publicly and privately owned but are managed for a wide range of objectives. On all landholdings conservation is a common objective, but deer are also managed as a resource. Other objectives include farming and livestock production, forestry and tourism. To manage deer populations at a landscape scale, a collaborative approach is required and the need to negotiate and compromise may be necessary.

Deer have the potential to impact (positively and negatively) on many of these LMF's objectives, and collaborative deer management at a landscape level is essential. Future management will be informed through a combination of Habitat Impact Assessment and opportunistic deer counts from individual MU (report all finding to the Forum). Annual Deer counts would be a welcome source of data, but this is near impossible due to difficult terrain and dense woodland cover.

5.2. Plan Objectives

The Land Management Plan will aim to identify specific actions to deliver local public interest and ownership objectives. The LMP should also ensure that representation and Membership of the LMF enables greater integration of different land-uses at a local level.

5.3. Current Delivery.

The LMF currently works in Partnership with Government Agencies (SNH & FES) and the Local Community. Cull targets are set and reported on annually. There is also regular dialogue between members at other times of the year and particularly at the time of the Spring Count and at the end of the stag season.

6. Actions to contribute to delivering higher standards of competence in deer management.

6.1. Background

The LMF has to be realistic and understand that we are a new forum and it will take time for us to contribute and achieve all of our objectives. The LMF recognises the importance of delivering higher standards of competence in deer management via:

- promoting and offering opportunities for Members to take up formal training opportunities;
- facilitating continuous professional development activities;
- Ensuring Wild Deer Best Practice guidance is adopted in deer management activities throughout the LMF.

6.2. Plan Objectives

In the short term the LMP is to ascertain training levels among Forum members; in the longer term we may consider developing a training policy and programme.

6.3. Current Delivery

Currently 100% of individuals involved in practical Deer Management have DSC Level 1 and 2.

7. Actions to ensure effective communication on deer management issues.

7.1. Background

Effective collaborative deer management requires effective communication on deer management issues both within the LMF and throughout the wider community to promote better awareness and education of deer and deer management.

7.2. Plan Objectives

To ensure that the LMF is inclusive, open, transparent and that local issues have been addressed. LMP will include a Communications policy to encourage a) participation, b) collaboration, and c) communicate the public benefits being delivered via deer management activity. LMF Constitution will set out methods for resolving disagreements.

7.3. Current Delivery.

The LMF works in partnership with SNH, FCS, Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, the Local Community and visitors.

8. Actions to protect designated historic and cultural features from being damaged by deer e.g. by trampling.

8.1. Background

Within the LMF boundary there are numerous sites of historic and culturally significant features. Deer can affect these sites both positively and negatively. Red deer particularly, because of their size and herding behaviour, are the species with most potential to cause negative impacts to these sites. Historic and cultural features within the landscape are important to the forum and the forum undertakes to protect these from negative impacts by deer. Within the LMF area there are 5 Category A scheduled monuments; 32 Category B scheduled monuments; and 59 Category C scheduled monuments;

8.2. Plan Objectives

The Plan is to consider deer management actions which contribute or impact on delivery of conserving and enhancing the local cultural and historic landscape.

8.3. Current Delivery

The LMF is currently unaware of any cultural or historic features that are being impacted on by deer.

8.4. Targets to be delivered by 2024

Targets to be delivered can be found in Part 1 of this LMP.

9. Actions to maximise economic benefits associated with deer

9.1. Background

Wild deer are considered a resource and can play an important role in promoting and sustaining economic activity, especially in rural areas where they can contribute to businesses, particularly stalking, tourism and food production. Properties within the LMF have a range of land management objectives; common to all, is the need to balance strong conservation objectives whilst maximising the potential value of deer as a resource – through stalking, tourism and venison production.

9.2. Plan Objectives

The long term plan is to identify the economic interests of LMF ownership, and identify opportunities to maximise these including employment, stalking, tourism, venison.

9.3. Current Delivery

There is an extremely minimal sporting interest with only a few stags shot for profit.

All properties use local services in the surrounding area - such as shops, fuel, hotels and B&Bs, local tradesmen.

Over 90% of the culling is done on management of conservation.

Venison sales to Highland Game are ~£100,000

10.Actions to minimise the economic costs of deer, and ensure deer management is cost-effective

10.1. Background

Whilst wild deer may be considered an important economic resource, they can also create costs to other land-use objectives, particularly impacting negatively on agriculture and forestry. Deer Vehicle Collisions may also incur an economic as well as a social cost.

10.2. Plan Objectives

The LMP will seek to minimise the economic cost of deer through identifying issues and implementing management to reduce or mitigate deer impacts where this results in an economic cost. Opportunities to work collaboratively to reduce these costs will be identified and actioned. LMF will monitor for DVC's within its boundary.

10.3. Current Delivery

The B837 road from Drymen leads towards Rowardennan and Ben Lomond, and is the only road that runs parallel to the Eastern bank of the loch. This road can be extremely busy during the summer with tourist but there have only been 14 DVC's since 2005; averaging 1 per year.

A very short section of the A811 Glasgow to Stirling road runs along the South Eastern edge of the boundary. Since 2005 there have only been 7 DVC's.

The A81 Balfron to Aberfoyle road runs along the Eastern boundary has had 6 DVC's since 2005.

The A821 Aberfoyle to Brig O' Turk road runs along the North Eastern edge of the boundary, there have been 7 DVC's since 2005.

The B829 Aberfoyle to Stronachlachar road, which runs past Loch Ard towards Loch Katrine, has only had 2 DVC's in since 2005.

11.Actions to Identify and promote health and wellbeing.

11.1. Background

Deer are of great social and cultural value to Scotland. As one of Scotland's top iconic wildlife species they provide a range of benefits, for example through their contribution to tourism and people's enjoyment of the outdoors. Venison is also a healthy meat enjoyed by many. The LMF area is a popular tourist destination; wildlife tourism and the provision of accommodation in particular are important to the LMF properties as well as the local economy as a whole.

11.2. Plan Objectives

The long term aim is to:

- Identify and promote opportunities contributing to public health and wellbeing benefits associated with deer and deer management;
- Identify, raise awareness and where possible minimise the local health and safety risks;
- Identify and increase the opportunities for people to enjoy and benefit from deer;
- LMF should raise awareness of road safety issues associated with deer to reduce the risks of road traffic accidents.
- Co-ordinate action to minimise deer-related human disease risks;

11.3. Current Delivery.

Access is promoted across LMF and up to date information is provided in the Table 7 of the Heading for the Scottish Hills website.

The LMF lies within the Loch Lomond National Park which attracts around 1,000,000 visitors per year. It is not surprising that the numerous walks, core paths, scenic routes, and hills are heavily used.

Tick awareness is already discussed with estates and staff on all estates. Tick information provided for holiday cottage visitors and by Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park (LLTNP) at car parks.

LMF collectively signed up to principles of Best Practice which provides guidance on safeguarding public safety and food safety.

LMF currently actively promotes positive deer management throughout the area. LLTNP provides talks to local visitors and hosts schools visits as well as providing wildlife viewing opportunities.

12.Actions to improve carbon storage and ecosystem health.

12.1. Background

Carbon rich soils and peatland areas provide multiple benefits, e.g. good water quality, biodiversity, and climate change mitigation. Soils are the main terrestrial store of carbon in Scotland, and Peatlands hold most of our carbon store. Blanket bog and Lowland Raised bog habitat is a type of peatland found in Scotland. Scotland holds a significant proportion of the European and world resource. It is one of the most extensive semi-natural habitats in Scotland, covering some 1.8 million hectares, 23 % of our land area. Growing trees is another way to increase the natural carbon reservoir. There is an estimated 50 mega-tonnes of carbon locked in Scotland's vegetation, most of it being held in natural woodland and forest plantations. Woodland and forest currently cover over 1.3 million ha in Scotland.

12.2. Plan Objectives

The LMF wishes to implement actions to deliver optimum habitat condition for carbon capture and storage. Our long term plan is to acknowledge all contributions to carbon storage through woodland and peatlands within the boundary. The plan will identify opportunities to secure carbon by quantifying areas of Blanket Bog which could be restored by drain blocking and through the re-profiling and revegetating of haggard peat.

12.3. Current Delivery

LMF manages around 16,559 ha of woodland and an area of approximately 3,029 ha of blanket and/or raised bog has been identified within the LMF Area.

LMF has undergone Habitat Monitoring Training and Blanket and/or raised bog is one of the habitats that the LMF will be including in the monitoring programme.

13.Actions to monitor and manage deer impacts in the wider countryside

13.1. Background

The LMF area has several Habitats with characteristics of conservation importance (blanket bog, coarse grass, heather moor, montane vegetation). Peatland/Blanket Bog and heather moorland are two of the habitats which Scottish Natural Heritage has recommended for monitoring for herbivore grazing and trampling impacts. The LMF will monitor herbivore impacts within its boundary in order to contribute to ecosystem health.

13.2. Plan Objectives

The aim is to implement a programme of herbivore impact assessments across the LMF to better inform future deer management. As a guideline, on designated sites the targets set by SNH are for 90% of survey samples (overall impacts: grazing/browsing and trampling) to be in the range of Low category.

13.3. Current Delivery.

Not all of the landowners have been trained in HIA. It is a priority of this plan to ensure that all members are competent to carry out HIA as soon as possible.

NTS Ben Lomond have previously carried out HIA in 2013, and have ongoing monitoring of upland heath.

14.Actions to manage deer to retain existing native woodland cover and improve

14.1. Background

The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) was published in 2014. It maps non-designated native woodland cover, reports condition and highlights herbivore impact which threaten medium to long term condition of these important woodlands. Wild Deer- A National Approach (WDNA) has set a national target that 60% of native woodlands should be considered to be in “satisfactory condition” by 2020. The Total area of native woodland across the whole of Scotland is 311,153 ha. 46% is currently in satisfactory condition – 143,163 ha; 54% is in unsatisfactory condition – 167,990 ha. To reach the WDNA 60% satisfactory target, Scotland needs an additional 14% improvement - 43,529 ha.

The NWSS has identified 5,325.7 ha of native woodland within the LMF boundary area. This represents 1.7% of the total area of native woodland in Scotland. According to the survey, 4,589.1 ha (86%) of the herbivore impacts from NWSS were considered to fall in the Low to Medium impact category within the LMF area.

14.2. Plan Objectives

Long term, the LMF Members will implement management to reduce the proportion of native woodland area identified within the ‘High’ and ‘Very High’ categories of herbivore impact in order to contribute to targets set by Scottish Government Agencies. The LMP will identify all existing woodland and its condition and will consider actions for the next 5 years to ensure that the long-term woodland objectives can be met. In the short term, the LMF will identify additional schemes which will contribute further to the national target.

14.3. Current Delivery

NTS Ben Lomond: SRDP payments claimed by the tenant business are keeping a further 400 ewes off the land to benefit moorland management.

15.Actions to demonstrate LMF contribution to the Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover.

15.1. Background

Woodland and forest cover over 1.3 million ha in Scotland. The Scottish Government woodland expansion target of 25% woodland cover will require 10,000 ha of woodland per year to be created. The LMF area covers some 32,000 ha with significant opportunity to contribute to the delivery of this target; this could be achieved through identifying areas for further woodland creation and managing deer impacts to allow for successful establishment of new woodland. Priority should be given to expansion opportunities where this improves habitat networks. It is expected that the LMF will be proactive in contributing to this target.

15.2. Plan Objectives

The Plan will identify all new woodland and the potential for any new proposals likely to be adopted during the life of the plan. LMF will consider future impacts of woodland expansion and timetable for removal/erection of fences, and possible expansion/reduction of deer range, where there may be changes in deer densities or movements as a result.

15.3. Current Delivery.

There is considerable woodland already present within the LMF boundary due to the significant efforts in the past of a number of properties; this includes both native woodland, commercial and amenity woodland.

NTS Ben Lomond: Approximately 25-30ha of natural regeneration woodland expansion has been/are in progress since 1986, 1998, and 2010. There are plans for a further 25ha in the future.

16.Actions to achieve Favourable Conditions for Designated Features.

16.1. Background

Across Scotland, within the current DMG network, there are around 356 designated sites (15.8 % of the total) where herbivores impacts are contributing to the unfavourable condition of their features. A Scottish Government target aims to achieve 80% of features in Favourable or Unfavourable Recovering condition by 2020.

The LMF area has 8 Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designations and 2 Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

- Craig Royston SSSI (93ha, which falls within Comer)
- Ben Lomond SSSI (2,374 ha, which falls within FCS Rowardennan and NTS Ben Lomond)
- Rowardennan Wood SSSI (496 ha, which falls within FCS Rowardennan)
- Conic Hill SSSI (60ha, which falls within Buchanan Castle)
- Gartfarran SSSI (36 ha)
- Drumore Woods SSSI (120 ha, which falls within FCS Duchray)
- Fairy Knowe and Doon Hill SSSI (42 ha, which fall within FCS Loch Ard)
- Trossachs Woods SAC (377 ha). Not all of the SAC is within the LMF boundary, but the sections relevant to the LMF fall within Drumlean Estate, FCS Achry & Braeval, FCS South Loch Katrine.
- Loch Lomond Woods SAC (1450 ha, which is spread along the eastern bank of Loch Lomond from Comer to Buchanan Castle).

Table 3: Designated features with potential herbivore impacts

Designated Feature	Site	Feature	Reporting Condition
SSSI	Craig Royston	Upland Oak Woodland	URDT
SSSI	Ben Lomond	Subalpine Dry Heath	Unfavourable Recovering
		Upland Assemblage	Unfavourable
		Vascular Plant Assemblage	URDT
		Snowbed	Unfavourable
SSSI	Rowardennan Wood	Upland Oak Woodland	Unfavourable Recovering
SSSI	Conic Hill	Upland Oak Woodland	Favourable
		Wet Woodland	Favourable
SSSI	Gartfarran	Lowland Neutral Grassland	Unfavourable Recovering
		Wet Woodland	Favourable Declining
SSSI	Drumore Woods	Upland Oak Woodland	Unfavourable Recovering
SSSI	Fairy Knowe and Doon Hill	Upland Oak Woodland	Unfavourable Recovering
SAC	Trossachs Woods	Western Acis woodland	Unfavourable
SAC	Loch Lomond Woods	Craigroyston, Rowardennan, and Conic Hill are incorporated in this SAC, and are discussed above.	N/A

16.2. Plan Objectives

The LMP will incorporate agreed management actions to manage deer impacts to delivering favourable condition on designated sites in the area. The LMF will monitor and review progress.

16.3. Current Delivery.

There are 10 designated sites within the LMF area and all of them have at least one feature which is considered to be in “Unfavourable” condition. The table below touches on some of the actions required to improve the status of the designated sites. For a full list of actions and remedies you may contact SNH.

16.4. Targets to be delivered by 2023

Targets to be delivered can be found in Part 1 of this LMP.

17. Appendix

17.1. Historical DMG Count Data

The following information is from the Historical DMG, and has been included within the Appendix for the reader's general interest. Like for like comparisons should not be drawn between the DMG and LMF.

Map 4: displaying the Historical DMG of East Loch Lomond

It is apparent that the DMG boundary was substantially less than the LMF.

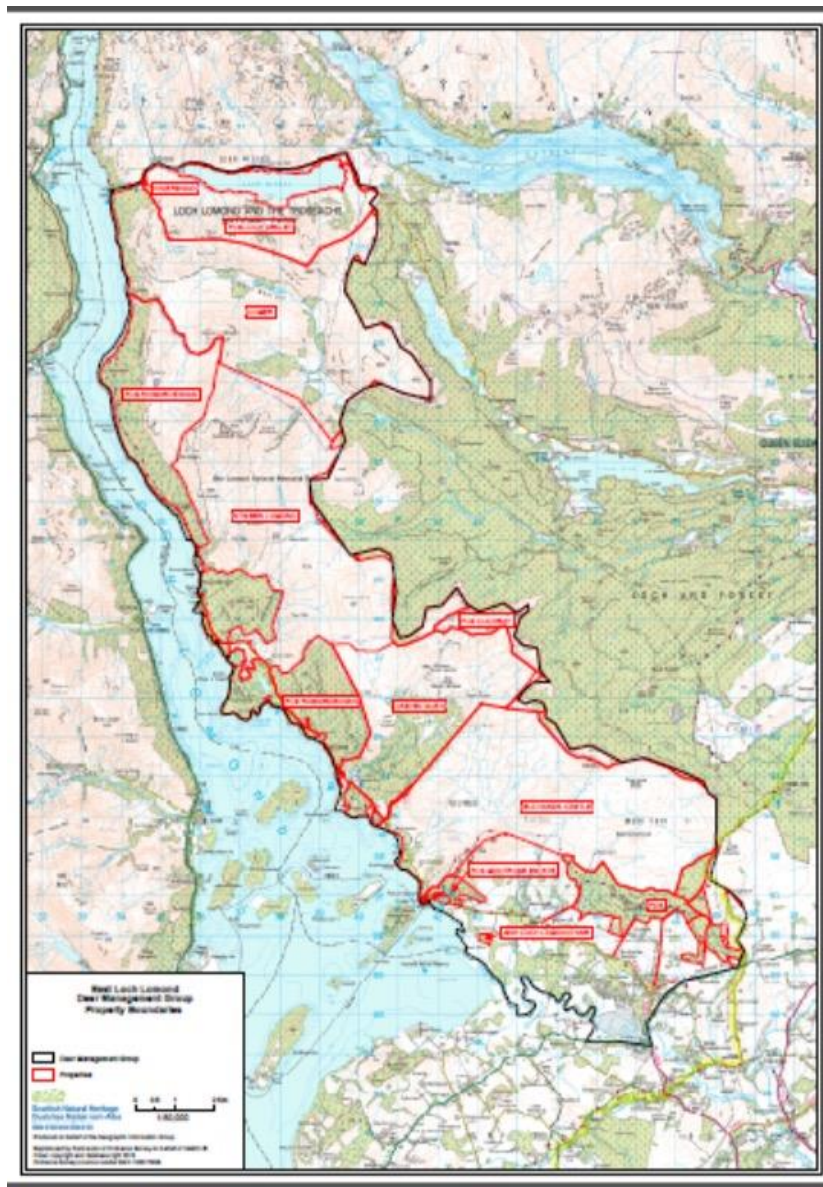


Table 4: Historical Helicopter Deer Counts (Red Deer)

Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Density
2000	382	1296	532	2210	15.7
2002	189	531	247	967	6.9

Table 5: Count by Management Unit -Historical Helicopter Deer Counts 2000 (Red Deer)

Estate/ Unit	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Deer Density/ km ²
Buchanan Castle	21	100	50	171	7.3
Cashel Glen	14	78	33	125	10.8
Comer	122	163	77	362	15.5
Drumlean	23	96	39	158	22.9
FE Shady Glen	38	180	59	277	100.4
FE West Achray	13	50	18	81	13.5
FE31	49	137	55	241	4.5
FE32	2	81	35	118	55.9
FE33	1	2	2	5	62.1
FE36	0	58	27	85	12.9
NTS Ben Lomond	55	145	54	254	11.2
South Loch Katrine	44	206	83	333	11.8
Grand Total	382	1296	532	2210	15.7

Graph 1: Stag and Hind Count by Management Unit from old DMG (2000)

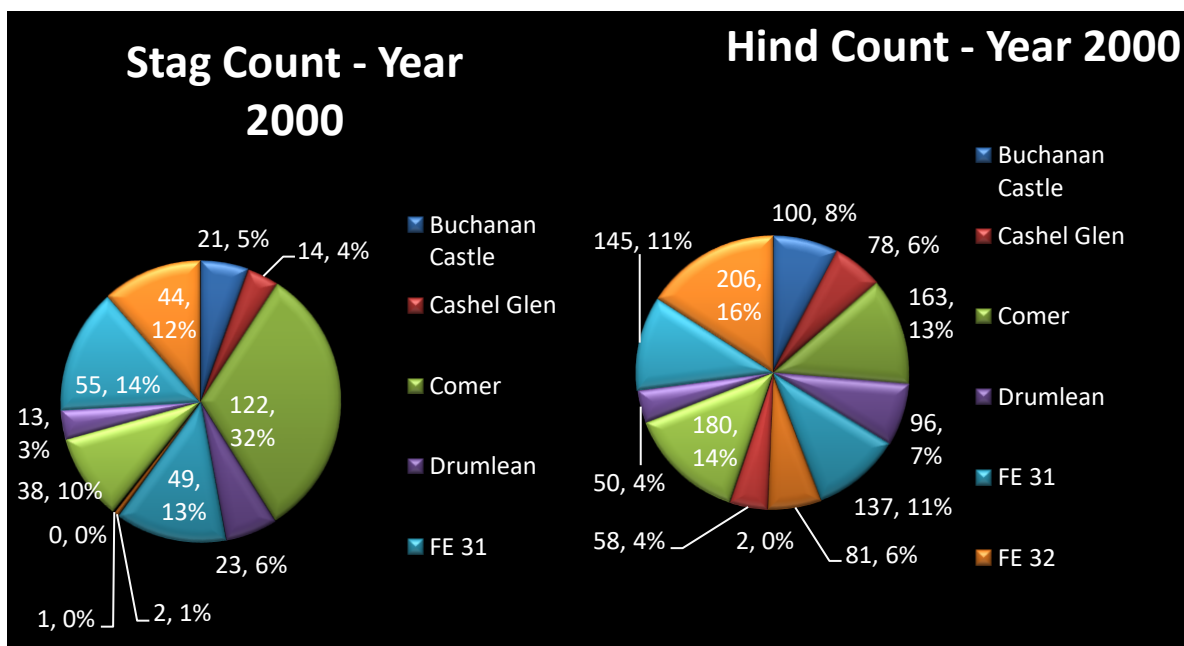
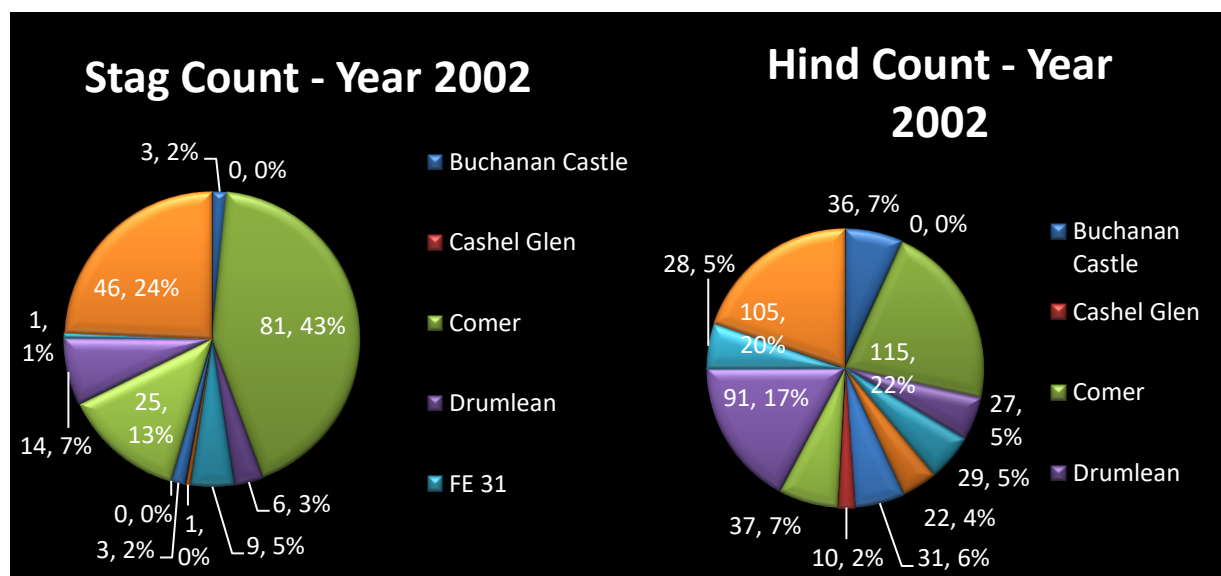


Table 6: Count by Management Unit - Historical Helicopter Deer Counts 2002 (Red Deer)

Estate/ Unit	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total	Deer Density/ km ²
Buchanan Castle	3	36	15	54	2.3
Cashel Glen	0	0	0	0	0.0
Comer	81	115	46	242	10.4
Drumlean	6	27	16	49	7.1
FE Shady Glen	25	37	13	75	23.8
FE West Achray	14	91	36	141	4.7
FE31	9	29	19	57	40.9
FE32	1	22	18	41	9.2
FE33	3	31	11	45	16.8
FE36	0	10	4	14	22.4
NTS Ben Lomond	1	28	14	43	1.9
South Loch Katrine	46	105	55	206	7.3
Total	189	531	247	967	6.9

Graph 2: Stag and Hind Count by Management Unit from old DMG (2002)



17.2. Historical DMG Cull data

The data below was lifted from SNH's deer-line database (cull return data base). It is worth mentioning that the old DMG had numerous small Management Units, whereas the current LMF currently has 12 Key Memberships encompassing far larger landholdings. Collating the data for the old DMG was extremely challenging as several MU's were eventually amalgamated together. The cull historical cull returns below should act as an approximate estimate.

Table 7: Historical Deer Culls (Red) 2005 -2014

Year	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Total
2005-06	63	80	49	192
2006-07	67	77	40	184
2007-08	69	64	36	169
2008-09	45	88	42	175
2009-10	66	136	50	252
2010-11	10	14	4	28
2011-12	318	322	197	837
2012-13	376	408	260	1044
2013-14	246	307	198	751

Table 8: Historical Culls for Roe Deer

Year	Buck	Doe	Kid	Total
2005-06	13	26	3	42
2006-07	19	36	9	64
2007-08	11	30	7	48
2008-09	19	21	10	50
2009-10	10	76	30	116
2010-11	6	4	4	14
2011-12	135	92	75	302
2012-13	119	139	48	306
2013-14	154	156	51	361

East Loch Lomond Management Forum

Part 3: Group Operation



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May 2020

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1. LMF Targets and Objectives

The purpose of the East Loch Lomond Land Management Forum (ELLMF) is to provide a round table forum to discuss the opportunities for a collaborative approach to aspects of land management to the east of Loch Lomond, and the potential to achieve landscape scale delivery on a number of projects. Each land manager will have their own specific outcomes, but will co-ordinate delivery in order to achieve joint outcomes and efficient use of resources. Of particular interest is deer management, which we deliver in a collective basis, in accordance with the Scottish Government strategy (Scotland's Wild Deer: A National Approach, 2008), and the Code of Practice on Deer Management (The Deer Code 2012).

There are 3 Parts to the LMF's plan:

Part 1 – Summarises the Working Plan

Part 2 - Sets out our targets and objections in detail

Part 3 – Lays out the Group Operation.

2. Planning, Reporting & Meetings

Meetings will be held 3-4 times a year.

An agenda will be circulated one week beforehand along with an update paper from each agency providing progress on current work. Following a meeting, Minutes will be circulated to all member and attendees. As the Forum matures, we may make use of a website, where all minutes and important information will be available to the public. The spring and autumn meetings shall focus on Deer Management: Culls achieved against cull targets; deer numbers based on latest counts, any updates on planned counts for the year ahead. Working Groups can be established to deal with specific issues / visit sites and meet more frequently with summary notes of meetings provided to the group. We will have a rotating Chair and meeting place, to ensure a fair distribution of responsibility. The Land Management Forums Plan will be delivered through the **actions** set out in **Part 1: The Working Plan**.

3. LMF Constitution

East Loch Lomond LMF, as of July 2019, is not a constituted Deer Management Group (DMG). The Forum does not currently operate a Paid Membership system; though this could change in the future.

4. Land Management Plan: Update and Review

The Land Management Plan provides an agreed framework for a coordinated and co-operative approach to various aspects of land management on the east side of Loch Lomond.

At the Forums spring and autumn meetings, the implementation of the Plan will be reviewed, with scope for the Membership to adjust and adapt the Working Plan as required. A review of the entire Land Management Plan will be conducted in 2024.

5. WDNA: The Deer Code & Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance

Deer Management: Forum members support and fully endorse:

- a) The Scottish Governments long term vision for sustainable deer management, as laid out in "Scotland's Wild Deer – A National Approach".
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/scotlands-wild-deer-national-approach>
- b) Code of Practice on Deer Management (aka The Deer Code)
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/code-practice-deer-management>
- c) Wild deer Best Practice Guidance
<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-wildlife/managing-deer/scotlands-wild-deer-national-approach>

6. Dispute Resolution

All Forum members are encouraged to deal with disputes in the first instance with those parties concerned. If unresolved, the Chairman of the Forum will seek to facilitate an agreement. This may involve the opportunity to air relevant issues at a meeting of the Forum. A request to do this should be made in writing at least four weeks prior to any meeting.

7. Culling Operations

Collaborative deer management relies on the accuracy of reporting culls. Open discussion of culls may be required at all meetings.

All LMF members agree to make sufficient resources available to carry out the culls outlined in this plan; and should be willing to assist their neighbours culling should they have the extra resources to achieve this.

8. Information Gathering: Deer Count Protocols

It has been agreed that where possible, the LMF will continue to count deer by foot, land vehicles, or helicopter. This will provide consistent deer count data across the Forum area. An indication of winter mortality will be provided for each management unit along with cull returns for the spring meeting of the Forum.

9. Information Gathering: Cull and Larder Information

Members will complete their annual returns (which is a statutory requirement). For the purposes of population modelling, the deer population will largely be treated as a whole. An annual cull will be agreed by Forum members to reflect the interests of individual and the forum as a whole.

10. Information Gathering: Habitat Monitoring Protocols

The LMF will be expected to manage localised deer impacts to deliver and sustain the good condition of a range of designated and non-designated habitats. Within the LMF boundary, there are three main environmental objectives:

- a) To deliver favourable or recovering condition on designated sites.
- b) To manage existing and new native woodland, as well as improving woodland condition where these are being impacted by deer.
- c) To manage impacts in the wider non-designated area such as peatland.

Habitat Impact Assessments are a tool which the Forum can use to monitor the long term health of the habitat to inform deer management. The HIA methodology would follow Best Practice Guidance Habitat Impact Assessment. These guides describe the methods used by SNH (and other agencies) to monitor deer impacts.

11. LMF Policies and Principles

11.1 Principles of Collaboration

Members of the LMF have a shared commitment to promoting and protecting the opportunities that result from a collaborative approach to land management on the east side of Loch Lomond. We will remain respectful of each other, and acknowledge that we have a diversity of land management objectives. We will communicate clearly and openly, and where an area of disagreement arises, we will work to resolve this.

11.2 Culling Policy

We are aiming to establish an overall population target ratio of approximately 1: 1 stags to hinds. Culling policy may vary from management units and this will be determined by factors such as expertise and resource. The goal is to reduce deer populations to a sustainable level that meets the forums objectives. Best Practise should be implemented at all times.

11.3 Competence Policy

Members of the LMF recognise the need for deer to be managed by trained personnel. An approved qualification such as the updated Deer Stalking Certificate Level 2 is the most robust way in which stalkers can show that they have the appropriate knowledge. As a minimum, each management unit, and any other individual involved in the culling of deer, will have or will have access to an individual

with the above qualifications. The LMF adheres to the Wild Deer Best Practice Guidance to safeguard public safety, food safety and deer welfare.

11.4 Communications Policy

Members of the LMF will promote effective communication on deer management issues in order to raise better awareness. Where possible, we will seek opportunities to promote deer management through training, educational or awareness raising events. The LMF will ensure that contact details are available for anyone seeking information or wishing to raise concerns. Should a website be created, it will be regularly updated and be open and transparent.

11.5 Non-Native Policy Sika & Muntjac

There are **no** areas within the LMF where Sika deer are recognised to be established but members will seek to prevent their further establishment where possible. There have been no records of muntjac within the LMF area. Should a muntjac be reported, they will be managed in accordance with the [Non-Natives Species Code of Practice](#).

11.6 Welfare Policy

Members of the LMF will promote and encourage the safeguarding of deer welfare both at individual and species levels. As a Forum we aim to ensure that the natural habitat supports good welfare through the provision of adequate habitat and shelter. Any land management operation has to consider any associated effects to deer. The LMF promotes training stalkers to DCS level 2, and always follows Best Practise.

11.7 Policy for Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a highly contagious and fatal transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) disease that affects deer (it is not known to affect humans). Chronic wasting disease is a notifiable disease; if you suspect it you must tell your nearest [Animal and Plant Health Office \(APHA\) office](#) immediately. Failure to do is an offence. For information on how to spot CWD see <https://www.gov.uk/chronic-wasting-disease> As of December 2018 there is no evidence of TSE in deer in the UK.

12.Venison Production

The LMF currently has no collective approach to carcass collection with each property making their own arrangements with a variety of Game Dealers.

13.Information Management and Data Protection Policy

The LMF is subject to General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDP) which regulates the use of "personal data". "Personal data" covers any data that can be used to identify a living individual including their name and address, telephone number or e-mail address. The LMF will only hold and use those details of its members which it needs in order to contact them, i.e. name, address, phone number and email address. These details should normally only be available to the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.