



**Scottish Natural Heritage**  
**Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba**

All of nature for all of Scotland  
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

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# **Socio-economic monitoring of Tayside beavers**

# Statement of Requirements

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# Statement of Requirements

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), comprising staff based throughout Scotland, whose remit is to secure the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural heritage – its wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

SNH want to assess the socio-economic impacts of a breeding population of beavers living in the wild within the Tay catchment. The Tayside Beaver Study Group (TBSG) was established in May 2012 in response to a decision by the Environment Minister, to tolerate and study beavers which had become established across the Tay Catchment. The Minister for Environment has decided that these animals should be allowed to remain in place for the duration of the official trial beaver reintroduction at Knapdale in Argyll. At the end of the trial period in 2015, the Minister will take a decision on the future of beavers in Scotland – both those in Knapdale and on Tayside.

The Tayside Beaver Group has two principal aims:

- To gather additional information and monitor impacts of the Tayside beavers on other wildlife and land uses in the area, to help inform Ministers' decisions on the future of beavers in Scotland in 2015; and
- To help identify a variety of means to resolve any conflicts between beavers and land uses in the area and provide advice and practical help to land owners at a local level, and to consider how these means could be used more widely in the future.

This work on Tayside beavers will make a significant contribution to addressing the first of these aims and will be a useful contribution to advice to the Minister on the socio economic monitoring of the Scottish Beaver Trial at Knapdale.

At the same time, in order to get a fuller picture of socio economic impacts of beaver re-introductions more widely, SNH want to carry out a brief literature review of socio economic impacts of beaver introductions in other European countries or at one other European location.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The Tayside Beaver Study Group have commissioned various other studies to date. A study of the population and distribution of beavers across Tayside was undertaken by SNH<sup>1</sup> in 2010 and can be accessed here

[http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/540.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/540.pdf).

Surveys undertaken between May and July 2012 to establish the population size, distribution and impacts of the beavers estimate that there are 38-39 groups of beavers present in the Tay catchment. The 2012 survey found that the River Earn, River Isla and Dean Water displayed the greatest density of beaver signs (and beaver groups), whereas the River Tay had the lowest density. With the exception of Dunalistair Water, no beaver groups were detected on the River Tummel. No beaver signs were detected in the River Garry. The report estimates that beaver groups occupy a total linear length of 112 km of river and associated tributaries in the Tay catchment.

During the survey, notes were taken on any likely impacts, and the consultants conducted

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell, R.D., Harrington, A., Ross, A. and Harrington, L. 2012. Distribution, population assessment and activities of beavers in Tayside. *Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 540*

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informal chats with stakeholders (in particular, farmers, fishermen and gillies) to assess their reactions to the presence of beavers and their opinions on the impacts of beaver activity.

In addition, TBSG members have been involved in the installation of a flow control device which helps to prevent dams causing problem flooding. They are involved in other practical mitigation projects such as tree protection and offer advice to landowners who have beavers present.

As of December 2012, the TBSG have started a significant project to understand the health and genetic status of the Tayside beavers. This involves trapping a sample of animals and taking blood samples, some measurements and getting a vet to examine the animals for potential parasites. The animals will then be released, under licence, where they were caught.

At the same time, Scottish Natural Heritage is co-ordinating the independent monitoring of the Scottish Beaver Trial on behalf of the Scottish Government. In May 2008, the Scottish Government gave permission to the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland and the Scottish Wildlife Trust for a scientifically monitored, trial reintroduction of European beavers to Knapdale Forest in mid-Argyll. There were some conditions, including the need for the monitoring to be done independently, and coordinated by Scottish Natural Heritage.

One year later, and following much detailed preparation, beavers were released at Knapdale. A monitoring programme is now underway, run by SNH in collaboration with a range of Independent Monitoring Partners. SRUC (Scotland's Rural College), under the supervision of Prof. Dominic Moran, were awarded the contract to carry out the socio-economic monitoring of the Knapdale Trial. The monitoring will run for five years from the May 2009 release, with a further year at the end to allow final reports to be produced and submitted to Scottish Government in 2015. On completion of the Trial, Scottish Government will then decide on the future for beaver reintroduction to Scotland.

### **3. OBJECTIVE**

This project will provide evidence on socio-economic impacts of Tayside beaver population, as well as providing an overview of socio-economic issues identified by beaver re-introductions in Europe.

The data collected as part of this project will contribute to estimating benefits from a wider beaver reintroduction at the end of the Scottish Beaver Trial.

### **3. OUTPUT**

To provide a report, clearly written in plain English, which summarises socio-economic impacts of Tayside beaver population, as well as covering a brief summary of socio-economic issues from European beaver reintroduction.

The report should be presented in the format of an SNH Commissioned Report which will be provided by SNH.

### **4. SCOPE**

Our suggested methodology is to collect data on the costs of the beavers on property/land owners and fishing interests within the Tay catchment where beavers are present. This will require a survey of local interests.

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The work must be completed in a complementary methodology to the Scottish Beaver Trail socio-economic monitoring<sup>2</sup>.

For a cost:benefit analysis of the Tayside beavers we will also need benefits data. If an analysis is to be undertaken of the economic benefits of keeping the beavers in place then there needs to be an assessment of the potential tourism expenditure generated once they are marketed and infrastructure is in place. This could either be the existing population/site or a wider spread (scenario to be determined, could be both). As there is nothing in UK of use at present international tourism data (Norway, Belgium) on beaver tourism would be required. Some modelling can then be undertaken to estimate the visitor numbers and expenditure if similar infrastructure was put in place in Tayside around the existing beaver population.

We welcome suggestions on alternative approaches to estimating the socio-economic impacts of the Tayside beaver population, for example, the less direct but potentially significant socio-economic effects of beaver presence such as damming activities, impacts on sediment loads and riparian woodland.

Tayside Beaver Study Group should be consulted on the work as it progresses.

### 5. TIMESCALES

The intended timetable for this project is:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Date</i>
Inception meeting	June 2013
Review of reintroductions in Europe	July 2013
Monitoring of Tayside beavers	August 2013
Draft final report	October 2013
Final report	November 2013

### 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Suppliers' responses will be evaluated against the following list of criteria:

- Methodology
- Ability to deliver quality outputs within timescale
- Value for money

### 7. REQUIREMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR SUBMISSION

- Personnel proposed;
- Days proposed for completion of project;
- Hourly/daily rates applicable;
- Travel and subsistence costs;
- Any other costs;
- Total excluding VAT;
- Your VAT status

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<sup>2</sup> Scottish Beaver Trial: Socio Economic Monitoring: SNH Commissioned Report 482. 2011.

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### **8. PROJECT OFFICER**

The project will be managed by Claudia Rowse, Rural Development Manager, SNH, Great Glen House, Inverness. [Claudia.rowse@snh.gov.uk](mailto:Claudia.rowse@snh.gov.uk) . 01463 725319

The work will be overseen by a Steering Group comprising Ralph Blaney, James Scott, Martin Gaywood (SNH) and Dr D Moran, SRUC.