

PLAN-GNÌOMHA
ÀRAINNEAN
COILLE
GNÈITHEACH

NATIVE
WOODLANDS
HABITAT ACTION
PLAN



WESTERN ISLES LOCAL
BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

PLANA-GNÌOMHA
BITH-IOMADACHD
IONADAIL NAN EILEAN SIAR

1. HABITAT PROFILE

Habitat Definition:

Native woodlands are characterised by a canopy of locally native trees and shrubs. They provide habitat for a large proportion of our native wildlife species including many targeted by the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Woodlands in the Western Isles are generally dominated by downy birch, eared and grey willow, and rowan, with small stands of aspen found on mineral soils. Two native species: hazel and juniper (also found outwith woodlands) have a particularly limited and fragmented distribution, and may be on the verge of extinction. A number of other Scottish native species, including ash, blackthorn, bird cherry and bay willow, have been recorded, though their status as locally native is questionable. There are historical records of alder and oak, but they are currently not known outside plantations.

*woodlands
habitat is
important for
a range of
species*

UK Biodiversity Status:

Broad Habitat Type:

Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland

UK Priority Habitats:

Upland birchwoods in Scotland
Wet woodlands

Statutory Protection:

Since 1985 national forest policy has included a presumption against clearance of broadleaved woodland for conversion to other land uses or to conifer plantations, and in particular seeks to maintain the special interest of ancient semi-natural woodland. Felling licences are normally required from the Forestry Commission if the woodlands concerned are not managed under a plan approved by them. Some woods may receive additional protection through policies and strategies within development plans.

Designation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) ensures that Scottish Natural Heritage is consulted over management operations and development proposals where woodlands are a notified feature, e.g. Allt Volagir SSSI.

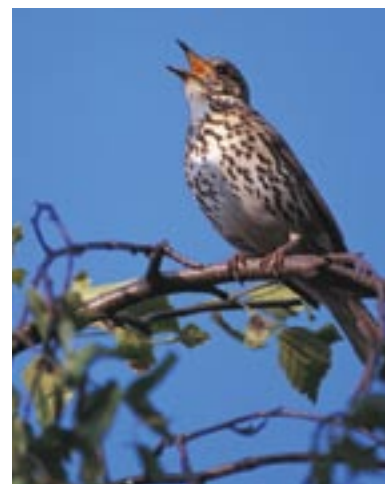
Associated Habitats and Species:

National Priority (p), Conservation Concern (cc) and Local Interest (li) species associated with woodland:

Pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* (p), song thrush *Turdus philomelos* (p), tree sparrow *Passer montanus* (p), wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* (li), juniper *Juniperus communis* (p), Pyramidal Bugle *Ajuga pyramidalis* (li), silky swan-neck moss *Campylopus setifolius* (p), Boletes Fungi *Leccinum salicola* (cc)

The limited and extremely fragmented nature of native woodland on the Western Isles has a number of consequences:

- 🌿 Native woodlands have not been a priority for research and recording, leading to a scarcity of survey data, in particular for invertebrates and non-vascular plants.
- 🌿 Species normally associated with woodland are commonly found outwith it. This may reflect adaptation (e.g. wren), or relatively recent removal of tree cover (e.g. bluebell).
- 🌿 The habitat is important for a range of species, from the bees feeding on early season willow, to eagles nesting by lone trees on crags; however, there are few if any recorded species entirely dependent on this habitat.



1. CUNNTAS ÀRAINN

Mìneachadh Àrainn:

Tha coilltean gnèitheach air an comharrachadh le sgàil-bhrat de chraobhan agus phris a tha gnèitheach don sgìre. Tha iad nan àrainn do chuibhreann mhòr de ar fiadh-bheatha gnèitheach a' gabhail a-staigh mòran den fheadhainn air a bheil Plana-gnìomha Bith-iomadachd na RA ag amas.

Mar as trice tha coilltean sna h-Eileanan Siar air an dèanamh suas gu sònraichte de bheith charrageach, seileach cluasach agus seileach liath, agus caorann, le beagan bhadan de chritheann air ùirean mèinnearach. Tha dà sheòrsa craoibhe gnèitheach: calltainn agus aiteann (a tha cuideachd air taobh a-muigh nan coilltean) aig a bheil sgaioleadh air leth cumhang agus sgapte, agus dh'fhaodadh gu bheil iad dìreach gus bàsachadh a-mach. Tha grunn chraobhan gnèitheach eile, a' gabhail a-staigh uinnseann, preas nan àirneag, siris nan eun agus seileach labhrais, air an clàradh, ged nach eilear cinnteach am bu chòir inbhe a bhith aca mar ghnè ionadail. Tha clàir eachdraidheil ann de fheàrna agus darach, ach aig an àm seo chan eil iad rim faighinn taobh a-muigh phlanntachais.

Photos (left to right):

Primroses; Song thrush; Rowan

Dealbhan (cli gu deas):

Sobhragan; Smeòrach; Caorann



Inbhe Bith-iomadachd na RA:

Seòrsa Àrainn san Fharsaingeachd:

Coille Leathann-duilleach, Measgaichte agus Iubhair

Prìomh Àrainnean san RA:

Coilltean beithe air talamh àrd an Alba
Coilltean fliuch

Dion Reachdail:

Bho 1985 tha poileasaidh nàiseanta nan coilltean air a bhith a' gabhail a-staigh ro-bheachd nach bi coille leathann-duilleach air fhalamhachadh airson atharrachadh gu cleachdadh fearainn eile no gu planntachadh chraobhan-durcain, agus tha e gu h-àraidh ag iarraidh a bhith a' cumail suas na h-ùidh shònraichte ann an seann choille leth-ghnèitheach. Sa chumantas feumar cead bho Ùghdarras nan Coilltean airson craobhan a ghearradh sìos mur eil rianachd nan coilltean sin fo phlana ris an do chuir iad aonta. Dh'fhaodadh gum faigh cuid de choilltean dìon a bharrachd tro phoileasaidhean agus ro-innleachdan taobh a-staigh planaichean leasachaidh.

Tha sònrachadh mar Làraich Annasach a thaobh Eòlaidheachd (SSSI) a' dèanamh cinnteach gum bi co-chomhairle air a chur ri Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba mu obair rianachd agus molaidhean leasachadh far a bheil coilltean am measg nam feart comharrachaidh, m.e. SSSI Allt Bholagair.

Àrainnean agus Gnèithean Co-cheangailte:

Gnèithean le Prìomhachas Nàiseanta (p), Cudrom Glèidhteachais (cc) agus Ùidh Ionadail (il) co-cheangailte ri coille:

Ialtag piopastrail *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* (p), smeòrach *Turdus philomelos* (p), gealbhonn nan craobh *Passer montanus* (p), dreathan-donn *Troglodytes troglodytes* (li), aiteann *Juniperus communis* (p), Glasair-bheannach *Ajuga pyramidalis* (li), còinneach-sioda *Campylopus setifolius* (p), Fungais Bholetus *Leccinum salicola* (cc)

Tha iomadh buil aig nàdar cuingichte agus fìor bhrìste nan coilltean gnèitheach sna h-Eileanan Siar:

✿ Chan eil prìomhachas air a bhith aig coilltean gnèitheach airson rannsachadh agus clàradh, agus lean sin gu gainnead dàta bho sgrùdadh, gu sònraichte airson neo-dhrum-altachain agus lusan neo-fhèitheach.

✿ Gu tric tha gnèithean aig a bheil ceangal sa chumantas ri coille air am faighinn air a thaobh a-muigh. Dh'fhaodadh gu bheil seo na chomharra air freagarrachd (m.e. an dreathan-donn), no nach eil fada on thugadh air falbh an còmhdach craoibhe (m.e. currac-cuthaige).

✿ Tha an àrainn cudromach airson caochladh ghnèithean, bho na seilleanan a' biathadh air seileach tràth san ràithe, gu òltairean a' neadachadh ri taobh craobhan nan aonar air creagan; ach, 's e glè bheag, ma tha gin idir, de na gnèithean clàrte a tha gu tur an eisimeil na h-àrainn seo.

tha aràinn
choille
cudromach
airson caochladh
ghnèithean



2. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

The objectives of this plan are to reverse the adverse trends affecting native woodlands in recent years, namely fragmentation, neglect and mismanagement that have resulted in a reduction in the overall area and quality of the habitat.

	Objective	Target
1	Survey all semi-natural woodland (SNW) to provide baseline for future actions and identify key sites.	Survey all SNW by end of 2005.
2	Ensure no net loss in area or reduction in quality of native woodlands.	No net loss or reduction in quality.
3	Bring key open-hill and gorge SNW into management and expand key sites by natural regeneration preserving the integrity of the best surviving relict woodlands.	25% increase in SNW area by 2010.
4	Initiate programme of seed collection and supplementary planting for vulnerable species (hazel and juniper).	Collect and store/propagate representative genotypes from a number of areas.
5	Produce appropriate statutory documentation and lobby to maximise fiscal support.	Complete and adopt Woodland Strategy; make a case for Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme: Locational Premium (SFGS:LP) and increased Rural Stewardship Scheme (RSS).
6	Raise awareness of importance of preserving and regenerating native woodlands.	Demonstration projects established by 2008.

raise awareness of importance of preserving and regenerating native woodlands.



3. CURRENT STATUS

Semi-natural woodland is estimated to cover less than 200,000 ha of Scotland (Action for Scotland's Biodiversity, 2000), and is greatly reduced from the original 60 - 75% coverage. The resource is highly fragmented, though important core areas remain in the central highlands. The combined areas of birchwoods and wet (birch dominated) woodlands in Scotland given by MacKenzie (1999) and Kirby (using estimates from the Ancient Woodland Inventories of the mid-1980s) are 76,000 hectares and 71,000 hectares respectively.

Native woodland coverage in the Western Isles is greatly reduced from the post-ice age maxima 6000 BP. Archaeological and paleo-environmental evidence suggests that the majority of loss had taken place by 2000+BP, largely as a result of conversion to agriculture (grazing and burning) and climate change. Historical evidence from the 19th century suggests that remaining woodlands were then more extensive and had a wider range of species than today.

There has been no authoritative inventory of semi-natural woodland in the Western Isles. The remaining semi-natural woodlands are small (almost all < 1.0 ha) and highly fragmented. A very crude estimate of the total area of native woodland: 200 ha. In recent years, there have been a number of larger plantings of predominantly native species - crude estimate: 500 ha.

2. AMASAN AGUS CUIMSEAN

'S e amasan a' phlana seo a bhith ag atharrachadh nan gluasadan millteach a tha a' toirt buaidh air coilltean gnèitheach sna bliadhnanachan mu dheireadh, 's e sin sgapadh, dearmad agus droch rianachd a tha air leantainn gu lùghdachadh ann am meud agus càileachd na h-àrainn san fharsaingeachd.

Amas	Cuimse
1 A h-uile coille leth-ghnèitheach (SNW) a sgrùdadh gus stèidh fhaighinn airson obair ri teachd agus prìomh làraich a chomharrachadh.	Sgrùdadh a dhèanamh air a h-uile SNW ro dheireadh 2004.
2 Dèanamh cinnteach nach bi call lom no lùghdachadh ann an càileachd nan coilltean gnèitheach.	Gun call lom no lùghdachadh càileachd a bhith ann.
3 Tòiseachadh a' rianachd prìomh SNW monaidh agus bealaich agus prìomh làraich a leudachadh tro ath-ghineamhainn nàdarra a' glèidheadh iomlanachd nan seann choilltean as fheàrr.	Meudachadh 25% ann an raon SNW ro 2010.
4 Prògram cruinneachadh sil agus planntachadh leasachail a thòiseachadh airson gnèithean cugallach (calltainn agus aiteann).	Eisimpleirean geneteipeach a chruinneachadh agus a stòradh/shìolachadh bho ghrunn àiteachan.
5 Na pàipearan reachdail iomchaidh ullachadh agus coiteachadh airson taic ionmhais a mheudachadh.	Ro-innleachd Coille a chrìochnachadh agus a ghabhail os làimh; cur airson Sgeama Tabhartasan Coilltearachd na h-Alba: Tàilleabh Làraich (SFGS:LP) agus barrachd Sgeama Stiùbhartachd Dùthchail (RSS).
6 Mothachadh a leudachadh air cho cudromach 's a tha glèidheadh agus ath-ghineamhainn coilltean gnèitheach.	Pròiseactan taisbeanaidh a stèidheachadh ro 2008.

Photos (left to right):

Woodlands are an important learning resource; Woodland at Meall Mor, South Uist; Hazel

Dealbhan (cli gu deas):

'S e stòras ionnsachaigh cudthromach a tha ann an coilltean; Coille aig Meall Mor, Uibhist a Deas;

Calltainn



3. INBHE LÀITHREACH

Thathar a' meas gu bheil nas lugha na 200,000 ha de Alba air a chòmhdach le coille leth-ghnèitheach (Action for Scotland's Biodiversity, 2000), agus tha sin gu math nas lugha na an còmhdach 60 - 75% a bha ann bho thùs. Tha an stòras fìor sgapte, ged a tha raointean bunaitheach cudromach fhathast am meadhan na Gaidhealtachd. 'S e na raointean de choilltean beithe agus choilltean fliuch (beith a' chuid as motha) còmhla an Alba air a dh'fhoillsich MacCoinnich (1999) agus Kirby (a' cleachdadh measaidhean bho Chunntasan nan Coilltean Àrsaidh bho mheadhan nan 1980s) 76,000 heactairean agus 71,000 heactairean fa leth.

Tha còmhdach coille gnèitheach sna h-Eileanan Siar air lùghdachadh gu mòr bhon riaghailt osbharra de 6000 BP an dèidh linn na deighe. A rèir fianais arc-eòlais agus seann-àrainneachd bha a' mhòr-chuid den chall air tachairt mus do ràinig e 2000+BP, gu mòr mar thoradh air atharrachadh gu àiteachas (ionaltradh agus losgadh) agus atharrachadh-side. Tha fianais bho eachdraidh na 19^{mh} linn ag ràdh gu robh na coilltean a bha air fhàgail an uairsin nas motha agus nas pailte ann an seòrsachan ghnèithean an taca ris an latha an-diugh.

Chan eil cunntas reachdmhor air a bhith ann de choille leth-ghnèitheach sna h-Eileanan Siar. Tha na coilltean leth-ghnèitheach a tha air fhàgail beag (cha mhòr na h-uile < 1.0 ha) agus fìor sgapte. Measadh glè mhì-chothromach de raon iomlan de choille gnèitheach: 200 ha. Sna bliadhnanachan mu dheireadh, tha planntachaidhean mòra air a bhith ann sa bheil barrachd de chraobhan gnèitheach - tuairmsean mì-chothromach: 500 ha.

mothachadh a leudachadh air cho cudromach 's a tha glèidheadh agus ath-ghineamhainn coilltean gnèitheach.



4. ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

In terms of National Vegetation Classification (NVC) plant communities this habitat is characterised by W1 *Salix cinerea* - *Galium palustre* woodland, W4 *Betula pubescens* - *Molinia caerulea* woodland, W7 *Alnus glutinosa* - *Fraxinus excelsior* - *Lysimachia nemorum* woodland, W11 *Quercus petraea* - *Betula pubescens* - *Oxalis acetosella* woodland, W17 *Quercus petraea* - *Betula pubescens* - *Dicranum majus* woodland (Rodwell 1991).

Given the micro-scale of many woodlands, and the absence of many of the defining species (e.g. *Quercus petraea*) a more helpful categorisation would be based on the five typical site types:

Open-hill woodlands: rare, but relatively large woods on sheltered hill slopes, generally dominated by birch, with considerable potential for expansion by regeneration, which may however be inhibited by bracken.

Gorge woodlands: extremely linear in plan, often with a wide range of species and rich associated ground flora. Potential for expansion is often limited to extension along the riparian zone.

Willow carr: found on sheltered valley bottoms, where extreme waterlogging inhibits birch growth.

Woodlands on Islands: these are a common feature of many lochans. Largely protected from grazing and burning, they may represent the best link with the ancient woodland of the islands. Expansion is naturally constrained.

Scattered individuals or clumps of trees on crags: boundaries, particularly of open-hill woodlands, are often diffuse and liable to change as woodlands expand and contract in response to fires and changes in grazing pressure. In more sheltered sites, e.g. gorges and cliffs, permanent tree cover may develop containing more diverse and less mobile species. Aspen grows on a variety of site types where mineral soil is present.

On all but the most acidic sites, birch influences the soil to allow development of a grass-herb flora on sites previously dominated by dwarf shrub heath. This successional development may be cyclical in nature with the ground flora of many senescent birchwoods eventually returning to heath, as tree cover is lost. Heavily grazed woodlands tend to develop a grass and moss dominated flora, or on richer soils become dominated by bracken and the return to heath may not happen so readily.

*Photos (left to right):
Woodland plantation at Druidibeg, South Uist;
Example of gorge woodland; Harebells.
Dealbhan (cli gu deas):
Àiteach chraobhan aig Druidibeg, Uibhist a Deas; Eisleimpeir de coille bealaich;
Curra-na-cuthaige.*

All woodlands should be managed in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard (FC, 1998). The Forestry Commission's Forestry Practice Guides to the management of Upland Birchwoods and Wet Woodlands were first published in 1994 (FP Guides 6 & 8 respectively). Management should follow these guides as well as other FC guidelines in order to qualify for grant aid or felling licences. Guidance on ways of creating new native woodland is also available in Forestry Commission Bulletin 112. The most appropriate locations for new woods can be identified using the Forestry Commission's Ecological Site Classification System (Ray, 2001), and similarly there is guidance on the role of Forest Habitat Networks (Ratcliffe et al., 1998).

In practical terms, management typically entails fencing to exclude stock and deer, appropriate muirburn and vegetation control (e.g. bracken) to promote regeneration.

...in more sheltered sites, e.g. gorges and cliffs, permanent tree cover may develop



4. EAG-EÒLAS AGUS RIANACHD

A thaobh coimhearsnachdan lus an Rangachadh Lusraich Nàiseanta (NVC) tha an àrainn seo air a chomharrachadh le W1 coille *Salix cinerea* - *Galium palustre*, W4 coille *Betula pubescens* - *Molinia caerulea*, W7 coille *Alnus glutinosa* - *Fraxinus excelsior* - *Lysimachia nemorum*, W11 coille *Quercus petraea* - *Betula pubescens* - *Oxalis acetosella*, W17 coille *Quercus petraea* - *Betula pubescens* - *Dicranum majus* (Rodwell 1991).

Le beag-sgèile mhòran de choilltean, agus gun ach beagan de na gnèithean comharrachaidh anna (m.e. *Quercus petraea* (darach)) bhiodh rangachadh nas fheumaile bonntaichte air na còig seòrsachan làraich sònraichte:

Coilltean monaidh: gann, ach coilltean an ìre mhath mòr air slios an fhasgach, san fharsaingeachd le barrachd beithe, agus mòran comas leudachaidh tro ath-ghineamhainn, ged a dh'fhaodadh raineach a bhacadh.

Coilltean bealaich: air chumadh sreathach, gu tric le iomadh seòrsa gnè agus mòran lus talmhainn co-cheangailte riutha. Tha comas leudachaidh gu tric dìreach sìos ri taobh aibhnichean.

Carr seilich: air fhaighinn air srathan fasgach, far a bheil uisge domhain a' cumail na craoibhe beithe gun fhàs.

Coilltean air eileanan: tha iad sin cumanta ann an lochan. Le dìon mhath bho iomadh ionaltradh agus losgadh, dh'fhaodadh gur iad an ceangal as fheàrr ri seann choilltean nan eilean. Tha e nàdarach gu bheil bacadh air a chur air leudachadh.

Craobhan sgapte air leth no badan dhiubh air creagan: tha crìochan, gu sònraichte choilltean monaidh, gu tric sgapte agus buailteach air atharrachadh mar a bhios coilltean a' leudachadh agus a' seacadh mar thoradh air teinntean agus atharrachaidhean ann an cudrom ionaltraidh. Ann an làraich le barrachd fasgaidh, m.e. bealaich agus creagan, dh'fhaodadh còmhdach craoibhe buan fàs suas anns a bheil gnèithean nas measgaichte agus nach bi a' sgaoileadh cho mòr. Tha critheann a' fàs air iomadh seòrsa làraich far a bheil ùir mhèinnearach.

Air a h-uile làrach ach a-mhàin an fheadhainn as searbha, tha beith a' toirt buaidh air an ùir gus am faigh flùraichean feurach air fàs air làraich anns an robh fraoch a' fàs roimhe. Dh'fhaodadh gum bi an leasachadh leantainneach seo cuairteach le na lus talmhainn ann am mòran de na coilltean beithe aosta air a' cheann thall a' dol air ais nam fraoch, mar a tha an còmhdach craoibhe air a chall.

Tha flùr-bheatha le barrachd feòir agus còinnich buailteach fàs ann an coilltean air am mòr ionaltradh, no barrachd raineach ann an ùirean nas torraiche agus dh'fhaodadh nach bi an dol air ais gu fraoch cho luath.

Bu chòir don h-uile coille a bhith air a rianachd ann an co-rèir ri Bun-tomhas Coilltearachd na RA (FC, 1998). Bha Stiùiridhean Cleachdaidh Choilltean Ùghdarras nan Coilltean mu rianachd Coilltean Beithe air Talamh Àrd agus Coilltean Fliuch air am foillseachadh airson a' chiad uair ann an 1994 (FP Guides 6 & 8 fa leth). Bu chòir gum biodh rianachd a rèir an stiùiridh sin agus stiùiridh FC eile airson a bhith airidh air tabhartas cuideachaidh no cead airson craobhan a ghearradh sìos. Tha stiùireadh mu dhòighean air coille gnèitheach ùr a chruthachadh cuideachd ri fhaotainn ann an Cuairt-iomradh 112 bho Ùghdarras nan Coilltean. Gheibhear air na làraich as fheàrr airson coilltean ùra a chomharrachadh le Siostam Rangachaidh Àrainnean Eag-eòlasach Ùghdarras nan Coilltean (Ray, 2001), agus air an aon dòigh tha stiùireadh mun àite a tha aig Lionraidhean Àrainn Coille (Ratcliffe et al., 1998).

Ann an cleachdadh, tha rianachd mar as trice a' gabhail a-staigh feansadh airson stoc agus feidh a chumail a-mach, falaisgean dòigheal agus smachd air lusrach (e.g. raineach) gus ath-ghineamhainn a bhrosnachadh.



...ann an làraich
le barrachd
fasgaidh,
m.e. bealaich
agus creagan,
dh'fhaodadh
còmhdach craoibhe
buan fàs



5. BIODIVERSITY CONTEXT

UK Action Plan for Wet Woodlands
 UK Biodiversity Group Tranche 2 Action Plans - Volume II: Terrestrial and freshwater habitats Page: 69 HMSO (December 1998)

UK Action Plan for Upland Birchwoods in Scotland (in preparation - Final Draft March 2003, provided by Peter Quelch, FC Native Woodland Advisor)

6. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE HABITAT

- ✿ Grazing by sheep - direct damage to regeneration, and promotion of grassy sward less amenable to regeneration.
- ✿ Browsing and fraying by deer - direct damage to regeneration and mature trees.
- ✿ Burning - direct damage to trees, damage to ground flora and lichen communities, reduction of adjacent heath communities and promotion of invasive bracken.
- ✿ Fragmentation - has reduced numbers, distribution and therefore viability of particular species, e.g. hazel, juniper, to critical levels.



*fragmentation
 - has reduced
 numbers,
 distribution and
 therefore viability
 of particular
 species*



5. SUIDHEACHADH BITH-IOMADACHD

Plana-gnìomha na RA airson Coilltean Fliuch

Buidheann Bith-iomadachd na RA
Cuibhreann 2 Planaichean-gnìomha
- Volume II: Àrainnean talmhaidh agus
fìor-uisge Taobh-duilleig: 69 HMSO
(Dùbhlachd 1998)

Plana-gnìomha na RA airson Coilltean
Beithe air Talamh Àrd an Alba

(ga ullachadh - Dreach Deireannach
Màrt 2003, air ullachadh le Peter Quelch,
Comhairleach airson Coille Gnèitheach
FC)

6. NITHEAN A THA A' TOIRT BUAIDH AIR AN ÀRAINN

- ✿ Ionatrachd le caoraich - milleadh dìreach air ath-ghineamhainn, agus brosnachadh de rùsg feurach nach eil cho math airson ath-ghineamhainn.
- ✿ Criomadh agus caitheamh le fèidh - milleadh dìreach air ath-ghineamhainn agus craobhan abaich.
- ✿ Falaisgean - milleadh dìreach air craobhan, milleadh air flùr-bheatha talmhainn agus coimhearsnachdan crotail, lùghdachadh air coimhearsnachdan fraoich faisg orra agus cuideachadh briseadh a-steach le raineach.
- ✿ Sgapadh - lùghdachadh air àireamhan, sgaoileadh agus mar sin ion-obrachadh ghnèithean àraidh, m.e. calltinn, aiteann, gu ìrean cunnartach.

Photos (left to right):
Woodland at Lews Castle, Stomoway;
Schools involvement in woodland projects;
Shorteared owl
Dealbhan (cli gu deas):
Coille aig Caisteal Leòdhais, Steòrnabhagh;
Sgoiltean an sàs ann am proiseactan
choilltearachd; Comachag chluasach



*Sgapadh -
lùghdachadh
air àireamhan,
sgaoileadh agus
mar sin
ion-obrachadh
ghnèithean àraidh*



7. OPPORTUNITIES AND CURRENT ACTION

- ✿ Exclusion of deer and sheep by fencing to promote regeneration, sometimes as part of a larger Crofter Forestry WGS planting schemes.
- ✿ Reduction in extensive sheep grazing (and perhaps a corresponding reduction in muirburn) may assist natural recovery in some areas, though this may be balanced by a corresponding rise in deer numbers.
- ✿ The Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme is targeted towards management and expansion (particularly by natural regeneration) of semi-natural and riparian woodlands. Locational premium is available for specific purposes within the Western Isles for a four year period from 1st April 2004.

✿ The increasing linkage between agricultural support mechanisms and environmental protection (e.g. RSS) may provide a greater stimulus to protection.

*exclusion of
deer and sheep
by fencing
to promote
regeneration*



7. COTHROMAN AGUS OBAIR LÀITHREACH

- ✿ Fèidh agus caoraich a dhùnadh a-mach le feansadh gus ath-ghineamhainn a bhrosnachadh, uaireannan a' dèanamh suas sgeamaichean planntachaidh Coilltearachd Chroiteir WGS nas motha.
- ✿ Dh'fhaodadh gum bi lùghdachadh anns a' mhòr-ionaltradh le caoraich (agus 's dòcha lùghdachadh co-fhreagarrach ann am falaisgean) na chuideachadh le leigheas nàdarra ann an cuid de àiteachan, ged a dh'fhaodadh seo a bhith air a chothromachadh le àrdachadh a rèir sin ann an àireamhan fèidh.
- ✿ Tha Sgeama-tabhartais Coilltearachd na h-Alba ag amas air rianachd agus leudachadh (gu sònraichte le ath-ghineamhainn nàdarra) de choilltean leth-ghnèitheach agus an cois aibhne. Tha tàilleabh làraich ri fhaotainn airson adhbharan sònraichte sna h-Eileanan Siar airson ceathar bliadhnaichean bho 1 Giblean 2004.
- ✿ Dh'fhaodadh gun toir fàs ann an ceangal eadar dòighean taic àiteachais agus dìon na h-àrainneachd (m.e. RSS) brosnachadh nas motha airson dìon.

Photos (left to right):

Browsing and fraying by deer can cause damage to regeneration and mature trees;
Oak tree saplings; School tree planting project
Dealbhan (cli gu deas):
Fòdaidh criomadh agus caitheamh le feidh milleadh a dheanamh air ath-ghineamhainn agus craobhan abaich; Craobh òg daraich;
Proiseact choilltearachd sgoile



*fèidh agus
caoraich a
dhùnadh
a-mach le
feansadh gus
ath-ghineamhainn
a bhrosnachadh*



8. ACTIONS

	ACTION	Lead	Priority	Time-scale	Partners	Objective
1	Policy and Legislation					
1.1	Produce Woodland Strategy containing high priority for semi-natural woodlands	CnES	High	Short	FC, SNH, RSPB DCS, WIE, Land-owners	5
1.2	Develop a long, medium and short-term plan for controlling the deer population on the islands.	Deer Management Groups	High	Medium	SNH, DCS	2, 3
1.3	Develop forest habitat networks (FHNs) for the purpose of creating wildlife corridors through expanding existing native woodland areas, promoting natural regeneration and targeting areas that historically were wooded.	SNH	Medium	Medium	FC, CnES	2
1.4	Support establishment of nurseries for local species. Until local stock is available ensure that natural regeneration is used to extend native woodlands.	FC, CnES	High	Medium	Land- managers, ST, SIAT	4
1.5	SFGS – Develop application forms that are straightforward and less time consuming.	FC	High	Medium		5
1.6	Investigate how existing support (e.g. for shelterbelts) can be better used to provide incentives for planting and enhancing native woodlands. Present case for increased coverage/funding for Rural Stewardship Scheme.	CnES	High	Medium	SEERAD, SNH, SAC, FC	5
1.7	Publicise the availability of SFGS Locational Premium and encourage crofting communities and land managers to apply for premium.	FC	High	Medium	SEERAD, SNH, SAC, CnES, SCF	5
2	Site Safeguard and Management					
2.1	Bring priority semi-natural woodlands into management to promote regeneration.	SNH	High	Medium	Land-managers, FC, SNH, SIAT	3
2.2	Initiate programme of seed collection, propagation and planting of threatened species (such as hazel and juniper) and island native woodland species.	FC, CnES	High	Medium	Land-managers, ST, SIAT	4
2.3	Encourage the establishment of native woodland areas in school grounds and in the wider community i.e. areas planted and managed by the community. Encourage people to grow native woodland species in their own garden.	CnES	High	Medium	SIAT, FC	2, 3, 6
3	Advisory					
3.1	Develop demonstration projects in the island groups to raise awareness of the benefits of regenerating native woodlands. Target individuals who are currently doing this well and arrange a means for information and advice to be exchanged.	CnES	Medium	Short	SNH, SWT, SAC, SCF	6
3.2	Develop generic guidance for, and an effective mechanism (or make use of an existing mechanism) to communicate with, crofting interests and land managers to encourage the long term management and maintenance of existing and newly planted woodlands. This guidance could include information and advice on:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long-term management; • species selection; • sourcing of local species; • soil conditions; • location of plantings; • size and shape of plantings; • native nursery crops; • muirburn; • grazing management; • financial schemes; • filling out application forms for schemes. 	CnES	High	Medium	SEERAD, FC, Land-managers, SAC, SNH, SCF	2
4	Monitoring and Research					
4.1	Survey semi-natural woodlands & compile inventory.	SNH	High	Short	SIAT, ST, CnES	1
4.2	Identify high priority semi-natural woodlands for bringing into management (based on species diversity and scope for expansion).	SNH	High	Short	Land-managers, CnES	1
4.3	Undertake research into the genetic variability of mainland and island species and variability between more local species, such as differences from island to island and even west coast to east coast.	SNH	High	Medium	FC, SEERAD, CnES	4
5	Communications & Publicity					
5.1	Establish a 'care for a tree day' campaign where communities are encouraged to tend to their woodland.	CnES	High	Medium	SIAT, FC	2, 3, 6

ABBREVIATIONS:

CnES	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	SEERAD	Scottish Executive Environment & Rural Affairs Department
Curracag	Western Isles Natural History Society	SIAT	Southern Isles Amenity Trust
DCS	Deer Commission for Scotland	SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
FC	Forestry Commission	ST	Stornoway Trust
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	SWT	Scottish Wildlife Trust
SAC	Scottish Agricultural College	WIE	Western Isles Enterprise
SCF	Scottish Crofting Federation	WITB	Western Isles Tourist Board



8. GNÌOMHAN

	Gnìomh	Stiùireadh	Priomhachas	Roon-ama	Com-pàirtichean	Amas
1	Poileasaidh agus Reachdas					
1.1	Ro-innleachd Coille ullachadh anns am bi prìomhachas àrd aig coilltean leth-ghnèitheach	CnES	Àrd	Goirid	FC, SNH, RSPB, DCS, WIE, Uachdarain	5
1.2	Plana fada, meadhanach agus gearr-ùine a chur ri chèile airson smachd a chumail air na h-àireamhan feidh sna h-eileanan.	Buidhnean Rianadh Feidh	Àrd	Meadhanach	SNH, DCS	2, 3
1.3	Lionraidhean àrainn coille (FHNan) a chur air dòigh airson transaichean fiadh-bheatha a chruthachadh tro leudachadh air na raointean coille gnèitheach a tha ann cheana, brosnachadh air ath-ghineamhainn nàdarra agus amas air àiteachan anns an robh coille roimhe.	SNH	Meadhanach	Meadhanach	FC, CnES	2
1.4	Taic a thoirt do stèidheachadh liosan-àraich airson gnèithean ionadail. Gus am bi stoc ionadail ri fhaotainn a bhith a' dèanamh cinnteach gum bi ath-ghineamhainn nàdarra air a chleachdadh airson coilltean gnèitheach a leudachadh.	FC, CnES	Àrd	Meadhanach	Manaidsearan-fearainn, ST, SIAT	4
1.5	SFGS - Foirmean-iarrtais a chruthachadh a tha furasta an lionadh agus nach iarr cus ùine.	FC	Àrd	Meadhanach		5
1.6	Rannsachadh air mar a dh'fhaodar barrachd feum a dhèanamh den taic a tha ann cheana (m.e. airson criosan-fasgaidh) a bheir brosnachadh do phlanntachadh agus leasachadh choilltean gnèitheach. A bhith a' cur air adhart argamaid airson barrachd obrachaidh/taic airson Sgeama Stiùbhartachd Dùthchail.	CnES	Àrd	Meadhanach	SEERAD, SNH, SAC, FC	5
1.7	Cothrom air Tàilleabh Làraich SFGS a chur air beulaibh an t-sluaigh agus coimhearsnachdan croitearachd agus manaidsearan fearainn a mhisneachadh gus cur air a shon.	FC	Àrd	Meadhanach	SEERAD, SNH, SAC, CnES, SCF	5
2	Dion agus Rianachd Làraich					
2.1	Tòiseachadh air rianachd coilltean leth-ghnèitheach gus ath-ghineamhainn a bhrosnachadh.	SNH	Àrd	Meadhanach	Manaidsearan-fearainn, FC, SNH, SIAT	3
2.2	Tòiseachadh air prògram cruinneachadh sil, leudachaidh agus planntachaidh airson nan gnèithean a tha ann an cunnart (leithid calltainn agus aiteann) agus airson craobhan coille gnèitheach nan eilean.	FC, CnES	Àrd	Meadhanach	Manaidsearan-fearainn, ST, SIAT	4
2.3	Stèidheachadh ceàrnaidhean coille gnèitheach ann an gàrraidhean-sgoile agus sa choimhearsnachd air fad a mhisneachadh i.e. ceàrnaidhean air an cur agus air an rianachd leis a' choimhearsnachd. Daoine a mhisneachadh gu bhith a' cur chraobhan coille gnèitheach sa ghèrradh aca fhèin.	CnES	Àrd	Meadhanach	SIAT, FC	2, 3, 6
3	Comhairle					
3.1	Pròiseactan taisbeanaidh a chur air dòigh sna buidhnean eileanach gus mothachadh a leudachadh air na buannachdan an lùib ath-ghineamhainn choilltean gnèitheach. Amas air daoine a tha a' dèanamh seo gu soirbheachail agus ullachadh dòigh airson fiosrachadh agus comhairle a cho-roinn.	CnES	Meadhanach	Goirid	SNH, SWT, SAC, SCF	6
3.2	Stiùireadh coitcheann a chur ri chèile, agus dòigh èifeachdach (no feum a dhèanamh de dhòigh a tha ann cheana) gus conaltradh ri com-pàirtichean croitearachd agus manaidsearan fearainn airson rianachd agus cumail suas fad-ùine nan coilltean a tha ann agus an fheadhainn air an cur às ùr. Dh'fhaodadh an stiùireadh seo a bhith a' gabhail a-staigh fiosrachaidh agus comhairle mu: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rianachd san fhad-ùine; • taghadh gnèitheach; • lorg gnèithean ionadail; • suidheachadh ùire; • àiteachan planntachaidh; • meud agus cumadh phlanntachaidhean; • pòran gnèitheach airson lios-àraich; • falaisgean; • rianachd ionaltraidh; • sgeamaichean ionmhasail; • lionadh foirmean-iarrtais airson sgeamaichean. 	CnES	Àrd	Meadhanach	SEERAD, FC, Manaidsearan-fearainn, SAC, SNH, SCF	2
4	Sgrùdadh agus Rannsachadh					
4.1	Sgrùdadh a dhèanamh air coilltean leth-ghnèitheach & cunntas a chur ri chèile.	SNH	Àrd	Goirid	SIAT, ST, CnES	1
4.2	Coilltean leth-ghnèitheach a chomharrachadh agus a chur an òrdugh tàbhachd airson tòiseachadh gan rianachd (bonntaichte air iomadachd gnèitheach agus comas leudachaidh).	SNH	Àrd	Goirid	Manaidsearan-fearainn, CnES	1
4.3	Rannsachadh a dhèanamh mun atharrachadh ginteil eadar gnèithean air fìr-mòr agus sna h-eileanan agus an t-atharrachadh eadar gnèithean nas ionadail, leithid eadar-dhealachaidhean bho eilean gu eilean agus eadhon cladaich siar gu cladaich sear.	SNH	Àrd	Meadhanach	FC, SEERAD, CnES	4
5	Conaltradh & Follaiseachd					
5.1	Iomairt 'latha coimhead an dèidh craibhe' a stèidheachadh far am bi coimhearsnachdan air am misneachadh gu cùram a ghabhail mu na coilltean aca.	CnES	Àrd	Meadhanach	SIAT, FC,	2, 3, 6

GIORRACHADH:

CnES	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	SEERAD	Roinn na h-Àrainneachd & Chùisean Dùthchail Riaghaltais na h-Alba
Curracag	Comann Eòlas Nàdair nan Eilean Siar	SIAT	Urras Ghoireasan nan Eilean a Deas
DCS	Ùghdarras nam Fiadh an Alba	SNH	Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba
FC	Ùghdarras nan Coilltean	ST	Urras Steòrnabhaigh
RSPB	Comann Rìoghail Dion nan Eun	SWT	Urras Fhiadh-bheatha na h-Alba
SAC	Colaiste Àiteachais na h-Alba	WIE	Iomairt nan Eilean Siar
SCF	Urras Croitearachd na h-Alba	WITB	Bòrd Turasachd nan Eilean Siar

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...the objectives of this plan are to reverse the adverse trends affecting native woodlands...



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Photos (left to right):

Alder; Birch woodland; Lews Castle Grounds, Stornoway.

Dealbhan (clì gu deas):

Feàrna; Coille beithe; Làrach Caisteal Leòdhais, Steòrnabhagh.



... 'S e amas an a' phlana seo a bhith a' atharrachadh nan gluasadan millteach a tha a' toirt buaidh air coilltean gnèitheach

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Photographs courtesy of Jon Hollingdale, Alasdair Banks, SNH & RSPB, Lews Castle Trust.

Dealbhan le cead bho Jon Hollingdale, Alasdair Banks, SNH & RSPB, Urras Caisteal Leòdhas.

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