

## **Common grazings in Scotland – assessing their value and rewarding their management**

*Gwyn Jones, European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism, 5/8  
Ellishadder, Culnancnoc, Portree IV51 9JE, United Kingdom. [info@efncp.org](mailto:info@efncp.org)*

### ***Abstract***

Common grazings make up c.13% of actively farmed land in Scotland, are used by 22% of all Single Farm Payment claimants and account for around 20% of Scotland's semi-natural, High Nature Value, farmland. Though only 7% of Scotland's land area, they account for around 27% of the land surface under a nature conservation designation, 10% of the soil carbon, 15% of peat soils and 30% of peat deposits >2m deep.

Though it has been a statutory requirement to keep a register of crofters' common grazings (probably 95% of the total area), there is no register of all common land, and in any case, support given on or to common grazings cannot be separately identified.

Support delivery to common grazings comes mainly through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and is delivered by two routes: through the individual shareholder and through the grazings committee. First pillar and disadvantaged area (LFA) support go to the individual on a historic or quasi-historic basis. Any move to an individually-based non-historic area payment would disadvantage active graziers, who would be paid according to their forage share, not the area of land they actually graze.

Agri-environment, afforestation and woodland management support is delivered through the grazings committee. However at least 1 in 5 grazings has no current institutions and in possibly another 20% they are moribund or have very limited capacity. In grazings where there is an active committee, support delivery is made difficult by the need to agree both on participation and on the disbursement of funds.

The programming logic set out for EU Rural Development Plans implies a description of the initial situation, a needs assessment, choosing and costing measures and delivery mechanisms having regard to the social, economic and environmental realities and monitoring and evaluating by the establishment of baseline and impact indicators. None of these are in place for common grazings in Scotland.

Scotland highlights the difficulties involved in matching the delivery of public policy goals through institutions first formalised legally almost 130 years ago. Unlike in many jurisdictions, such institutions do at least exist; they may be suitable for delivering new policy goals in principle but they definitely need capacity building and ongoing support. To have any chance of success, the measures and regulations through which policy is delivered must be designed with common grazings in mind from the start, not ex post as at present, and their performance on common grazings should be specifically monitored and evaluated.

Keywords: CAP, Scotland, IACS, grazings institutions, governance

## **Introduction**

### ***Common grazings in Scotland***

Scotland is a country of almost 79,000 km<sup>2</sup>, which makes up the northern third of the United Kingdom. Since the Union of 1707 it has remained an independent jurisdiction, retaining its own private law, including land law. Since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it has had an ever-increasing amount of administrative autonomy, culminating in the re-establishment of a Scottish Parliament in 1999. Devolved matters include agriculture, rural and regional development and environment policies.

Alasdair Ross (Ross 2008) shows how almost all of Scotland's mountainous so-called wastes were legally subdivided between different communities by at least the year 1000 – a time before the consolidation of the Scottish State per se. Robin Callander (Callander 2003) quotes estimates that half of the country was still in common land in 1500, but by

the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most of these were in private use, the result of a series of Acts of the Scottish Parliament in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Most surviving common grazing was and is located in the north and west of the country, where they were and are used by small-scale farmers called crofters. After the abolition of the hereditary feudal jurisdiction of local chieftains in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they became simply tenants at will of their landlords. This, combined with the Agricultural Revolution, in which Scots played a leading role, led to the so-called Highland Clearances, which continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this, the Scottish Highlands were by no means unique – what made them different, if anything, was that these acts of dispossession and privatisation of land were made in the era of mass politics and the mass media; these could both reflect and boost local self-confidence, which had by that time also been boosted by the establishment of dissenting churches in defiance of the same landlords.

These pressures led not only to the passing of the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act 1886, which established security of tenure, control of rents, etc., but also of the Crofters' Common Grazings Regulations (Scotland) Act 1891, which allowed for the setting up of grazings committees, gave them the power to set grazings regulations and established a mechanism of formal oversight by the State. The effect of these two Acts and their successors was firstly to *change* the situation in so far as the balance of power between the landlord, the several crofters and the State was concerned, but also to *fix* many aspects of what had been a rapidly changing socio-economic situation and the associated cultural landscape. One result, for example, is that common grazings, although representing only a modest proportion of Scotland's land area, is used by a disproportionate number of its farmers.

Despite clearly making up the bulk of land under crofting in Scotland, information on common grazings is not easy to come by. Forty years ago, Coull (Coull 1968) produced a map showing their approximate location, but there are, for example, no official maps available from the statutory regulator, the Crofters Commission. Katrina Brown (e.g.

Brown 2006) is the person who has gone furthest, producing many useful and interesting insights based on sampling methods, but again much of the background, scene-setting, information was based on estimates.

### ***Common grazings and public goods in Scotland***

The concept of ‘public goods’ is a new term for an old observation – that the producers of some services which in theory are valued by society find it very difficult, or even impossible, to convert this into a financial reward. Analysis shows that these services share common features – use by one consumer does not reduce their value for other consumers, at least not substantially or within the same time frame (there is no *rivalry* of consumption) and one consumer cannot stop others from enjoying the service (there is no *excludability*). Examples of services of this type include beautiful landscapes; high biodiversity; protection against soil erosion and carbon storage (Cooper, Hart, and Baldock 2009).

Common grazings consist almost solely of semi-natural vegetation. This is central to the delivery of all the public goods just named. What is not clear is the significance of Scottish common grazings and of common grazing systems in delivering such goods on a national, UK or EU level.

### ***The economic needs of the active grazier***

We need to digress somewhat here to illustrate the economics of crofting. Take a flock of 100 Blackface sheep in north-west Scotland. Sampled data (QMS 2010) show that the gross margin (i.e. output less variable costs) on such a flock before CAP support is GBP -756 (approx. €800). Fixed costs are dominated by labour, but there may be up to GBP 1000 of other costs. 100 ewes require 400 hours of labour (SAC figures), of which 200 currently come from outwith the family. Bought in, this would cost around GBP 1500; crofters increasingly have to spend money on labour as neighbours with whom they collaborated retire or die and are not replaced. The net cost of keeping 100 sheep could easily be GBP 2000 at present and reach GBP 3000 in the near future.

Most crofters are, unsurprisingly, part-time; the attractions of the wider economy are not just in a theoretical competition with crofting agriculture for their time, but are in actual competition just now. While keeping sheep as a ‘hobby’ or to ‘maintain tradition’ by cross-subsidising from their other employment is certainly a choice open to them, this implies a change of mindset which has until now has seen this activity as primarily *economic*, at least in principle (and in terms of self-justification). The current situation seems very unstable.

### ***Support for common grazings***

The Highlands and Islands of Scotland have a very seasonal production pattern and a high degree of natural disadvantage in the form of high rainfall, poorly-drained soils, steep slopes, high winds, poor accessibility and so on. Agriculture, based on the production of store calves and especially store lambs, has been supported by the State for at over 60 years, initially through headage and latterly through area-based payments. These have been both First Pillar (Single Payment Scheme, SPS, paid in Scotland on with reference to historic production levels, and the Scottish Beef Calf Scheme) and Second Pillar (Less Favoured Area Support Scheme, LFASS, also paid with reference to historic production).

Since the 1990s, support has also been directed at supporting the delivery of other public benefits, especially in the field of nature conservation. In the current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) programming period, the Community Strategic Guidelines on Rural Development (Council Decision 2006/144/EC) state that Member States are to focus measures under Axis 2 of EAFRD (Regulation (EC) 1698/2005), which is targeted at ‘Improving the Environment and the Countryside’, on ‘biodiversity and the preservation and development of high nature value farming and forestry systems and traditional agricultural landscapes; water; and climate change’. Common grazings deliver on all three of these objectives and should then in theory expect to benefit from such funding.

However, accessing payments from both these Pillars of the CAP poses actual or potential future problems for farmers with common grazings shares. In the case of the basic support payments of SPS and LFASS, money is paid per hectare of their official share in the grazings, not their actual share of livestock actually utilising the forage. It is clear that many shareholders are inactive – the public policy goals, whether in terms of continuing agricultural use and production or in terms of public goods, are being delivered on the whole area by a subset of the potential graziers. For the time being, they are not disadvantaged to a significant degree – payments are historically- based.

It is clear that such a situation is not likely to remain after 2013 – eleven years will have elapsed since the end of the reference period by then; claimants will have died; new entrants will want to claim; products and levels of productions will have changed. Because payments on common grazings are allocated by shares not proportion of grazing livestock, a move to a regionalised model of payment, with standard payments per hectare for all, has the potential to reduce significantly the income of crofters and to put them at a disadvantage relative to their farmer neighbours who do not use common grazings.

So CAP payments in these areas comprise two main elements: SPS, currently roughly equating to GBP 15 per sheep (the payments are area-based, but historically-based, while crofters tend to be conservative about stock numbers) and LFA payments, which are about GBP 7 per sheep. A crofter who claims the payments can therefore change his loss on sheep keeping into a very modest profit. Meanwhile the return to the crofter's own labour and that of his family is less than half the minimum wage, even with subsidy. Any reduction in the amount a crofter can claim could have serious consequences, while access to appropriate Pillar 2 funds over and above LFA payments could make a big difference to the net profit.

However, the decoupled nature of the SPS and, to a lesser extent, LFA payments, throws in a complicating factor. The crofter might be able to claim his payments *without* keeping the sheep, allowing him to avoid all his costs and earn a higher wage in the wider

economy. But the only way he can do this is if some *other* crofter keeps the land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC), that is, continues to graze the land. Active graziers are therefore both essential for the inactive claimants and subsidise them.

So what about other Rural Development funding? Except in the case of the LFA measure (they are in this regard more like First Pillar direct payments), the issues are somewhat different. Whereas SPS and LFA are claimed individually, agri-environment payments can only be claimed collectively, through the regulatory institution, the grazings committee. Grazings with no committee cannot access the funds, but even when committees exist, these schemes potentially open up new issues of decision making, new power relations between active and inactive shareholders, new issues of income and expenditure distribution and so on.

### ***The project***

The project, which was funded by the European Commission (DG Environment), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Scottish Natural Heritage, Shetland Islands Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Highland Council, had four broad aims:

- To give a snapshot of common grazings and their use in Scotland in 2010
- To provide some information on the relative significance of common grazings, economically, socially and environmentally
- To assess the degree to which shareholders on common grazings experience now or will potentially experience after 2013 disadvantages in accessing CAP funding relative to their importance and to the difficulties faced by comparable claimants with no common grazings
- To set the findings in a policy context, and set out recommendations for action.

### **Methods**

Data on all of Scotland's common grazings is not collected anywhere. However, forage claims on common grazings are made through a specific question – question 2 - of the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) form used to claim SPS and other CAP schemes. The Scottish Government was asked to provide data by parish (NUTS IV)

of the number of claimants claiming SPS with any forage declared at q.2, the total number of SPS claimants, the total area claimed at q.2 and the total area claimed. They were also asked to give the total area of all the parcels for which any forage was claimed at q.2.

Data relating to the number of actual claimants compared to the total number of possible claimants was gathered around  $\frac{1}{4}$  of all common grazings. This data was made available by the Scottish Government at its local offices, where spreadsheets have been prepared to calculate the forage share for each registered shareholders on more or less every grazings. Data was gathered for all common grazings in two area offices.

Data on actual use, on participation in schemes and on attitudes and perceptions was gathered through a stratified random sample of grazings clerks (officers of grazings committees). Using contact information supplied by the Crofters Commission, a sample was drawn up of approximately half the grazings in approximately half the parishes. The general principle was that parishes were arranged by number of grazings and alternate parishes chosen, though some adjustment was made to allow for some returns from all regions and to adjust for the low number of large grazings with many shareholders found in Shetland. Within the parishes, grazings were listed alphabetically and taken in this order until the set number of grazings had been sampled. The sample took the form of a standard questionnaire; most questions were closed, although there was an opportunity for other feedback where appropriate.

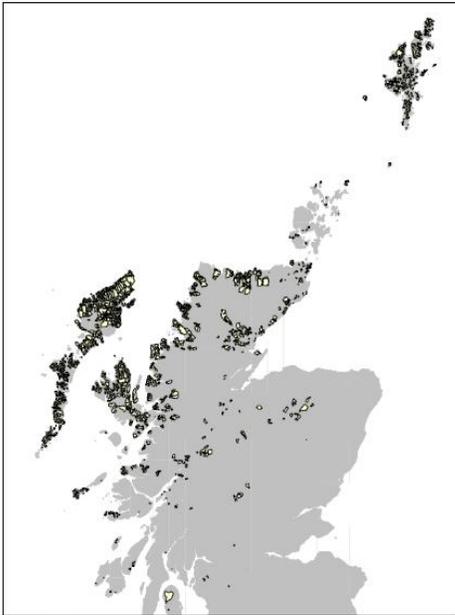
Interim results of the project were discussed in 3 meetings with groups of shareholders and with the Board of Directors of the Scottish Crofting Federation.

## **Results**

### ***Common grazings in Scottish agriculture***

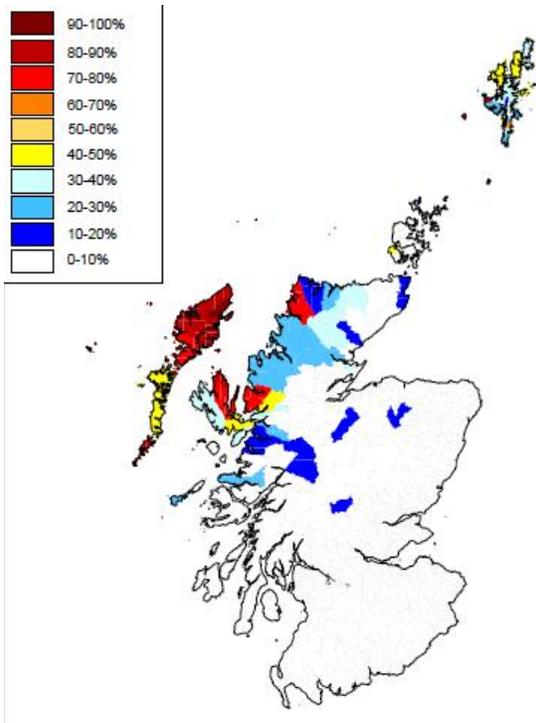
Common grazings extend to 591,901 ha (Scottish Government 2010a). 360,360 ha were used to claim SPS in 2009, on parcels whose total extent was 537,615 (54,286 ha are

therefore on parcels none of whose forage was declared in IACS 2009). The distribution of this land is shown in Fig. 1.

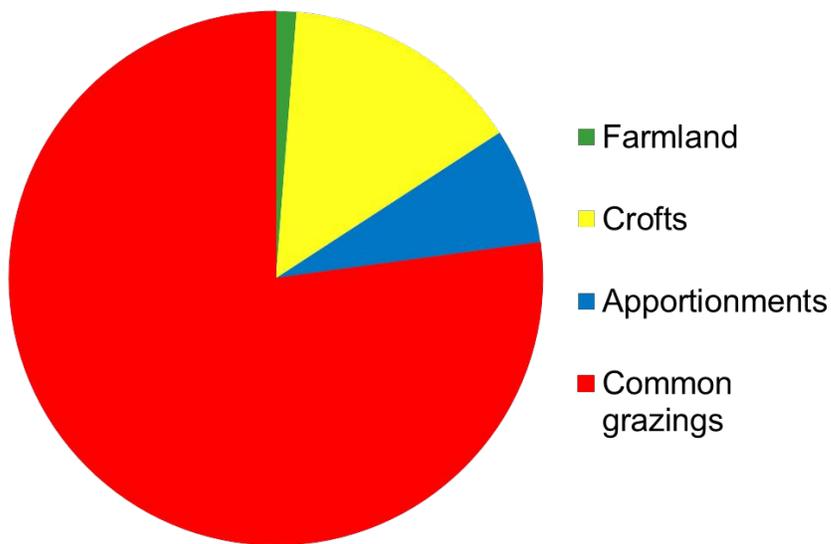


**Figure 1. Parcels declared at the common grazings question in 2009 IACS**

Common grazings are around 9% of all IACS-claimed land and about 24% of IACS-claimed rough grazing land; the geographical variation is shown in Fig. 2. In parishes dominated by crofting land use, common grazing land can account for 80% or more of the total farmed area – Fig. 3 illustrates this using Kilmuir on the Isle of Skye.

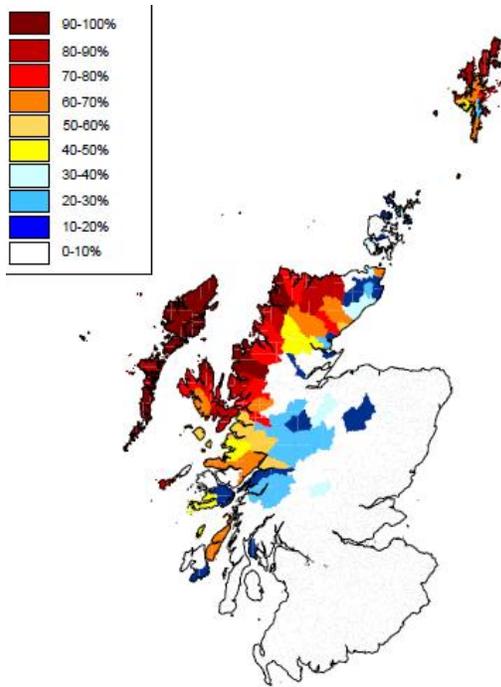


**Figure 2. Percentage of all IACS-declared land declared as common grazings, by parish (NUTS IV)**



**Figure 3. Agricultural land types in Kilmuir parish, Skye**

There are 4425 claimants with common grazings, or 20.55% of all claimants. The distribution of these claimants is even more concentrated geographically, illustrating the small size of these holdings compared to the average Scottish farm (Fig. 4).



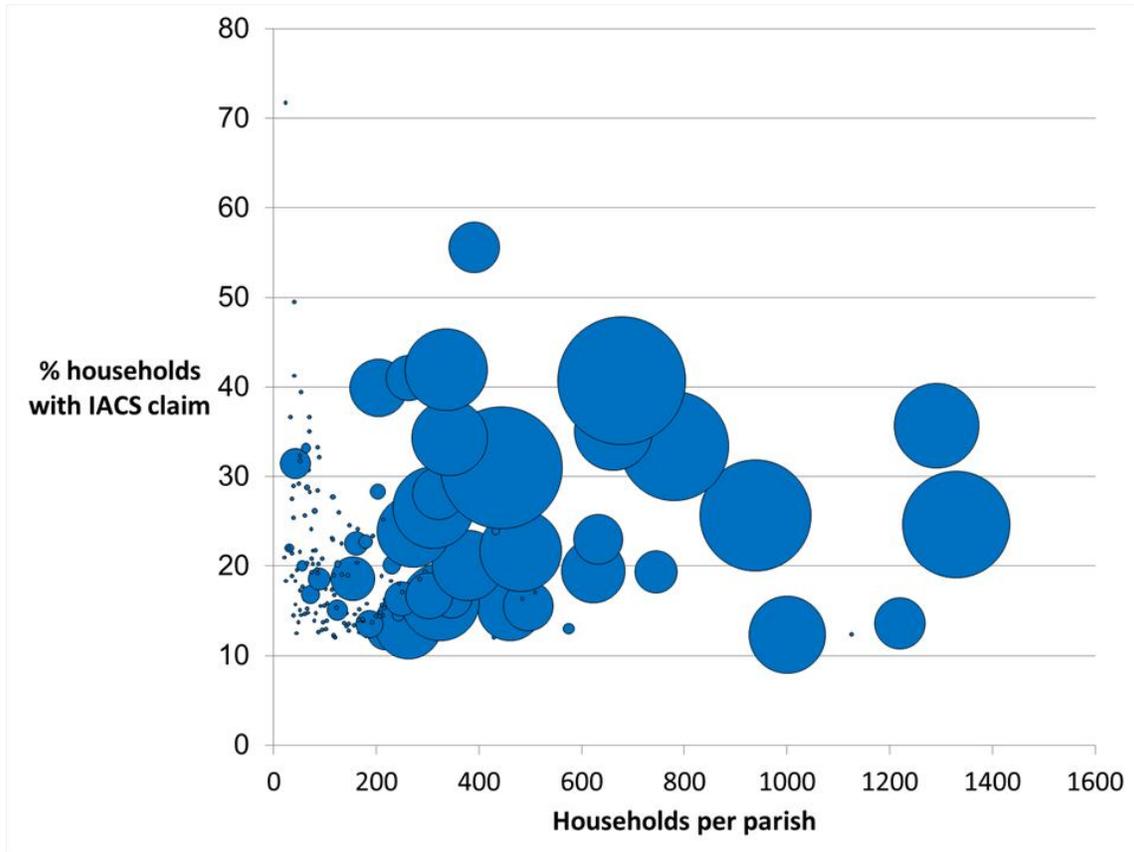
**Figure 4. Percentage of all IACS claimants declaring common grazing in 2009, by parish (NUTS IV)**

In terms of production volumes, they are much less significant; we estimate that they carry approximately 2.5% of grazing livestock over 1 year old, and possibly 10% of Scottish breeding flock.

### ***Common grazings and public goods***

If the maintenance of an agriculturally-active population in the most marginal areas is a public policy goal, the distribution of grazings and their importance in terms of area of forage to their users gives common land a disproportionate significance. Fig. 5 combines agricultural data with household survey information for all the parishes in Scotland with over 12% of households claiming IACS. It can be seen that virtually all of the parishes with where IACS numbers are high also have a large area of common grazings.

HIE has identified 65 parishes as being officially socio-economically ‘Fragile’; 52 contain claimed common grazings, but these parishes also contain 69% both of *all* claimants with common grazings and *all* claimants in the country.



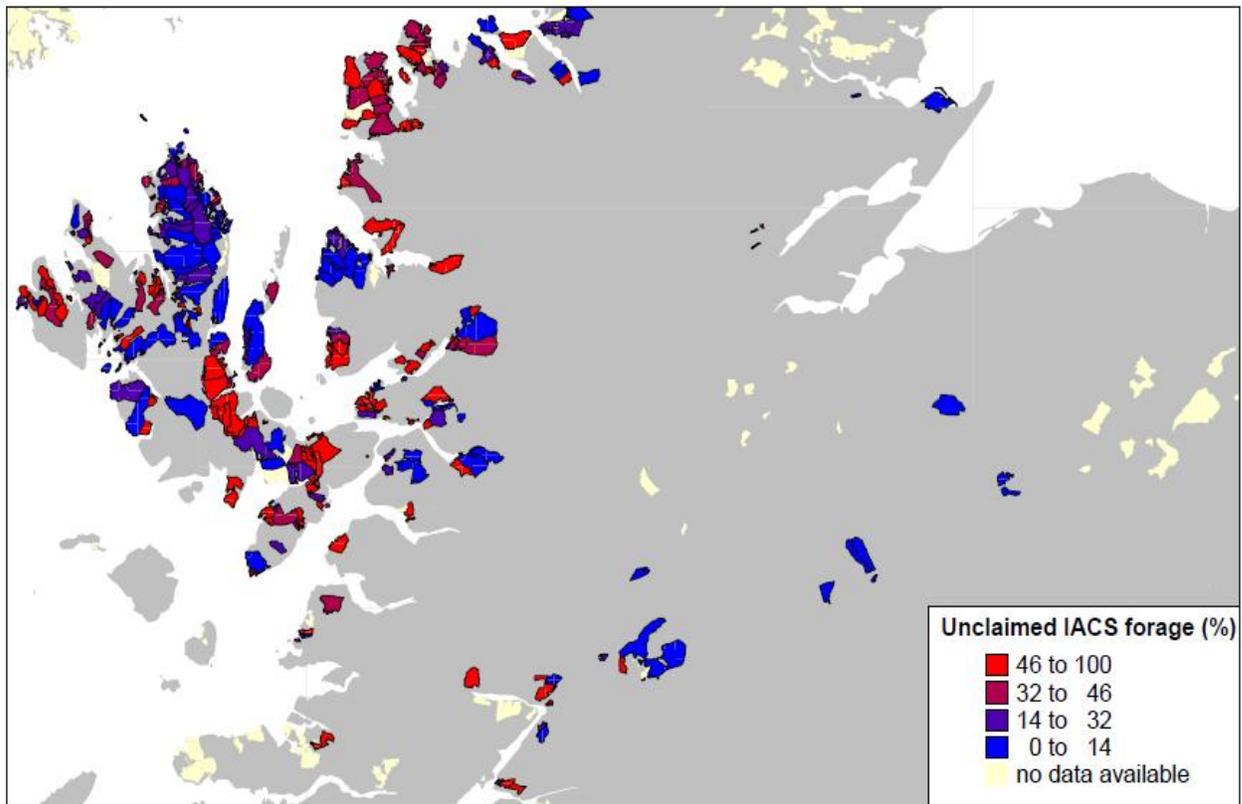
**Figure 5. Relationship between relative importance of agriculture by households (number of IACS claimants per parish) and common grazings area in the same parish. Area of dots proportional to declared grazings area.**

In terms of services which are even more clearly public goods, we estimate that common grazings account for somewhere between 15% and 20% of farmed semi-natural vegetation in Scotland. Semi-natural vegetation farmed at low intensity is at the heart of the ‘High Nature Value’ farming referred to in the Community Strategic Guidelines. Their international importance for conservation is illustrated by the fact that not only is 27.5% of them under some nature designation, but they are almost twice as likely to be a Special Protection Area under the Birds Directive as an average area of Scottish land. They also are particularly important for carbon storage in deep peat, with 30% of the total Scottish resource on 7% of the total land area.

***Support for common grazings***

The total land used to claim SPS in Scotland in 2009 was 4,176,623 ha; common grazings is 8.63% of this total. However, taking into account the unclaimed forage on

parcels which are nevertheless being maintained in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC), common grazings account for 12.8% of all such land. This unclaimed forage amounts to 177,624 ha, on average 37% of the area of the parcels included in claims. Based on the area office based subsample, the distribution is skewed, with quartiles at 14, 32 and 46% (Fig. 6). (Compare that figure to the 57% of *shareholders* who do not claim, at least in the sample area.)



**Figure 6. Percentage of unclaimed IACS forage by common grazing, 2009. From SG local office data**

Fig 7 compares IACS forage per claiming shareholder and actual forage per claiming shareholder for the same grazings, again for the subsample. Note the claimant who has an IACS claim of 22 ha of forage, while actually using 502 ha – in a shift from historic to non-historic payments, and assuming an overall status quo implementation in which a non-common grazings using claimant would get the same payment as at present, this crofter could lose over 95% of his SPS and LFA payments.

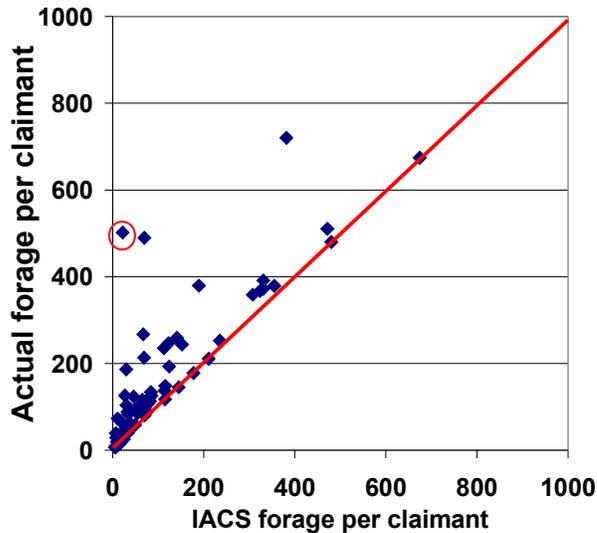


Figure 7. Comparison of average declared IACS forage (total IACS forage declared/IACS claimants) versus actual forage used per claimant (total eligible area of claimed parcels/no. IACS claimants) in 2009. From SG local office data. Circled data point referred to in text.

We had no data on the overall uptake of rural development measures against which to compare the uptake by common grazings, nor of the total uptake by common grazings committees. We did however ask the grazings clerks about uptake. 63% of the sampled grazings were in no scheme, while the greatest uptake was of the first afforestation of farmland measure – for taking land *out* of High Nature Value farming! Almost all the other participants were still in ‘legacy’ schemes from previous programming periods, not open to new applicants. Only around 1% of all the grazings were participating in the currently-open entry-level Land Managers’ Options Scheme and a similar percentage were in the discretionary Rural Priorities Scheme.

66% of clerks stated that accessing schemes was more difficult for them than for a hill farm (this reached 90% in Shetland and Orkney). 30% of those who responded in this way thought that the scheme rules were the main issue, while the other 70% cited social reasons – difficult in obtaining shareholders’ agreement and lack of trust.

### *Attitudes amongst grazings clerks*

This leads us to the final topic of the project’s enquiries – the adequacy of grazings committees and grazings regulations set up under the Crofting Acts to deal with these

various issues in principle and the capacity and attitudes of grazings clerks who, as the ‘sharp end’ of these institutions, would be most involved in mediating between the body of shareholders and the State.

The first, important, point to be made is that some grazings are not regulated and/or have no committee. There are at least 10,000 ha of grazing land outwith the jurisdiction of the Crofters Commission; they *could* have grazings institutions, since the provisions of the 1891 Act were extended to all ‘small landholders’ in Scotland in 1911, but this is an area of great uncertainty requiring further investigation.

The Crofters Commission (pers. comm.) estimates that around 20% of the *crofters* common grazings are completely unregulated – no committee, no regulations – while another 34% are technically unregulated. Such grazings would have had a committee and have regulations, but the Commission has not been notified of a current committee (possibly an oversight on the part of the clerk) and so no regulations are considered to be in force (although this may well not be the situation on the ground). While this seems a rather technical matter, it would seem that this third of the grazings are at very least somewhat lax with paperwork, which in itself is perhaps not insignificant, given that the issues raised are primarily bureaucratic.

The project enquired about a wide range of topics and the attitudes of clerks varied widely. We report here just two questions – who should be allowed to claim IACS forage (and how) and how agri-environment scheme money is disbursed. The second question was asked of scheme participants only.

In Scotland, grazings committees are allowed to reallocate unused grazings shares on an annual basis. The choices given to the clerks were therefore:

- Forage should only be claimed by shareholders active on the actual grazings
- Forage should only be claimed by shareholders active somewhere
- Forage could be claimed by any active farmer, under the control of the committee/clerk

- Forage could be claimed by any farmer (i.e. any claimant), under the control of the committee/clerk
- Forage could be claimed by any farmer (i.e. any claimant), with shares being reallocated by the shareholders personally [this last choice is not officially available]

Most areas felt that activity on the grazings should be the criterion for claiming, but in 3 of the 8 regions into which the sample was split, a substantial fraction felt that being active anywhere was felt to be enough as long as the claimant was a shareholder on the grazings. Around 10% of grazings overall felt that shares could be claimed by non-shareholders of some type.

Concerning the disbursement of agri-environment and forestry payments (for which the grazings committee is the eligible applicant in Scotland), we offered a range of options corresponding, informed by the author's experience as a farm advisor:

- Money disbursed to participating crofters only (i.e. a subset of the total)
- Money disbursed to all active graziers
- Money shared between participating crofters and the grazings account
- Money shared between all active crofters and the grazings account
- Money disbursed to all shareholders
- Money retained in the grazings account

A clear majority opted for the last option, with the others being more or less evenly split between distributing the money to all shareholders on the one hand and the various remaining options on the other.

## **Discussion**

### ***Role of grazings institutions***

We have shown that crofters are potentially very vulnerable to either a reduction in their direct payments or an inability to take advantage of available agri-environment payments. One potential solution lies with the governance institution ordained by statute – the grazings committee. The committee is entitled to claim agri-environment payments and to reallocate unused forage shares on a year by year basis. The question then is, to some

extent at least, how *willing* do committees seem to be to act on their powers and, importantly, how efficient is the transfer of money to the ‘right’ graziers?

We might pause momentarily to consider the question of the ‘right’ graziers. The condition for receipt of SPS is the maintenance of the land in GAEC – this is done by the active graziers, so in this case, the legitimate recipients would seem clear.

For agri-environment, it is not so clear. While we might wish it were otherwise, the main payments available so far have been for a reduction in flock numbers. This implies a commitment not only by the active (who have to do less), but also by the *inactive*, who have to continue to do nothing! (They can choose to start keeping sheep again of course, but only within the agreed ceiling, implying further negotiation with the always-active.) On the other hand, the *payment* is calculated purely with reference to the losses of the active grazier (though we showed previously to be how inactivity can be financially more attractive than activity!).

It is not surprising that this mish-mash of policy signals and reality has led to a certain conservatism on the part of grazings committee. It is against this background that we interpret what is at face value a rather surprising decision by the majority of committees to keep agri-environment monies within the grazings account. This is in fact a socially-acceptable way of not facing up to the question of disbursement. Money in the township bank account will be spent only on agriculture-related expenses – fencing, shearers, gatherers, livestock handling facilities and the like. While being indisputably in the common pot, to the *theoretical* benefit of all, the money *actually* benefits only the active (though the inactive may benefit indirectly by being relieved temporarily of their obligation to contribute towards urgent repairs, for example). Socially-elegant as this might be, it remains however a very inefficient, ‘leaky’, way of transferring money to the active grazier – the transaction costs are all too real.

In the case of SPS, we found that 22% of clerks were reallocating the forage shares of non-IACS-claimants to others submitting an IACS that year, with an unbelievable 67%

claiming to do so in Lewis and Harris. We should remind ourselves that ‘unused’ in this case means not used for claiming SPS and that for claiming SPS the claimant need have no actual livestock on the grazings, so this right of reallocation in itself requires some organisational capacity and the existence of a degree of respect for the institution on the part of individual graziers. However, it would seem that the people of Lewis and Harris at least have been able to overcome this not insignificant problem.

Does that mean that for SPS (and LFA payments), all is then well for the active grazier? Not really. We saw how both in Skye and the Uists and Barra – both major centres of crofting – a majority of clerks did not think that claiming forage should be limited to active graziers, while in Lewis and Harris and the north-west mainland roughly a quarter of clerks held this view. The popularity of the ‘shareholders active *somewhere*’ option reflects the unwillingness of clerks to condemn to a lower income those who are still at least active on their crofts or on smaller grazings – it was clear in our consultation meetings that while inactivity was seen as a problem, everyone understood how it came about: the economics demand it of the ‘rational’ crofter. The active grazier cannot therefore be sure that his committee will reward him for maintaining the whole grazings in GAEC.

This problem can only be magnified after 2013, when historically-based support is likely to be replaced by a uniform regionalised system of payments. Moreover, these are probably not going to be based on entitlements, established on a one-off basis at the start of the period, but limited only by the eligibility of the claimed land. Were this to come about, the pool of possible (inactive) claimants could expand markedly, putting further obstacles in the way of the active grazier being rewarded for his actual management of the land.

### ***Common grazings and policy-making***

Common grazings are, according to the data collected in this project, both socio-economically and environmentally significant. The administrative and social impediments to action which characterise them in principle can be shown to have

practical effects when it comes to accessing CAP payments, whether for income support or for rewarding environmental management. It is clear that mechanisms are designed for the sole use farm without *a priori* reference to common grazings. We identified a number of specific weaknesses in policy-making which helps to explain this poor fit:

- Lack of a truly integrated territorial vision.
- Lack of attention to common grazings by crofting bodies. There is no complete register of grazings, for example. Recent debates have centred on legal etc. issues relating to the croft itself (i.e. the enclosed farm). This lack of focus on grazings applies equally to crofter civil society organisations and government agencies.
- Inability to separate out common grazings (and crofts) in wider datasets. The recently-instituted series of reports on the Economic Condition of Crofting (Scottish Government 2010b), for example, cannot narrow down almost any of its statistics to the point where they truly describe the situation for crofting, let alone common grazings.
- Lack of attention to common grazings in policy strategies and programmes. The 2007-13 RDP (Scottish Government 2006) contains *no* references to common grazings within the main text and no measures which are either targeted at common grazings or which recognise their extra needs and higher transaction costs.
- Decreasing attention given to capacity building within grazings institutions, partially due to financial constraints, at a time when taking advantage of opportunities offered by policy requires considerable knowledge and confidence.

Scotland's common grazings systems are a good example of the mythical 'European Model of Agriculture' – socially-significant in the most marginal communities, producing high levels of public goods. They are fortunate in that they operate within a strong legal framework, but at present support measures both fail to work in ways which are well-suited to these arrangements and fail to build capacity in the governance institutions to take advantage of them when they do. We suggest that a good test for future CAP proposals in Scotland would be, 'how well do they work on common grazings?' Will this happen? Probably not, judging by Government's past record. A

good illustration perhaps of both marginality in policy making and lack of capacity and self-confidence on the part of graziers and their organisations – the problem itself prevents the problem being solved!

### ***Acknowledgements***

All maps kindly created by Emma Teuten, RSPB Scotland and reproduced under licence 100021787 by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of HMSO, Crown Copyright. We wish also to acknowledge the funders: European Commission (DG Environment); Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Scottish Natural Heritage; Shetland Islands Council; Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Highland Council. Also the assistance of the Scottish Government and Crofters Commission and the advice and help of the contractors who carried out the telephone survey (Donald Harrison, Colin MacDonald, Becky Shaw and Peter Dodge) and the crofters and others who attended meetings to discuss the findings.

### ***References***

- Brown, Katrina M. 2006. "New Challenges for Old Commons: The Role of Historical Common Land in Contemporary Rural Spaces." *Scottish Geographical Journal* 122 (2): 109 – 129.
- Callander, Robin. 2003. The history of common land in Scotland. Commonweal of Scotland - Working Paper No. 1 (Issue 2). Caledonia Centre for Social Development. [http://www.scottishcommons.org/docs/commonweal\\_1.pdf](http://www.scottishcommons.org/docs/commonweal_1.pdf).
- Cooper, Tamsin, Kaley Hart, and David Baldock. 2009. Provision of Public Goods through Agriculture in the European Union. Report to DG Agri. IEEP. [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/external/public-goods/report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/analysis/external/public-goods/report_en.pdf).
- Coull, James R. 1968. "Crofters' Common Grazings in Scotland." *Agricultural History Review* 16 (2): 142-154.
- QMS. 2010. *Cattle and Sheep Enterprise Profitability in Scotland*.
- Ross, Alasdair. 2008. Sustainable souming in Scotland: theory and practice (abstract only). In Lancaster. <http://commons.ncl.ac.uk/?q=system/files/SymposiumAbstracts1.pdf>.
- Scottish Government. 2006. Scotland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (as amended). <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/311173/0098233.pdf>.
- . 2010a. Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture 2010 Edition. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/315020/0100103.pdf>.
- . 2010b. Economic Condition of Crofting, 2007 – 2010. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/931/0109979.doc>.