

Peatland Action Fund and the SRDP - Eligibility Criteria

Peatland Action will **not** fund activities or parties that are eligible for funding under the current SRDP - Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) (which includes Improving Public Access (IPA)) or Forestry Grant Schemes (FGS). Where it can be demonstrated that there is an overall benefit to the public purse by doing some minor AECS/FGS eligible works, as part of a larger Peatland Action restoration project, we may exceptionally consider support. For example, if without the activities the project will not gain the wider/total site benefits.

Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) / Woodland Improvement Grant (FGS)

Management options available under AECS/FGS are not necessarily restricted to areas classified as 'rural'. However, there are various options that are only available within certain defined target areas. In AECS, for example, only land within target areas is eligible for the 'Lowland Bog Management' or 'Moorland Management' Options or for rhododendron control. (This [tool](#) shows whether a holding is within these target areas). In practice, virtually all moorland and lowland bog falls within the target areas. For rhododendron control under AECS, if your land is out with the target area, you must obtain an endorsement from SNH and submit this with your application. You can also do so for the Moorland Management option, though that should rarely be necessary.

In FGS, rhododendron control is also [targeted](#) and endorsement is needed from FCS or SNH if you wish to apply out with the target area.

Capital items

The following table lists the capital items available through AECS/FGS that can be relevant to peatland restoration. These items must normally be applied for alongside the relevant AECS/FGS annual recurrent management option:

Capital item	Management Option			
	AECS - Lowland Bog Management	AECS – Moorland Management	AECS – Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs	FGS – Woodland Improvement Grant ¹ (Habitat & Species)
**Ditch-blocking - plastic dams (small/med/large)	✓	✓	✓	✓
**Ditch-blocking - peat dams	✓	✓	✓ only with prior approval from SNH	✓
**Moving or realigning ditches (<i>only for land on or adjacent to an SSSI or Natura lowland bog/wetland</i>)	✓ only with prior approval from SNH	✗	✓	✗
**Control of scrub or woody vegetation (light/intermediate/heavy)	✓	✓	✗	✓

¹ In order to qualify for a WIG, no more than 20% of the area can be managed as open ground. To this end, peatlands could be managed in clearings, but a management plan to clear-fell trees over more than 20% of the management area would not be eligible.

Capital item	Management Option			
	AECS - Lowland Bog Management	AECS – Moorland Management	AECS – Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs	FGS – Woodland Improvement Grant (Habitat & Species)
**Rhododendron removal	✓	✓ if land within target area. But if land is not within target area an endorsement is required	✗	✓
Installation of stock fencing	✓	✓ if required for management	✓ if required to meet grazing management	✓
**Stock bridges	✓	✓	✓	✓
**Matting to prevent damage to bogs	✓	✓	✓	✗
Mulching	✗	✗	✗	✓
*Muirburn & heather cutting (This covers swiping)	✓	✓	✗	✗
*Heather restoration	✗	✓	✗	✗

Items marked with * are available on a stand-alone basis

Items marked with ** are available on a stand-alone basis, if you have prior approval from Scottish Natural Heritage (or Historic Environment Scotland in some instances) as appropriate, before applying. Otherwise, the item must be applied for alongside the relevant annual recurrent management option.

Access and interpretation – capital items

The following table lists the Access and Interpretation capital items that can be relevant to peatlands:

Capital item	Management Option				FGS – Woodland Improvement Grant (Habitat & Species)
	AECS - Lowland Bog Management	AECS – Moorland Management	AECS – Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs	AECS – Improving Public Access	
Interpretative materials	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Specialised access	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗

Ongoing management

The table below lists ongoing management activities that can be carried out under certain AECS/FGS management options:

Ongoing management activity	Annual recurrent management options			
	AECS - Lowland Bog Management	AECS – Moorland Management	AECS – Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs	FGS – Woodland Improvement Grant (Habitat & Species)
Management without grazing	✓	✗	✗	✗
Management with grazing	✓	✓	✓	✗
Stock disposal	✗	✓	✗	✗
Away wintering	✗	✓	✗	✗
Muirburn & heather cutting (includes swiping)	✓	✓	✗	✗
Open range deer management	✗	✓	✗	✗
Deer management	✗	✓	✗	✗

Peatland Action

There are no geographical restrictions or target areas for Peatland Action funding. Annual management payments will not be funded under the scheme. Peatland Action will consider funding the following work:-

- Bunding
- Combined drain/grip re-profiling and blocking
- Use of wave-dams (multiple peat dams formed from drain/grip walls and spaced <7m apart)
- Gully re-profiling
- Gully blocking
- Bare peat restoration
- Surface-smoothing and stump inversion
- Hag restoration
- Installation of sediment traps, timber or stone
- Mulching
- Re-use of felled to waste material (e.g. brash, mulch) in restoration
- Capital items for research projects and equipment
- Peat depth surveys*
- Restoration feasibility studies and site condition assessments*
- Collection & collation of baseline data*
- Baseline monitoring following the Peatland Action protocols
- Interpretative materials
- Specialised access
- Community initiatives that include restoration
- Innovative methods and trials as part of a restoration project

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* All data must be made publicly available.