



Reforesting Scotland welcomes the Committee's enquiry towards guiding the development of biomass as a sustainable renewable energy. It is essential that biomass is developed in a way that supports Scottish communities, enhances local environments and is respectful of the need to generate multiple benefits from Scotland's limited forest resource.

Supporting Scottish communities

Existing suppliers of wood fuel/ biomass are largely run by individual contractors on a small-scale. These suppliers are playing a crucial role in stimulating the biomass market and development of the supply chain. These individuals, meaningful jobs created, and relationships within the local supply chain, are critical to the integrity of the communities and environments in which they operate.

Biomass development should be small to medium-scale to support and increase meaningful employment from forest resources. Importantly biomass development should not create job loss through large-scale operations that offer lower priced fuel because they do not consider the real costs to the environment (through transport and processing) and local communities (through job loss or replacement with less meaningful jobs).

Enhancing local environments

Biomass development must be mindful of net environmental costs throughout the supply chain – from woodland management to delivery to the consumer. Critically, negative impact on landscape, biodiversity, environmental services, and carbon emissions must be kept to a minimum throughout the process. As such local biomass supply chains (with reduced transport emissions and sensitive management within multiple-use forests) must be supported where possible. In forest-rich, fuel-poor areas support to households for installing and sourcing logs (which require minimal processing) should be a priority.

Respectful of the multiple benefits that Scotland's forests provide

International agreements and the Scottish Forestry Strategy demonstrate Scotland's commitments to manage and use forests in a way that respects and enhances the environment, communities and economies in an integrated way. All forest land in Scotland can and should provide multiple benefits to the people of Scotland, in this and future generations, also in development of biomass.

Kristin Olsen
Development Officer
kristin@reforestingscotland.org