

Minister for Environment and Land Reform  
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Committee

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22 September 2022

Dear Edward,

### **Review of the Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement**

I would like to advise you that the Scottish Government has laid in Parliament a Revised Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement (LRRS) and accompanying Report to Parliament, as well as a copy of the Advisory Notes to the LRRS. I attach copies of these for the Committee's interest.

The LRRS was revised follow a consultation and review carried out under Part 1 of the Land Reform (Scotland 2016) Act ("the 2016 Act"). Section 2(4) of the 2016 Act places a statutory obligation upon Scottish Ministers to review the first Statement before the end of the period of 5 years beginning with the day on which the Scottish Ministers published the statement. The first Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement was published on 28 September 2017, and the first review must therefore be completed by 27 September 2022. In undertaking this review, section 2(5) requires Scottish Ministers to consult such persons as they consider appropriate.

Following this review, section 2(6) sets out the steps that Scottish Ministers must take if they consider that it is not appropriate to prepare a revised statement, whilst section 2(7) sets out the steps that must be taken if they consider that it is appropriate to prepare a revised statement.

Having undertaken this review, Scottish Ministers consider that it is appropriate to prepare a revised statement, and are therefore required to comply with section 2(7), which sets out that they publish the revised statement and lay it before the Scottish Parliament, along with a report setting out the consultation process undertaken and the reasons why they consider that it is appropriate to prepare a revised statement.

This report has today been laid before Parliament under section 2(7)(b) of the 2016 Act, alongside a copy of the revised Statement, and the accompanying revised Advisory Notes.

Having assessed the evidence from the consultation in the context of wider developments in recent years references to a just transition to net zero, natural capital, and sustainability have been added to the Vision. Minor changes to the Principles, and the addition of a new Principle, seek to address a common theme which emerged in responses, namely the need to reference the wider benefits/common good that responsible land ownership, management and use can deliver. Further details are set out in the Report to Parliament.

The Committee will also be aware that we are currently consulting on proposals for the next Land Reform Bill. Those proposals include the strengthening of the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement. The current review is separate from the Bill proposals.

We remain committed to progressing land reform, to ensure that our land supports a sustainable future for the benefit of all the people of Scotland, and I look forward to continuing to work closely with you on this.

Yours sincerely,

**Màiri McAllan**