The barriers of woodland creation in Scotland. A review of the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) and tree planting on Tenanted land

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If Scotland is to achieve the aims set out by the *Indicative Forest Strategy,* Scottish Forestry must address the unnecessary ‘red tape’ of the current ‘*SRDP2’ Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS).*

‘*The Mackinnon review’* (2016) was undertaken to address this issue within Scottish Forestry, who were (*and still are*) failing to meet their planting targets.

This study aims to investigate the impact of the following aspects on woodland creation targets:

1. Integral Barriers within the FGS
2. The *outcome* of the Mackinnon review
3. Barriers preventing Tenant Farmers from planting

The results revealed a series of existing flaws within the FGS, as well as flaws in the ‘pre- consultation’ process which was brought forward by Scottish Forestry to embellish the recommendations of the Mackinnon review.

It also became clear that tenant farmers are restricted primarily by the *Agricultural Holdings Legislation* (*2003*) and their ongoing ‘relationship’ with their landlord.

Furthermore, the integrity of Scottish Forestry – the FGS paying agency – is in complete despair, emphasising the importance of addressing external barriers (*e.g. staff autonomy, education and training*) in assessing the ‘bigger picture.’

The findings can be used to provide recommendations for the revision of the FGS (2024). Evidence gathered through semi-structured interviews will encourage changes to be made, without showing a ‘vested interest’ from public or private organisations.