

SEA SCREENING PROFORMA

No.	Question	
	Body	Deer Commission for Scotland (the Commission)
	Plan	Corporate Plan 2005-2008
	Link	http://www.dcs.gov.uk/i_documents.htm
	Date of first formal preparatory act	the plan has just recently been put under review
	Date of adoption	at some point in 2005
1	Characteristics of plans and programmes	
a	To what degree does the plan or programme set a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources?	<p>The Corporate Plan succeeds the previous Corporate Plan 2002-2005. It lays out the objectives and key tasks for the Commission for the next three years. It is the working document which is developed to meet the requirements of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 and those of the Scottish Executive.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan sets the framework for all of the Commission's activities throughout Scotland (key objectives, tasks and the broad allocation of resources). This is based on three key strategic aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. to integrate deer management into wider public policyii. to stimulate effective, safe and well founded local deer management throughout Scotlandiii. to work within these strategic aims and the wider Commission vision, efficiently and effectively <p>Although the Commission has no direct developmental control i.e. the ability to distribute grants or aid, it currently plays, and seeks to increase, its role in influencing and advising public policy and therefore possible development directions (specifically in relation to land use in more rural areas).</p>
b	To what degree does the plan or programme influence other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy?	<p>The Corporate Plan is guided primarily by the Commission's <i>Long Term Strategy</i> (2001), which in turn lays out the strategy for realising the Commission's <i>Vision for Wild Deer in Scotland</i> (2000).</p> <p>The Commission also produces an Annual Plan based on the Corporate Plan, which in turn requires an Annual Report. The Annual Report is the formal and public mechanism for reporting on progress on the Long Term</p>

Strategy, the Corporate Plan and the relevant Annual Plan.

A key strategic aim of the Corporate Plan is:

“To have public policy and priorities for deer management, welfare and damage in Scotland integrated into the wider rural and policy context.

The Corporate Plan is therefore aimed at linking to (or influencing to a degree) a whole range of plans and programmes within Scotland which relate to land use and the management of land i.e. agriculture, forestry, tourism and recreation etc. The Corporate Plan also has a significant bearing on the planning and programming of other agencies in Scotland, specifically those responsible for natural heritage, such as Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

In addition, the Commission is part of a joint working team, including SNH, the Forestry Commission and SEERAD set up specifically to look at joint working to achieve effective deer management and ensure public safety.

c What is the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development?

Section 1(1)(a) of The Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 states that the Commission shall:

further the conservation, control and sustainable management of deer in Scotland.....”

The Corporate Plan specifically has objectives concerned with reconciling the positive and negative economic, social and environmental aspects of deer management in Scotland to try and ensure a more sustainable approach is achieved.

d What environmental problems are relevant to the plan or programme?

At this stage of the process, the main SEA Directive topics of concern appear to be Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna, Landscape, Public Health, water resources etc.

There are also economic and social impacts, which may effect local populations and it must be noted some of these “problems” can also be benefits (i.e. landscape and habitat change) when managed properly, which the Commission seeks to achieve.

e What is the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)?

The work of the Commission in general, and the remit of the Corporate Plan in particular, are of relevance to a range of EU legislation on the environment, specifically in relation to habitats and species protection. The active management of wild deer in Scotland has the potential to affect habitats and also therefore, other species both beneficially and adversely. Without management however, it is likely that the impact on habitats would be predominantly adverse as deer have no natural predators in the UK and at certain population densities can cause serious damage.

Relevant Community legislation includes:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) encompassing Special Areas of Conservation ▪ Bird Directive (79/409/EEC) encompassing Special Protection Areas. ▪ These 2 Directives underpin a European network of protected areas know as Natura 2000.
2	Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected	
a	What is the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects?	Habitat or species loss as a result of future deer management could potentially be irreversible and permanent; however this is unlikely given the strategic aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan. What are more probable are localised impacts on landscape and / or habitats which hopefully will be beneficial but if adverse should be reversible over time.
b	What is the cumulative nature of the effects?	The cumulative impact of local deer management has the potential to be significant at larger geographical levels both, adversely e.g. habitat loss, landscape change, land use conflict and beneficially e.g. habitat improvement, significant employment and tourism potential.
c	Are there any transboundary effects?	There are no transboundary effects within the terms of the Directive.
d	What are the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)?	There may be some minor direct impacts on human health e.g. in relation to Lyme's disease. The main direct impact is the potential for serious vehicular accidents on public roads.
e	What is the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)?	Direct impacts will mostly occur at the local level i.e. within the geographical confines of individual deer management areas but the Corporate Plan covers Scotland and will therefore also result in impacts at the wider Scottish level.
f	What is the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:	
	(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;	(i) The whole of Scotland is potentially the area which could be affected, however impacts are likely to be greatest at the local level. Issues relating to natural heritage will be dealt with through a Priority Site process using local deer management plans.
	(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or	(ii) There are no EQSs or limit values of relevance to this plan.
	(iii) intensive land-use	(iii) The Commission is specifically trying to reduce any damage caused by deer grazing by advising on the control of population densities.

g What are the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status?

Any additional information

Due to the nature of the issue, that of dealing with Scotland's populations of wild deer, much of the work undertaken by the Commission will be in areas designated and protected for a range of landscape and natural heritage reasons, from local designations to international protection status.

Much of the work detailed in the Corporate Plan is concentrating on ensuring that important natural heritage (both designated and undesignated) is not damaged by wild deer populations. The issue is extremely complex as the deer themselves make up an important part of Scotland's natural heritage.

The Corporate Plan is a working document which stems from the wider aims and objectives of the Deer Commission. There are two higher level documents which set the context for the rolling 3 year Corporate Plans, these are:

DCS: A Long Term Vision – this document was published in 2000 based on extensive consultation and details the overall vision for wild deer management in Scotland for the next 15 to 20 years. When this is revised it is likely to fall under the proposed SEA Bill.

DCS: Long Term Strategy – this document published in 2001 builds on the Vision, directing the work of the DCS towards more specific actions. This will be reviewed every 5 years and provides the direct context for the Corporate Plans. This will fall under the proposed SEA Bill.

The Commission is unsure as to whether the Corporate Plan should be subject to SEA. The core rationale for the Commission is the effective and safe management of wild deer in Scotland, with effective management meaning the need to find a balance between wider environmental, social and economic concerns and the welfare and conservation of the deer themselves. The Commission is committed to the principles of sustainable development and appreciates the potential impacts their work has on the environment of Scotland.