**National Park Commission - SAG 5-2 - Description of the approach to the survey analysis**

**Purpose**

**This paper provides a description of the approach taken to the analysis of the consultation. SAG members are asked to note and comment on the paper.**

*Overview*

1. The consultation questions were hosted on the SmartSurvey platform. We bought a licence for four months for the mid-range option, which enabled a wider range of question formats. SmartSurvey made it easier for us to receive responses, and we could export the individual question responses to a master spreadsheet.
2. The survey opened on 6th October and was closed on Friday 2nd December, to allow for a few late responses, which we had been notified of, after the formal closing date of 30th November. We received a small number of questions about filling in the survey via the general mailbox, which we addressed.
3. The total number of responses submitted was 230. Many more surveys (over 800) were begun than submitted; it was only on reading these that they were seen as having been opened and viewed but not filled in. Twenty respondents sent narratives rather than replies within the SmartSurvey format. These narratives ranged from responses to all questions, through responses to some questions, to general observations or information. To allow for ease of analysis, we allocated each point made in the general letters to a survey question, including Q38 (the catch-all question).
4. All questions were qualitative, with free text rather than tick boxes. This provided richer information and more in-depth opinions but meant they were more difficult, and time-consuming, to analyse.

*Preparation for Analysis*

1. The analysis would be key to help NatureScot write a robust, evidence-based report on the consultation. Fundamentally, for each question, we particularly wished to know:

* Is there consensus on this issue? and
* What are the top three points to report on and inform our Advice to Ministers?

1. To enable the task to be completed quickly, we recruited an internal team of 10 people (8.6 FTE) to review the responses, with each analyst allocated around four questions. The following steps were taken to ensure efficiency and consistency in our approach:

* Coding of all respondents: numbered from 1-230, and categorised as either individuals or types of organisations - as indicated in Annex 1. Allocation of codes was drafted and checked by three of the team. We received responses from all bar three categories of respondent (one of which was ‘other’). Eight local authorities responded.
* Providing a template table (see annex 2, page 5) and outline guidance on the process for each of the team, briefing the team and reviewing progress at regular intervals.
* Providing response tables, tailored to each question, to provide a framework to fit the range of responses into, with scope for including quotes and other notes. See annex 2 page 6 for an example of a full analysis table.
* Providing a summary response table, to help focus on the fundamental points on degree of consensus and the main emerging points. These were the same for each question, to enable broad comparison across the survey results. See annex 2 page 7 for the summary analysis table.

*Undertaking the Analysis*

1. The team commenced analysing the national park responses on 4th December, starting with responses from organisations before moving on to individual responses. The summary analysis tables for organisations were finished on the 13th December and we expect the analysis of all responses to be completed by the end of the year.
2. Using the tailored response tables helped with task management but meant some nuance could be lost. Analysts could amend the response categories (by track changes); they were often added to in questions where further suggestions were invited, e.g. Q10 on other options for Parks’ aims. There was also room for quotes to help retain particular points made, and provide a ‘flavour’ of the respondent’s opinion and/or strength of feeling.
3. The preparation of the summary tables helped analysists focus on the main issues raised, and enabled a comparison on general levels of consensus across different questions. Transferring findings from the full, tailored analysis to the summary tables required judgement on the degree that each of the responses agreed, or not, with the question. On questions where this judgement was complex, the analysts were encouraged to explain their rationale.
4. There was a start-up meeting with all analysts on 30th November to explain the process, talk through the guidance, and clarify any initial issues raised. A progress meeting was held on the 5th December once the team had started their task. Several questions arose during the analysis, answered amongst the analysts and by overseers using Teams chat and email. The discussion and sharing of answers helped increase consistency. A review meeting was held on 15th December to ensure analysts were content with the draft overall findings that were emerging from a review of the summary tables; and also to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the process.

*Planned review or QA*

1. A review of a sample set of full and summary responses will take place prior to the publication of our advice.

*Initial reflections on the consultation*

1. The mix of organisations who responded was good, with only a few obvious geographic or sector specific gaps in coverage (Orkney and Shetland Island authorities; economic agencies, national forestry bodies – though the last may be because they have contributed via the stakeholder group).
2. The length of the questionnaire was probably off-putting (perhaps explaining in part the number of opened but not submitted responses). It was also a complex survey, mixing questions on aspects like the aims and purpose of national parks and the nomination process. Embedding the questions within explanatory text also made it less than straightforward. At the same time, we suspect that the separation of the information provided on the webpage (including the background paper on Scotland’s National Parks) from the survey form itself may have meant this material was drawn on less in preparing some of the responses than we would have intended.
3. With more time, a more tested set of questions (tailored more to the eventual analysis), and a plain English version, could have been prepared. That said, the number of responses, to what was flagged as a technical consultation, was good. The answers and comments provided are probably broadly the same as a better survey would have elicited. Perhaps most importantly, the survey seems to have been successful in finding out the full range of opinions on this issue at this stage of the process.

**NatureScot**

**December 2022**

**Annex 1 – Breakdown of respondents (draft)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Total** | **%** | **Organisations** |
| 1. Individuals | 153 | 67 |  |
| 1. Individual landowners/ managers/ factors | 2 | 1 | Invercauld Estate, Dunecht Estates |
| 1. Individual companies and businesses | 5 | 2 | Scottish Power Renewables, SSE Renewables,  RWE Renewables UK, EDF Renewables UK,  Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks |
| 1. Community councils and trusts | 1 | >1 | Strathglass Community Council |
| 1. Local authorities | 9 | 4 | Dumfries and Galloway Council, Argyll & Bute Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Stirling Council, Perth & Kinross Council,  Eilean Siar Council, Borders Council, Highland Council |
| 1. MSP/MPs/Councillors | 0 | - |  |
| 1. National Public Bodies | 10 | 4 | Scottish Water, Crown Estate Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland,  Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, Visit Scotland, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Bord na gaidhlig, Skills Development Scotland, Sportscotland |
| 1. Regional/Local public bodies | 0 | - |  |
| 1. Land management interest groups | 6 | 2 | Scottish Gamekeepers Association, Scottish Land & Estates, NFU Scotland, British Association for Shooting and Conservation, Confederation of Forest Industries, National Sheep Association |
| 1. Marine management interest groups | 2 | 1 | Berwickshire Marine Reserve, Blue Marine Foundation |
| 1. Natural and cultural heritage interest groups | 24 | 10 | Heart of Argyll Wildlife Organisation, Marine Concern & Seal Scotland, Reforesting Scotland, Galloway National Park Association, Friends of Denmarkfield,  Trees for Life, Scottish Rewilding Alliance, Rewilding Britain, British Ecological Society, SCNP/ APRS, Green Action Trust, SE LINK, National Trust for Scotland, John Muir Trust, Scottish Badgers, Bug Life, REVIVE coalition for grouse moor reform, Europarc Atlantic Isles, Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs, Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park, Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group,  Built Environment Forum Scotland, RSPB, Scottish Wildlife Trust |
| 1. Recreation and sporting interest groups | 7 | 3 | Royal Yachting Association Scotland, Sustrans Scotland, Intelligent Health, Mountaineering Scotland, Paths for All, Scot Ways, Adventurous Activities Industry Advisory Committee |
| 1. Social and economic interest groups | 3 | 1 | Newton Stewart Initiative, Scottish Women's Convention, Scottish Renewables |
| 1. Professional bodies | 6 | 3 | RoSPA, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists,  CIEEM, The Royal Town Planning Institute Scotland,  Landscape Institute, Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association |
| 1. Research/Academia/ Academics | 0 | - |  |
| 1. Other | 0 | - |  |
| 1. Outside Scotland | 2 | 1 | Europarc Federation  Campaign for National Parks |
| Total | 230 | 100 |  |

**Annex 2 – response tables**

**Full analysis template – explanation of categories of response**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **new national park consultation –** | | | | |
| **Question x** | | | | |
| Category of Response  *tailored to each question* | | Respondent code | no of responses | Selected Quotations *include respondent code* |
| No response | Skipped - did not answer this question or only put “n/a”, or similar. |  |  |  |
| No view | The response does not include an overall opinion (unlike agree/disagree). |  |  |  |
| / Unclear | The response includes text but it is unclear what view the respondent is taking ,. |  |  |  |
| Refers to a response to another question – note respondent’s ID number |  |  |  |  |
| Disagree | The respondent disagrees with the suggestion (the wording is tailored to suit the question and suggestions).  This may include options for providing additional information. | e.g. R4, S2  (*from spreadsheet)* | 3 | The grass is dead (T2) |
| Agree | The respondent agrees with the suggestion (the wording is tailored to suit the question and suggestions).  This may include options for providing additional information. | e.g. R1, R2 | 64 | The grass is greener…(R2) |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Full response table - sample**

| **Question 1 –**  Do you support “leadership of nature recovery and a just transition to net zero” becoming the overarching purpose of Scotland’s National Parks?  If not, what else would you propose? | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category of Response** | **Respondent code** | **No. of responses** | **Selected Quotations** |
| No response | TV12, R15, | 2 |  |
| No view |  | 0 |  |
| Not sure | R16 | 1 |  |
| Refers to a response to another question – note respondent’s ID number | U55 | 1 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Agree with proposed overarching purpose | V7, T12, W18, Y22, Z1, V58 | 6 | An important part of our armoury in fighting biodiversity loss.(V7)  Link with lynx (P31) |
| Disagree with proposed overarching purpose | W3, X23, Y45, Z47, S56, T60, S62, S101 | 8 | Must not be sought at all costs, (S101) |
| Proposed an alternative  *List the alternatives in categories, noting respondent code for each category* |  |  |  |
| electric vehicles | T42 | 1 | subsidise electric cars instead (T42) |
| mince pies | Z23 | 1 | mince pies should never contain marzipan (Z23) |
|  |  |  |  |

**Summary response table - blank**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question Y** | | | | **summary response table** | | |
|  | **numbers of responses per category** | | | | | |
|  | **agree** | **mostly agree** | **not sure** (includes “no view”, excludes ‘no response’) | | **mostly disagree** | **disagree** |
| respondent code |  |  |  | |  |  |
| numbers summary |  |  |  | |  |  |
| summary |  |  |  | |  |  |
| notes |  |  |  | |  |  |
| **Top three points made** (number can vary depending on responses) | | | | | | |
| **1** | | | | | | |
| **2** | | | | | | |
| **3** | | | | | | |