



## Soil Association Scotland's Agroforestry in Action Knowledge Transfer Programme



**Final Report for  
KTIF-038-2020**

**March 2021**

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## 1. PROJECT TITLE/APPLICANT

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### 1.1 Title

Farming for the Future: KTIF/038/2020

### 1.2 Overview of Soil Association Scotland

[The Soil Association](https://www.soilassociation.org/)<sup>1</sup> established in 1946, is the UK's leading charity working for healthy, humane and sustainable food, farming and land use. The Soil Association is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity number 206862 and with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, charity number SCO39168.

The Charity has a wholly owned subsidiary Soil Association Certification Limited, the UK's largest organic certification body. This is run as a not-for-profit company that delivers parts of the Charity's strategy and generates financial returns that are put back into the Charity's wider work. It also audits other schemes including FSC and PEFC forestry standards. The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and governed by Articles of Association. The governing body of the Charity is the Board of Trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law.

The Soil Association (charity and certification body) currently employs around 240 people across the UK, with 22 full-time equivalent staff based in Scotland. Income to the Charity for the financial year 2019/20 was £9,208,000, with around 10% of that income attributable to Scotland. Income is received from a range of sources including government grants, trusts and foundations, programme partner organisations and private donations.<sup>2</sup>

[Soil Association Scotland](https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/)<sup>3</sup> was created in 2002, to provide a focus for the Charity's work in Scotland. The Charity has a long and successful track record of working with the Scottish Government and partners organisations to deliver programmes of work for sustainable and healthy food, farming and land use. Our programmes are delivered in partnership with a wide range of public and non-governmental organisations. These programmes aim to demonstrate and enable practical solutions for transforming the way we way eat, farm and care for the natural world to restore nature, a safe climate and health. Our current partnership programmes of work include:

- KTIF funded Operational Group 'Farming for Biodiversity' (KTIF/035/2020) to which will provide a practical management, environmental and business framework for farmers interested in implementing rotational conservation (mob) grazing.
- Recently completed 'Farming for the Future' - a three-year knowledge transfer, skills development and innovation programme which commenced on 1 September 2018 and completed on 31 December 2020. The purpose of the programme was to support farmers and crofters across Scotland interested in productive and profitable farming and land use, using low-input and sustainable approaches to build financial and environmental resilience in a changing climate.
- Rural Innovation Support Service which brings the right people together to help farmers and crofters across Scotland to and get their innovative ideas for solving a business challenge or developing a new business opportunity off the ground. (Delivered as part of the Scottish Rural Network in partnership with Scotland's Agricultural Organisation Society (SAOS), SAC Consulting and Scottish Food and Drink.)
- Food for Life Scotland which supports local authorities across Scotland to put more local food on the table and serve fresh, healthy, and sustainable meals in their schools through the Food for Life Served Here award. (Funded by the Scottish Government.) Our UK-wide National Lottery Community Fund Food Get Togethers project supports and facilitates regular community activities that connect people from all ages and backgrounds through food.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.soilassociation.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.soilassociation.org/about-us/annual-review-and-finances/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/>

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The project 'Agroforestry in Action' commenced on 1 December 2020 and completed on 31 March 2021. It was delivered jointly by Soil Association Scotland and Woodland Trust Scotland with 25% co-funding from Woodland Trust Scotland and Scottish Forestry. The aim of the project is to increase awareness and understanding amongst farmers, crofters and other rural stakeholders of the opportunities for agroforestry in Scotland and its benefits for productive and sustainable farming, resource efficient land management, nature and a safe climate.

By promoting the wider uptake of agroforestry as a viable land management practice, the project supports the SRDP/EU-RDR criteria and key Scottish Government policies for climate change, resource efficiency, environmental performance and sustainability, rural development and biodiversity. The project's objectives were to

- Increase interest in agroforestry amongst farmers and crofters as a viable land management practice
- Improve access to practical resources and information for agroforestry in a Scottish context.
- Provide an on-going project legacy beyond the lifetime of the project – outreach learning etc.
- Increase referrals to FAS specialist advisory service for Woodland Management.
- Work with key stakeholders including FAS and NFU Scotland, policy makers and research bodies to overcome barriers to agroforestry/woodland creation on agricultural land
- Provide evidence to help inform policy making for best practice, advisory services, grants etc.
- Showcase the benefits of agroforestry to a wider audience of rural stakeholders and the public.

Given the short lifetime of the project (4 months from December 2020 to March 2021) some of the outcomes will not be reported until later in 2021 – a key objective being that the project will provide an on-going legacy beyond the KTIF funded activity. By 31 March 2021 the project has achieved to support its objectives through the following activities.

- Delivery of three webinars focusing on agroforestry systems applicable to Scotland. The target of 100 individuals was exceeded: 202 logged in from Scotland, while 118 other logged in from around the world.
- Development a suite of knowledge and learning assets including:
  - An Agroforestry Hub highlighting benefits, opportunities, how to get started, links to expert advice etc. through case studies, videos, the free Agroforestry Handbook, etc - the hub has already attracted 1,471 visits.
  - A YouTube playlist where audiences can find a series of farmer and crofter-developed videos, as well as recordings of webinars - these video resources have been watched more than 8,000 times
  - A Soil Association agroforestry e-learning course. This is still in development, but once ready it will be widely shared and promoted. This KPI is still in development and will be a legacy output the KTIF funded project.
- Promotion of the Woodland Trust Scotland and FAS services to support farmers and crofters to plant more trees (also an on-going legacy output).

The project's key finding is that there is a great appetite for agroforestry-related information from Scottish farmers and crofters, especially resources and events that address the particularities of the Scottish regions. However, there are a number of issues including lack of resources and information relevant to Scotland which are holding back the wider uptake of agroforestry in Scotland.

Agroforestry could contribute significantly to a range of environmental, social and economic benefits. In conclusion we suggest that there could be merit in creating a working group on agroforestry to look at these issues in more detail and produce a set of recommendations for how best to support agroforestry in Scotland going forward.

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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#### 3.1 Aims and objectives

The project 'Agroforestry in Action' commenced on 1 December 2020 and completed on 31 March 2021. It was delivered jointly by Soil Association Scotland and Woodland Trust Scotland with 25% co-funding from Woodland Trust Scotland and Scottish Forestry. The aim of the project was to increase awareness and understanding amongst farmers, crofters and other rural stakeholders of the opportunities for agroforestry in Scotland and its benefits for productive and sustainable farming, resource efficient land management, the environment, nature and a safe climate. By promoting the wider uptake of agroforestry as a viable land management practice, the project supports the SRDP/EU-RDR criteria and key Scottish Government policies for:

- Climate change and net-zero – by reducing GHG emissions, sequestering carbon and enabling agricultural business to adapt to climate change.
- Resource efficiency, environmental performance and sustainability – by improving soil health, managing water flow, enhancing productivity and boosting animal welfare.
- Rural development – by supporting diversification, increasing business resilience and building strong rural economies.
- Biodiversity – by encouraging wildlife, reducing pollution, enhancing ecosystem services and increasing ecological connectivity.

The project specifically supports the SRDP/EU-RDR priority for increasing efficiency, environmental performance and sustainability. Agroforestry is promoted by EIP-Agri as a resource efficient and sustainable land management practice for developing rural economies, combating climate change and enhancing the environment.

The Scottish Government recently announced £100 million for new tree planting in its Programme for Government 2020-2021 to help support a green recovery and meet our climate change targets. Despite good evidence which shows that agroforestry – integrating trees with farming – can deliver multiple environmental and business benefits, agroforestry in Scotland has yet to reach its full potential. A recent survey of 346 people interested in agroforestry reveals that much greater support and information is needed to implement agroforestry. This project will support the Scottish Government's ambition for 'new or enhanced agroforestry initiatives in Scotland' to increase tree planting.

If farmers are to be more actively involved in delivering and managing trees as part of their farm enterprise and if the forestry sector is to diversify to provide agroforestry and farm services, then there needs to be a significant investment in upskilling and helping to break down current barriers and to change perceptions. Increasing farmer agency over the ownership and management of trees as part of the farm enterprise will be crucial in achieving national tree planting targets and is likely to be more culturally and socio-economically acceptable than a top-down or externally driven approach. Agency and ownership partly come from enhancing knowledge about not just the benefits, but also the practical implementation and management aspects of 'trees on farms'.

KTIF funding enabled Soil Association Scotland to join forces with Woodland Trust Scotland and other key stakeholders to build on-going work to deliver new activities and resources. We discussed the project with Ricardo and SAC Consulting about how this project can add value to FAS, particularly through increased uptake of Woodland Management and Conservation specialist management plans in the one-to-one strand; and how the findings from this project can inform FAS one-to-many activities following the project's completion in March 2021. Planned activities were discussed with FAS, particularly those involved in Farm Woodlands and Climate Change activities of the one-to-many strand. The project's objectives were to:

- Increase interest in agroforestry amongst farmers and crofters as a viable land management practice for delivering multiple environmental and business benefits.

- Improve access to practical resources and information specific to agroforestry systems which are applicable in a Scottish context.
- Provide an on-going project legacy (beyond the lifetime of the project) of outreach support and e-learning to get more of Scotland’s farmers and crofters planting more trees.
- Increase referrals to FAS specialist advisory service for Woodland Management and Conservation and FAS mentoring programme for new entrants interested in forestry and woodland.
- Work with key stakeholders including FAS, NFU Scotland, NatureScot, Rural Innovation Support Service Scottish Agroforestry Group, policy makers and research bodies (e.g. SRUC) to overcome barriers/obstacles to agroforestry/woodland creation on agricultural land and promote the best options for different enterprises and locations.
- Provide evidence to help inform policy making for best practice, further research, advisory services, grants etc.
- Showcase the benefits and opportunities of agroforestry to a wider audience of rural stakeholders (e.g. local businesses, partnerships, landowners, community leaders) and the public.

The project built on the partners’ existing farmer-facing knowledge transfer activities and resources for agroforestry/farm woodland creation and draw-on the UK-wide expertise of the partners’ and other stakeholders. An added value aspect of the project is that Woodland Trust Scotland will provide free outreach support for tree planting to interested farmers and crofters during and beyond completion of the KTIF funded project. (The outreach support will be resourced by Woodland Trust Scotland and will not be funded by KTIF.)



*Tap o’Noth Farm, Aberdeenshire. Photos courtesy of Rosa Bevan*

### 3.1 Activities

The project sought to achieve its objectives by delivering a programme of:

- Webinars focusing on agroforestry systems applicable to Scotland and tailored to different locations and enterprises featuring expert presenters/communicators and Q&A sessions.
- Knowledge and learning assets provided through an Agroforestry web hub including:
  - [The Agroforestry Handbook](https://www.soilassociation.org/agroforestry/)<sup>4</sup> – a detailed practical guide written by experts and agroforestry practitioners which covers key information.
  - Existing farmer-facing resources and messaging including case studies, podcasts, videos etc.
  - Videos of the webinars made available online.
- [Outreach support](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/)<sup>5</sup> through the Woodland Trust’s Trees for Your Farm, MOREhedges and MOREwoods initiatives.
- Signposting to the FAS specialist advisory service for Woodland Management and Conservation and mentoring programme for new entrants.
- Communication and engagement activities to widely promote the project and the benefits of, and opportunities for agroforestry using various channels (social media, press etc) and industry networks and organisations including FAS, SRN, NFU Scotland, etc.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.soilassociation.org/agroforestry/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/>



- Circumstances allowing, a site visit or video of a site, to showcase best practice in action aimed at land managers and influential persons including policy makers, researchers and farming leaders. (This was not delivered during the lifetime of the project due to Covid-19 restrictions.)
- End of project report containing: an evaluation of the project's activities – results, outcomes, best practice, lessons learned etc; feedback from participants and stakeholders around barriers, challenges and opportunities; recommendations for improving future rural knowledge and innovation services (RKIS).

### **3.4 Opportunities and problems addressed**

#### **Industry need and demand**

Feedback from farmers and crofters has informed the design and content of the project specially to provide Woodland Trust Scotland outreach support and increase referrals to the FAS specialist guidance service for Woodland Management and Conservation.

Our experience of delivering knowledge transfer events for agroforestry/farm woodland creation demonstrates that there is significant and growing interest amongst farmers and crofters. Over the last 24 months, we have delivered 13 events (including four webinars) focusing on agroforestry/farm woodland attended by 198 farmers and crofters from locations all over Scotland including the Hebrides and Northern Isles.

Participants were asked to provide feedback immediately after attending events to ascertain levels of intention to implement practices and what can be improved regarding event content. Of those participants who responded, 80% say that they will look at the potential for agroforestry/farm woodland creation on their agricultural holding. Common requests around content include more information on business benefits, systems design, species choice and management specific to Scotland.

Some participants also said that they would welcome the creation of discussion groups to foster on-going peer-support and networking. The Rural Innovation Support Service Scottish Agroforestry Group has been created to identify barriers to implementing agroforestry and find ways to address these. Ideas identified early in the process included the need for more demonstration and quantification of agroforestry in practice, more knowledge transfer and a platform to share and discuss ideas and information. Whilst this falls outside of the scope of this project, due to time and funding constraints, this could be explored further with other stakeholders including FAS and the Scottish Agroforestry Group.

These findings are echoed in a recent UK-wide survey of 346 people interested in agroforestry which reveals much greater support, information and payment certainty are needed for farmers and land managers to implement the practice. Respondents were asked to complete the survey after downloading the [free Agroforestry Handbook](#), produced in collaboration with the Soil Association and the Farm Woodland Forum to help farmers decide which trees and systems are best for their farms.

The survey revealed the handbook gave most farmers more confidence to implement agroforestry, with over 75% of respondents more likely to implement agroforestry on their farms after reading the guide. Respondents' most common motivations were increased biodiversity, landscape resilience, and farm resilience. However, despite strong interest in the benefits of agroforestry for farms and the environment, the survey found significant barriers holding development back, including a lack of technical knowledge and uncertainty around support payments.

Around 40% of respondents did not know where to go for further guidance on agroforestry, with many others finding that the information they need does not exist. The survey results revealed the need for:

- More financial modelling and case studies
- More information on UK/Scottish specific benefits (environmental and otherwise)
- Greater knowledge exchange on systems design, species choice, and management
- Market development for the broad range of outputs from agroforestry systems

- Greater policy support and funding

We discussed the project with key stakeholders including Farm Advisory Service (SAC Consulting and Ricardo), NFU Scotland, Scottish Forestry and NatureScot. These organisations welcome the project and support its aims and objectives.

*“NFU Scotland is pleased to lend its support to this project proposal. NFU Scotland recognises the climate and biodiversity crises, and the important role that climate and nature friendly farming can play in tackling this. NFU Scotland believes that Scottish farmers, crofters, and growers will need to be supported through investment and advice to deliver on climate change targets. Projects that increase awareness and understanding of farmers and crofters on issues like agroforestry will be vital in supporting sustainable and efficient land use practices.”*

## **Environmental and economic benefits**

### Green Recovery and Climate Emergency

The Scottish Government recently announced £100 million for new tree planting in its Programme for Government 2020-2021 to help support a green recovery and meet our climate change targets. The ClimateXChange review ‘Agroforestry in Scotland – potential benefits in a changing climate’ sets out the evidence-base for how agroforestry systems applicable to Scotland can deliver multiple benefits for business, climate (mitigation and adaptation) and the environment. Despite the evidence of its benefits, agroforestry in Scotland has yet to reach its full potential.

This project will support the Scottish Government’s ambition for ‘new or enhanced agroforestry initiatives in Scotland’ to increase tree planting on agricultural land. By promoting the wider uptake of agroforestry as a viable land management practice, the project will support key policies for a green recovery, the environment and climate emergency.

The project will help deliver the government and stakeholders ambitions for agriculture ‘to reduce greenhouse gas emissions’, ‘support sustainable farming and land use’, ‘improve the environmental sustainability of the sector by protecting and restoring natural habitats’ and ‘build sustainability through business practices that encourage productivity, innovation and inclusion.’

A project objective is to publicise the benefits of agroforestry and the actions the stakeholders are taking to make farming more climate and nature friendly to a wider audience of landowners, local policymakers, businesses and the public. The project promotes inclusion by demonstrating that agroforestry systems can be used on all types and sizes of enterprise from large estates to small holdings. It also promotes the role that agroforestry can play in helping place-based land use partnerships (e.g. Southern Upland Partnership), national park authorities and Regional Land Use Partnerships (RLUPs) to tackle climate change and deliver benefits for local businesses, communities and the environment. (The Scottish Government has committed to creating RLUPs across Scotland by 2021.)

### Programme for Government 2019-2020 - Farming and Food Production

The project will help deliver the Scottish Government’s action to ‘encourage more tree planting across Scotland including woodland integration and agroforestry on Scottish farms’.

### Resource efficiency rural development

The project had a strong focus on resource efficiency which is an SRDP/EU-RDR priority – using natural resources in a sustainable manner to support healthy rural economies and combat climate change. Agroforestry is promoted by EIP-AGRI as a resource efficient land management practice. The EU definition of resource efficiency – “Resource efficiency means using the planet's limited resources in a sustainable manner and seeking to minimise impacts on the environment. 'Doing more with less' is an especially pertinent concept for rural development practitioners. The natural environment – notably soil and water – powers the rural economy.’



The project demonstrated the business benefits of agroforestry in protecting and enhancing Scotland's natural resources and tackling GHG emissions. Examples of benefits delivered by agroforestry which promote ecosystem resilience (specially to climate change and extreme weather events) and business productivity include increased soil health, increased soil organic carbon, reduced soil erosion, improved water infiltration, reduced pollution and reduced flood risk.

Research shows that the adoption of agroforestry can increase farm productivity, sustainability, land use efficiency and farm incomes. Examples of added value include enhanced grain yield/hectare from silvoarable systems or enhanced meat production from silvopastoral systems. Examples of direct income include the sale of timber and woodfuel.

#### Biodiversity and ecosystem services

The project supports The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy which aims to 'protect and restore biodiversity', 'support healthy ecosystems' and 'maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth'.

Agroforestry can increase ecological connectivity and biodiversity which can have a positive impact on ecosystem functions (nutrient recycling, water infiltration, nitrogen fixing, pollution reduction etc.) essential for the provision of services beneficial to farming including fertile soil, water supply and pollination. Woodland on farms can provide habitat for a range of wildlife – including birds, bats, insects and small mammals – create wildlife corridors and enhance the visual character of farmed landscapes.

#### Animal welfare

The project promotes the benefits of silvopastoral systems for animal welfare including shade and shelter. Reduced temperature extremes and a greater variety of within-field habitats can reduce animal stress and allow more natural animal behaviour.

#### Public demand and growing markets

One of the project's objectives is to promote the benefits of agroforestry and the actions the stakeholders are taking to make farming more climate and nature friendly to a wider audience of policymakers, businesses and the public. A recent poll by Survation suggests that over three quarters of Scotland's citizens support farmers but want farming to deliver more for the environment, wildlife, animal welfare and climate, reflected in growing consumer demand for sustainable food. Producing climate and nature friendly food – using systems such as agroforestry – can open-up new opportunities for Scotland's farmers, with the right policies and support, to access to growing markets.

#### 4. FINANCE

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KTIF grant awarded: £29,925

Total approved spend: £39,900

Spend on KTIF/038/2020 over lifetime of the programme: £33,564

KTIF award spent over lifetime of programme: £25,172

**Table 1: Detail of spend**

<b>Project development costs</b>	
Soil Association staff costs – development of project	£952.60
<b>Project management costs</b>	
Soil Association staff costs – delivery of project activities	£10,726.57
Soil Association staff costs – delivery of management, administration finance & reporting	£9,648.92
<b>Fees for speakers/facilitators</b>	
Expert speaker fees for webinars & videos	£1,440.00
<b>T&amp;S for speakers/ facilitators</b>	
T&S for travelling to venues	£0
<b>Event venue costs</b>	
Fees for venues and catering	£0
<b>Materials costs</b>	
Resources for promotion etc.	£65.25
<b>Publicity</b>	
Soil Association staff costs - web hub creation, production of supporting resources, press and article writing, dissemination	£7,910.03
External costs for production of video resources, digital content etc	£2,820.25
<b>TOTAL SPEND</b>	<b>£33,564.62</b>

#### **Reason for underspend**

Underspends were incurred on:

- T&S for speakers / facilitators and Event venue costs due to Covid-19 restrictions
- Publicity - External costs for production of video resources, digital content etc due to costs being lower than original anticipated/budgeted.

## 5. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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The aim of the project is to increase awareness and understanding amongst farmers, crofters and other rural stakeholders of the opportunities for agroforestry in Scotland and its benefits for productive and sustainable farming, resource efficient land management, the environment, nature and a safe climate. Please note that some of the outputs will be project legacies which are reflected in some of the milestones and KPIs. The project's objectives, milestones, timescales and measures of success (KPIs) are to:

- Increase interest in agroforestry amongst farmers and crofters as a viable land management practice for delivering multiple environmental and business benefits.
- Improve access to practical resources and information specific to agroforestry systems which are applicable in a Scottish context.
- Provide an on-going project legacy (beyond the lifetime of the project) of outreach support and e-learning to get more of Scotland's farmers and crofters planting more trees.
- Increase referrals to FAS specialist advisory service for Woodland Management and Conservation and FAS mentoring programme for new entrants interested in forestry and woodland.
- Work with key stakeholders including FAS, NFU Scotland, NatureScot, Rural Innovation Support Service Scottish Agroforestry Group, policy makers and research bodies (e.g. SRUC) to overcome barriers/obstacles to agroforestry/woodland creation on agricultural land and promote the best options for different enterprises and locations.
- Provide evidence to help inform policy making for best practice, further research, advisory services, grants etc.
- Showcase the benefits and opportunities of agroforestry to a wider audience of rural stakeholders (e.g. local businesses, partnerships, landowners, community leaders) and the public.



*Parkhill Farm, Fife. Apple line cropping; lines of planting; apples and barley. Photos courtesy of Roger Howison*

## 6. PROJECT OUTCOMES

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Given the short lifetime of the project (4 months from December 2020 to March 2021) some of the outcomes will not be reported until later in 2021 – a key objective being that the project will provide an on-going legacy beyond the KTIF funded activity. We are therefore providing information on progress for these KPIs/targets as at 31 March 2021.

**Objective:** increase interest in agroforestry amongst farmers and crofters as a viable land management practice for delivering multiple environmental and business benefits

**Milestone and timescale:** series of knowledge transfer webinars delivered for farmers and crofters by March 2021

**KPI:** number of farmers and crofters participating in webinars (target of 100 individuals)

### What has been achieved

Given the social distancing measures in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, we developed and delivered (well-attended) webinars focusing on: agroforestry systems applicable to Scotland which are tailored to fit different farming systems and locations – species and planting to suit topography, climate, soils and enterprise type; outreach support services which are available; funding opportunities; economic considerations; business opportunities etc; and Q&A sessions. This included helping to address any concerns or challenge perceptions that farmers and crofters may have about agroforestry/woodland creation on agricultural land. Videos of the webinars are being posted on the Agroforestry web hub. See Appendix 1 for details of events.

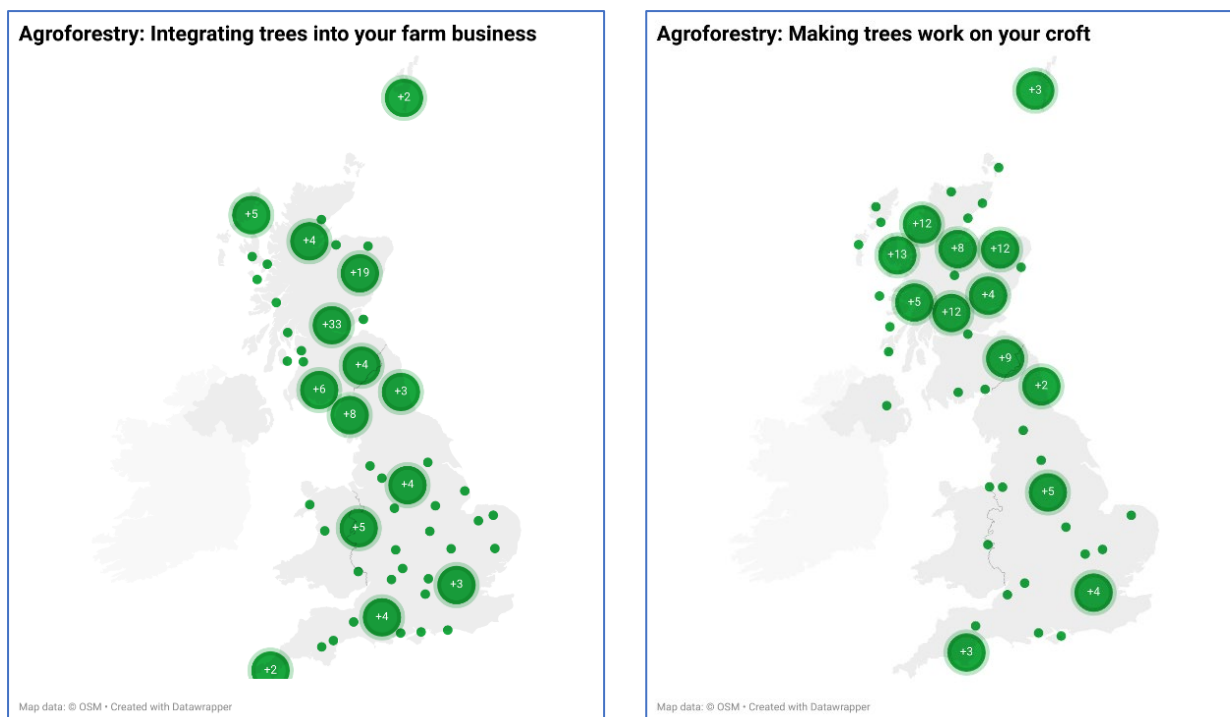
Two webinar Q&As and a discussion webinar were delivered in February and March (see Annex 1). These webinars were facilitated by Clem Sandison and Ana Allamand, and explored a variety of topics through conversations with crofters and farmers:

- **11<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Agroforestry: Making trees work on your croft**  
Speakers: crofters Phil Knott, of Wildlife Croft on Skye, and Mike Hyatt, of Baleveolan Croft, Isle of Lismore
- **25<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Agroforestry: Integrating trees into your farm business**  
Speakers: farmers Rosa Bevan and James Reid from Tap o'Noth, Aberdeenshire, and Roger Howison, of Parkhill Farm in Fife
- **18<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Agroforestry in Scotland: Discussion groups**  
Peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and networking event is your chance to talk about different agroforestry topics with crofters, farmers, foresters, and land managers in Scotland.

The target of 100 individuals was exceeded: a total of 317 attendees from around the world participated in these events. Of them, 212 were located in Scotland, while 105 logged in from other countries (UK, the US, Ireland, Denmark, Canada and the Netherlands). A total of 227 were farmers, crofters, foresters or land managers: 157 are located in Scotland and 70 in other countries (mostly UK: see Figure 1). The webinars were recorded and uploaded to the Agroforestry Scotland playlist, where they have been viewed almost 300 times (see Annex 2).

Conversion rates for these events were 68.8% and 63.4% for our events, significantly above the average for webinars (35% is the standard for webinars over 100 people). Through our registration process we have managed to consolidate a detailed database on stakeholders interested in Agroforestry in Scotland and the UK; this will be a useful asset in potentially surveying stakeholder interest (across the country or in determined areas) and developing effective projects on the topic.

**Figure 1: Location of attendees of the programme’s Q&A webinars**



**Objective:** improve access to practical resources and information specific to agroforestry systems which are applicable in a Scottish context

**Milestone and timescale:** on-line Agroforestry web hub created by 15 March 2021 and resources and information accessed during and beyond the lifetime of the project

**Milestone and timescale:** suite of knowledge and learning assets for agroforestry tailored to the need of Scotland’s farmers and crofters produced by 31 March 2021

**KPI:** 1,000 visits to Agroforestry web hub and online resources by December 2021

### What has been achieved

An agroforestry hub highlighting the benefits of agroforestry, how to get started (through case studies and expert advice) and available sources of funding through grants is currently available in this [link](#)<sup>6</sup>. It has already reached 1,471 visits.

We have also developed a YouTube playlist where audiences can find a series of farmers and crofters-developed videos, as well as the recording of the first 2 webinars (see Annex 2 for the list and links to individual videos). These resources have been watched over 8,000 times so far. Crucially, one of the farmers we partnered with to develop some of these practical videos (Tap o’Noth) has a big social media following which has driven visits to these resources - over 7,000 subscribers to their YouTube channel.

**Objective:** provide an on-going project legacy (beyond the lifetime of the project) of outreach support and e-learning to get more of Scotland’s farmers and crofters planting more trees

**Milestone and timescale:** promote the Woodland Trust Scotland outreach service and Soil Association e-learning course through project activities and resources during and beyond the lifetime of the project

**KPI:** numbers of farmers and crofters accessing outreach service and e-learning resource by December 2021

### What has been achieved

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.soilassociation.org/our-work-in-scotland/scotland-farming-programmes/resources-for-farmers/agroforestry/grants-and-guidance-on-agroforestry/>

We have worked closely together with the Woodland Trust Scotland, sharing our events through their outlets and sharing their programmes and contact information to everyone who has registered to our events.

During our first event, **Agroforestry: Making trees work on your croft**, Iona Hyde (from the Woodland Trust Scotland) was a speaker and shared information about their services and grants. She has also participated in our last event (**Agroforestry in Scotland: Discussion Groups**) where, in a small group format, she was able to further engage with those interested in the WTS support. Alan Bryce, Outreach Adviser for WTS, also attended this event where participants engaged directly with the WTS team.

The Soil Association e-learning course is still in development, but once ready we will share it with webinar attendees and to a wider audience through our social media and newsletter during 2021. This KPI is still in development and will be a legacy output the KTIF funded project.

**Objective:** increase referrals to the FAS specialist advisory service for Woodland Management and Conservation and mentoring programme for new entrants

**Milestone and timescale:** advisory service and mentoring programme promoted through project activities and resources during and beyond the lifetime of the project

**KPI:** number of farmers and crofters engaged with project and accessing FAS specialist advisory service for Woodland Management and Conservation by 31 December 2021

#### **What has been achieved**

We have shared the FAS specialist advisory service amongst those who registered to our webinars via the events' follow up email. Here we have described the service and included the relevant links. These mails have reached an audience of 329 stakeholders who registered to our events from across the world and expressed interest in our follow up emails; 203 of them in Scotland, 100 in other parts of the UK and 26 from other countries.

**Objective:** work with key stakeholders including Rural Innovation Support Service Scottish Agroforestry Group, FAS, NFU Scotland, policy makers and researcher providers (e.g. SRUC) to identify barriers/obstacles to agroforestry/woodland creation on agricultural land and promote the best options/solutions for different enterprises and locations

**Milestone and timescale:** findings shared between partners and stakeholders

**KPI:** findings used to inform end of project report by 31 March 2021

#### **What has been achieved**

We will share this report with the key stakeholders indicated above.

**Objective:** provide evidence to help inform policy making for agroforestry (best practice, further research, advisory services, grants etc.)

**Milestone and timescale:** findings, results and evidence from the project collated by 15 March 2021

**KPI:** production of end of project report by 31 March 2021 with key findings and recommendations disseminated to key stakeholders by 31 May 2021

#### **What has been achieved**

This report highlights key findings, lessons learned and recommendations which will be disseminated to all stakeholders by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

**Objective:** showcase the benefits and opportunities of agroforestry to a wider audience of stakeholders e.g. local businesses, and the public

**Milestone and timescale:** communication and engagement activities delivered by 31 March 2021

**KPI:** range of news, project highlights, case studies etc featured across different communication channels with wide reach to target audiences by 31 March 2021



### What has been achieved

- The project launch was covered in the following publications: [The Scottish Farmer](#), 3/02/21
- [The Herald](#), 3/02/21
- [Press & Journal](#), 24/01/2021

The project is being promoted through:

- [Agroforestry You Tube playlist](#) for videos from our recent speakers
- Case studies of our speakers:
  - Roger and Rachel Howison, Parkhill Farm, Fife ([link to case study here](#))
  - Phil Knott of Wildlife Croft, Skye ([link to case study here](#))
  - Andrew Hall, of Burravoe Croft ([link to case study here](#))



## 7. LESSONS LEARNED

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1. One of the main challenges associated with the project was the inability to meet face to face and discuss the different systems in the field due to Covid19 Government guidance.

Lessons learned:

- As the year has gone by, many more farmers, crofters and land managers have grown used to different kinds of online events and are willing to attend them: ideal times (after 7pm, for example) and engaging formats (Q&A rather than presentations) have proven successful for this programme.
  - The benefit of online meetings has been that farmers can take part regardless of their geography. In the future a blended model of virtual meetings and farm visits is likely to be adopted.
2. A second, very relevant challenge, is the sparsity of examples that stakeholders can look up to when considering the development of agroforestry projects in Scotland. Scottish conditions are unique, and it is not easy to “translate” experiences from other parts of the world. While the gap can be initially surmounted by engaging with innovative stakeholders who are testing agroforestry ideas in their land, in the long term the support of data driven information (for example on income streams or attractive products from agroforestry) will be crucial to ensure uptake.

Lesson learned:

- There is a high degree of interest in agroforestry from crofters, farmers and land managers of all sizes and different conditions
  - People are testing ideas, and peer-to-peer knowledge can be a very effective starting point to engage and get farmers, crofters and land managers planting
  - General agroforestry concepts are well understood in Scotland, but more in-depth information and case studies is needed. A combination of case studies and clear data focussing specifically in agroforestry conditions in Scotland, with examples of successful (or not so successful) projects with associated data would be an excellent driver.
  - Knowledge of data driven information on income streams derived from agroforestry is key for uptake; this information void is a deterrent to planting. Current data is only just streaming from the innovative projects whose authors we engaged with. Given Scotland’s unique set of circumstances we believe studies and data gathering specific to the Scottish reality should be supported for farmers, crofters and land managers to be able to confidently develop agroforestry projects.
3. Associated to the previous challenge, agroforestry projects are being developed in Scotland, but there is no place where this information about them is consolidated. Most of it can be gathered via informal conversations with some key stakeholders, but a “go to” space would certainly speed uptake. A critical aspect would be to highlight first-hand experiences: participants felt inspired and responded particularly well to our events given their Q&A nature with on-the-ground farmers and crofters, and our crofter-farmer shot videos have been very well received.

Lessons learned:

- Farmers and crofters are actively looking for ways to learn about agroforestry, however there is very little information/training available through mainstream education and the agricultural advisory sector is fragmented.
- Speakers and videos: people have expressed how useful and inspiring it has been to learn about other people’s experiences. There is also an implicit trust in what they have to say, as they are not associated to any particular organisation.
- A database of those interested and those developing agroforestry projects, and ideally connecting them, could result in faster uptake of these practices.

## Event feedback

- *“Integrating woodlands on your farm was the first webinar I have attended and found it very informative. It was also great to have a forum where you can connect to others that can provide additional support. For example, the Borders Forest Trust who intend on reaching out to this week to see how we could take things forward.”*
- *“Thanks for organising these talks, they've provided some much-needed inspiration for our smallholding. We are already implementing what we've learnt and have planted over 300 trees as wind breaks/ field shelters with more to come.”*
- *“Just hearing about other people's similar projects to our own, hearing that other people have come across the same hurdles as us and finding out more information about possible grants/financial support in order for us to continue our own projects”*
- *“I was really struck by how happy the presenters were which is really encouraging!”*
- *“It's great that you have followed up with these materials. I got loads to follow up on the webinar”*
- *“I'm at the early stages of planning for an Agroforestry business and these resources are great”*
- *(What was useful / you enjoyed the most about the event) “Honesty of the presenters - covering what went wrong as well as right.”*
- *(What was useful / you enjoyed the most about the event) “Knowing Where to start ”*
- *(What was useful / you enjoyed the most about the event) “Real information from active crofters”*
- *(What was useful / you enjoyed the most about the event) “Real life people, real examples, no PPT!”*
- *(What was useful / you enjoyed the most about the event) “Info regarding funding”*
- *(What could be improved) Platform could work better: we have had that from other, always a challenge for someone.*



*Bolfracks Estate, Aberfeldy. Photo courtesy of Matthias Kremer; Mains of Fincastle, Pitlochry. Photo courtesy of Andrew Barbour*

## 8. COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

Agroforestry in Action online events were marketed and advertised to the target audience using a wide range of sources (see below) including Farming Advisory Service (FAS). Monitoring and evaluation of the marketing methods used to attract and engage farmers helped to ensure we used the most cost-effective methods.

**Table 2: Sources of promotion and reach for Agroforestry in Action online events:**

Source of promotion	Reach/readership	Events promoted
Soil Association Scotland <a href="#">Twitter</a>	8,000+	All Q&A events
Soil Association Scotland <a href="#">Facebook</a>	780+	All Q&A events
Soil Association Scotland <a href="#">website farming page</a>	1,800+	All Q&A events
Soil Association Scotland "What's On' and emails contact list comprising individuals, industry bodies, park authorities, land management organisations, NGOs etc (list is GDPR compliant)	Estimate: 2,000+	All Q&A events
Rural Matters (Twitter account for the Scottish Government's Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate)	7,000+	All Q&A events
Farm Advisory Service website & twitter	Twitter: 3,000+	All Q&A events
Scottish Rural Network	Twitter: 3,000+	All Q&A events
Community newsletters	Estimate: <1,000	All Q&A events

**Table 3: Those who registered to these events heard about them through:**

Soil Association Scotland What's On e-newsletter	27.9%
Facebook	16.1%
Other	15.0%
Word of mouth	12.6%
Other organisation	10.6%
Twitter	7.9%
Browsing Soil Association website	5.9%
Newspaper	2.3%
Flyer	1.8%

## 9. KEY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

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### Key findings

There is a great appetite for agroforestry-related information from Scottish farmers and crofters, especially resources and events that address the particularities of the Scottish regions: what can be grown and how different systems can be adapted to the geographical, climatic and cultural particularities of Scotland. Participants from across the country, from the Borders to the Islands and Shetland participated in our events and shared their questions and experiences.

This appetite has a variety of sources: animal welfare, land protection, potential of diversification, biodiversity increase.

Participants of all sizes, from small households to large farms, are interested in the topic and willing to implement agroforestry systems.

### Key recommendations

We would recommend that the following issues are looked at in greater depth by all relevant stakeholders to identify how best to address them.

- There is a lack of sufficient information about agroforestry-related income sources and appropriate systems for the Scottish reality. Although there are a couple of well-known examples of some systems and their benefits (Andrew Barbour's silvopasture project in Pitlochry, for example) they are still few and far between; and there is no easily available information on their bottom-line impact. There is also a need for more information on what marketable products can result from the implementation of agroforestry projects in Scotland, and their economic value. This is a limitation to uptake for many.
- Many crofters and farmers are experimenting with ways of incorporating trees into their land. These innovators are testing and leading the way, but lack of resources and formal support limit the uptake of these practices.
- There are few grants and tools to support agroforestry projects in Scotland. Most grants are aimed at bigger projects that align with woodland creation rather than agroforestry: addressing this void would help meet the Government's goal of planting 15,000 hectares a year from 2024/25.
- There is a fragmentation of information about agroforestry: a project unifying different stakeholders would be a great opportunity to join forces and knowledge and provide farmers with a "one-stop shop/place" to start their journey.
- Farmer and crofter-led events, as well as examples, are amongst the most effective ways of engaging with audiences from across the UK.

### Conclusion

Our work to promote agroforestry in Scotland has demonstrated that there is significant and growing interest amongst farmers and crofters. However, a number of issues including cultural barriers, lack of resources relevant to Scotland etc. are preventing the wider uptake of agroforestry systems in Scotland. We suggest that there could be merit in creating a working group on agroforestry to look at these issues in more detail and produce a set of recommendations for how best to support agroforestry in Scotland going forward.

## **ANNEX 1: Agroforestry in Action Webinars**

### **1. Agroforestry: Making trees work on your croft. Online event, Thursday 11 February, 7–8.30 pm**

This webinar took the form of an online discussion with two crofters – new entrant Phil Knott, of Wildlife Croft on Skye, and Mike Hyatt, of Baleveolan Croft, Isle of Lismore – talking about their experience of crofting with trees, including:

- Benefits of agroforestry for crofting operations - food production, wood and fuel, shelter for crops and livestock
- How trees can support biodiversity and improve soil health
- How to plan, fund, establish and manage trees on your croft
- Challenges and how to tackle them

Scottish Forestry and Woodland Trust were present to answer attendees' funding questions.

### **2. Agroforestry: Integrating trees into your farm business. Online event, Thursday 25 February, 7–8.30 pm**

Trees are an effective tool for a variety of purposes in any farm design, whether you are managing a lot of hectares or a small homestead. Rosa Bevan and James Reid, from small farm and market garden Tap o' Noth, Aberdeenshire, and arable farmer Roger Howison, of 537-acre Parkhill Farm in Fife led this event, explaining how trees are helping them achieve their goals, covering:

- Why you should consider trees in your farm design
- The main challenges when including trees, and how to overcome them
- How to plan, fund and establish trees in different-sized farms
- What big farms can learn from smaller farms and vice versa
- How trees could work on your farm (Q&A)

### **3. Agroforestry in Scotland: Discussion groups. Online meeting, Thursday 18 March, 7–8.30 pm**

There are many ways of integrating trees on your land. Having heard from crofters and farmers over the past weeks, this peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and networking event was a chance for farmers, crofters and land managers from all over Scotland to talk about different agroforestry topics with like-minded peers. They were encouraged to bring their ideas, know-how and experience, as well as their questions and challenges.

The event included two half-hour rounds of smaller group conversations on different topics, followed by sharing the top tips discussed in each group. The topics were based on feedback from attendees at our previous two events:

- Funding and grants
- Trees and livestock
- Designing your project
- Tree protection and management
- Trees on crofts
- Agroforestry products e.g. fruit, wood, fuel

We were joined by the speakers from our previous two Agroforestry events alongside other farmers who are actively implementing agroforestry in Scotland. Iona Hyde from the Woodland Trust and Lyn White from Scottish Forestry were available to discuss grants and funding.



## ANNEX 2: Videos and Links

	Views total	Video link
<b>AGROFORESTRY SCOTLAND PLAYLIST</b>	287	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2">https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2</a>
<b>CROFTERS AND FARMERS VIDEOS</b>		
Agroforestry Scotland: Wildlife Croft Skye on shelter	110	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkAEeS9RCck&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=1&amp;t=16s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkAEeS9RCck&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=1&amp;t=16s</a>
Agroforestry Scotland: Wildlife Croft Skye on trees and soil health	63	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgPseyuNilw&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=2">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgPseyuNilw&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=2</a>
Agroforestry Scotland: Baleveolan Croft, Isle of Lismore	108	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTvChzZuQg0&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=3">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTvChzZuQg0&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=3</a>
Agroforestry Scotland: Parkhill farm introduction to alley cropping	154	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSsX8xvZPzk&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSsX8xvZPzk&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=4</a>
A FOREST GARDEN FARM - CROFT & SMALL FARM AGROFORESTRY	3,706	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE0Lfv2PRZ8&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=5">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE0Lfv2PRZ8&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=5</a>
A FOREST GARDEN FARM: Agroforestry for market gardens (forest gardens & alley cropping)	3,343	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 24my6LNusi&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=6">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 24my6LNusi&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=6</a>
<b>WEBINAR RECORDINGS</b>		
Agroforestry Scotland: Making trees work on your croft webinar recording	121	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bstg7nOJtSw&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=7">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bstg7nOJtSw&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=7</a>
Agroforestry Scotland: Integrating trees into your farm business webinar recording	123	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgrcU1-Co-Q&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgrcU1-Co-Q&amp;list=PLiWAozVmDLEkA6FBekx7OxRiDg4tJsbh2&amp;index=8</a>
<b>TOTAL VISITS AS OF 18.03.2021</b>	<b>8,015</b>	