

# FORESTS FOR BRITAIN - THE BANC REPORT ISBN 0 9503344 2 9 (1987)

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## INTRODUCTION

The case for reforming the objectives and practices of current British forestry policy is now well proven; it is acknowledged and understood by all land-use interests, including many members of the Government.

In order to add and confirm points across the full range of the subject, BANC has commissioned six specialist commentators - all recognised experts in their own field - to set down their independent views. Each provides a cogent analysis of a distinct area of policy, with decisive and forward looking conclusions.

There is no doubt that the majority of the electorate now views the current state of British forestry - and the upland landscapes it produces - as wholly unacceptable. It is the tax-payer which foots the bill for most of the investment and the tax contrived profit margins made by select individuals, private forestry companies and pension funds. For the Government to continue distributing extravagant sums of money to these few city based investors seems a curious means of assisting the rural economy. It flatly contradicts other Government signals which seek to stimulate local-scale growth in rural communities.

A full-scale review of the forestry sector and its associated policies must now be set in hand by Government. Such a reappraisal will need to address the range of issues covered in this report.

The report:

- \* Reaffirms the questionable economic rationale behind the Government's existing forestry investment procedures;
- \* Restates undisputed facts concerning critical losses of rare bird species levels brought about by continued afforestation of upland landscapes;
- \* States the case for planning control over forestry and describes the method by which it would operate more clearly than has yet been done elsewhere;
- \* Proposes practical solutions for using forestry and woodland to regenerate the rural economy - both in Scotland and in England and Wales.

The report's solutions are creative ones; they are designed not only to further landscape and nature conservation, but to assist the well being of rural communities and to please the tax-payer.