

Vision

The vision of the Rural Policy Centre is to establish SAC as a leading authority on the impact of policy on rural businesses and communities by providing impartial analyses of current issues and by contributing to debate about the challenges we face.

What We Do

The Rural Policy Centre aims to:

- Examine the impact of current policies on rural businesses and communities
- Provide the knowledge required for the development of future rural policies
- Contribute to policy discussions by providing impartial commentary on current issues

To fulfil these aims, the Rural Policy Centre produces reports and policy briefings on topical issues, research briefings on recent research relevant to the current debates and it holds seminars that provide a forum for rural policy stakeholders to discuss the pressing issues of the day.

Outputs

The Rural Policy Centre produces a range of outputs:

Outlook Reports and Roadshows – These reports draw on expertise from across SAC to provide a forward look at the markets in the livestock and arable sectors and at the policy issues we need to address.

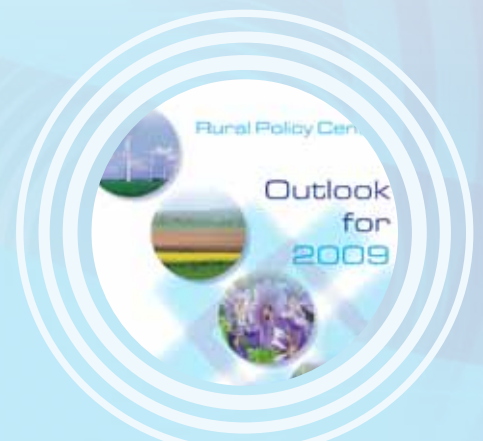
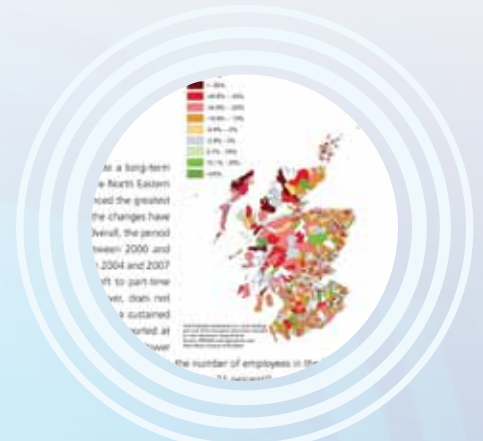
Policy Briefings – These briefings unpack the big issues of the day and provide analysis of the different positions, the way that the debates are changing and some of the policy options.

Research Reports – The Rural Policy Centre also undertakes research on pressing issues in order to inform debates. For example, the Centre informed debate about the decline in the number of livestock in Scotland by producing *Farming's Retreat from the Hills*. In 2010, the Rural Policy Centre produced *Rural Scotland in Focus* – a report outlining the state of rural Scotland across the environmental, economic and social landscape.

Research Briefings – These briefings provide concise information about the findings of SAC's recent policy relevant research.

To view the range of the Rural Policy Centre's outputs go to

www.sac.ac.uk/ruralpolicycentre



Rural Scotland in Focus 2010



The *Rural Scotland in Focus Report 2010* is the first of what will become a series of SAC reports on the state of rural Scotland. It presents the latest evidence about the way that rural Scotland is changing and provides a commentary on specific issues, challenges and opportunities across the economic, environmental and social landscape.

In bringing this information together for the first time, its eight sections deal with population differences and the future of services and infrastructure in what is over 90% of Scotland's landmass and home to one million people. It explores ways local communities are taking control of their own future as well as dealing with climate change, water management and biodiversity improvement. The evidence and commentary are structured around a series of key questions:

- How is Scotland's rural population changing?
- How resilient is the rural economy to the current economic crisis?
- What is the future for Scotland's rural infrastructure and services?
- How are Scotland's rural communities taking ownership of their own future?
- What impact will climate change have on rural Scotland?
- How effectively is water quality being managed?
- How well is farmland biodiversity being maintained?
- What future for upland biodiversity?

Rural Scotland in Focus 2010 was produced and edited by staff from SAC's Rural Policy Centre, with valuable contributions by experts from other research institutions in Scotland. Our ambition for the report is that it will provide a stimulus to ongoing debates on the future of rural Scotland, and inform the dialogue on policy and practice options. To this end, Rural Scotland in Focus will be updated every two years, with interim In Focus Briefings being produced on pressing policy-related themes, coupled with Round Table events. We at SAC hope these will help focus an urgent debate about managing change in rural communities.

Download the Report here: www.sac.ac.uk/rsif

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