

EXECUTIVE NOTE TO
THE REGISTER OF SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2008
SSI 2008/221

The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 22(3) and 53(2) of the **Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004**. The instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure.

Policy Objectives

Section 22 is the last provision in this Act to be brought into force and makes provision for the creation of an authoritative new public register of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) to be overseen and maintained by the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland.

This instrument provides for the form and content of the register. It places a duty on Scottish Natural Heritage to send the information required for the register to the Keeper, and requires the Keeper to amend the register upon receipt of that information within the timescales specified in regulation 6(2).

The new register will be a publically available, authoritative, central source of information about the extent and legal status of SSSI land and will be accessible in electronic form.

A register of SSSIs was originally required under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) to be maintained as paper copies by the relevant local authority and required the registration of each SSSI notification against the title of the property. However, it was found that they had limited authority given the lack of provision for notification of change of ownership, updating was labour intensive and it is arguable that they did not effectively meet the needs of either those involved in dealings in land on a professional basis, or of the popular audience.

Since the 2004 Act came into force, transitional arrangements have been in place which required SNH to keep a register (which included the material kept in the register maintained under the 1981 Act) until the establishment of the new register.

Financial Effects

The proposed instrument will not result in any additional costs to business, charities or the voluntary sector.

Scottish Government Rural Directorate
5 June 2008