

# Scottish Government submission of 24 November 2022

## PE1945/B: Ban the extraction and use of peat for horticulture and all growing media by 2023

- **How feasible it would be to ban the extraction and use of peat by 2023?**

In terms of **extraction**, our Revised Draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), laid in the Scottish Parliament on 8 November 2022, makes clear that proposals for new commercial peat extraction, including extensions to existing sites, are not supported except in very limited circumstances, including where the extracted peat is supporting the Scottish whisky industry and there is no reasonable substitute, and where other relevant and applicable criteria are met including on site restoration. The preparation of NPF4 has been the result of an ambitious and extensive process of consultation and collaboration, with 3 separate rounds of engagement, beginning almost 3 years ago. We have listened carefully to our stakeholders and are proud to present a national spatial strategy that is a product of extensive engagement and collaboration. Should Parliament approve NPF4, Scottish Ministers would move swiftly to adoption to allow us to progress onto implementation and delivery.

Since announcing our intention to ban the **sale** of peat-related gardening products, in September 2021 (2021-22 Programme for Government), we have been working with industry to understand exactly where transitional issues lie and will soon launch a consultation that will provide the information we need to put a workable and ambitious plan in place to remove peat from Scottish horticulture. We have also undertaken and commissioned impact assessments to help shape our policies to minimise impact on the environment and on the horticulture industry, which, in itself, is vital for our environment, economy, food supply and wellbeing. In addition, we have engaged with UK Government and devolved administrations in relation to the UK Internal Market Act and its potential impact on effective implementation of policy.

Completing these necessary steps means that it will not be possible to implement a sales ban by 2023. Consultation responses and

stakeholder discussions will inform our timescales and we intend to put a ban in place as quickly as is feasible.

With encouragement from Scottish Government and other UK administrations, the UK horticulture industry is already transitioning – peat's share of the retail sector has declined over the past decade from 58% of growing media used by the UK public in 2011 to 30% in 2021 and we will continue to liaise with industry to ensure a swift removal of peat from horticulture, culminating in a sales ban.

- **When the Scottish Government expects the delivery plan and timetable for phasing out horticultural peat to be developed and produced**

We will develop a delivery plan and timetable for phasing out horticultural peat following analysis of consultation responses and discussions with industry and environmental NGOs.

- **When the public consultation on the ban of peat-related gardening products will launch**

We expect to launch the consultation in December 2022.

- **How the petitioner can contribute to the consultation**

We would encourage the petitioner to contribute to the consultation, which will be launched on Scottish Government Citizen Space Consultation Hub ([consult.gov.scot](https://consult.gov.scot)). They can also email [horticultural.peat@gov.scot](mailto:horticultural.peat@gov.scot).