



Unfinished Business

A National Parks Strategy
for Scotland



APRS
The Association for the
Protection of Rural Scotland

PRESS RELEASE

MORE NATIONAL PARKS WOULD BOOST TOURISM IN ECONOMICALLY FRAGILE RURAL AREAS

For immediate release 18 March 2016

Two Scottish charities have released a new research report that clearly demonstrates the tourism and economic benefits that designating more National Parks would bring to some of Scotland's most remote and fragile communities, which currently suffer from seasonality and limited employment opportunities.

Using evidence from the worldwide network of National Parks to back its case the new report, [*Tourism and Future National Parks in Scotland*](#), argues convincingly that growing the network of Scottish National Parks would boost the number of UK and international visitors to Scotland and generate much needed additional jobs and income in rural Scotland, particularly in some of the more fragile and remote areas.

Ross Anderson, Chairman of the Scottish Campaign for National Parks, said: "Our new report provides compelling evidence on how the creation of more National Parks would help to grow Scotland's rural visitor economy in a sustainable way, and would support Scotland's 2020 Tourism Strategy with its focus on nature, heritage and activities".

John Mayhew, Director of The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland, said: "Remoter communities in rural Scotland would greatly benefit from the year-round increase in visitor spending which more National Parks would bring and, importantly, the existence of more National Parks could ensure that this growth takes place without harming the precious landscapes that visitors come to see".

The new report presents evidence to support its case from around the world, including:

- Visitor numbers to the Kakadu National Park in remote Northern Australia grew from 46,000 in 1982 to 211,000 by 1991, with tourism spending reaching \$35m by that time

- The three National Parks in Wales directly add £557 million per annum to the Welsh economy
- The 560,000 day visitors and 33,000 overnight visitors to the Fiordland National Park in New Zealand per annum generate \$196 million additional regional economic output beyond what it would be without the National Park

Among the key conclusions of the new report are that:

- International visitors actively seek out National Parks
- Increased visitor numbers can help to sustain vital services also used by local people such as shops, buses and cafes
- National Parks have a strong international reputation for being 'open for business' and welcoming to visitors
- Many national tourism websites actively promote National Parks as a key component of their marketing offer, but they are less prominently featured on the *VisitScotland* website, possibly because Scotland only has two National Parks

This new report follows on from *Unfinished Business*, published previously by SCNP and APRS, which challenged the Scottish Government to bring forward a national strategy to deliver more National Parks in Scotland.

At present there are only two National Parks in Scotland: the Cairngorms National Park and the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Scotland remains near the bottom of the world league in terms of its number of National Parks, despite travel writers regularly praising Scotland's natural and cultural heritage as being of world-beating quality.

The Scottish Government has failed to fulfil its 2011 manifesto pledge to "work with communities to explore the creation of new National Parks". For example, although a local referendum overwhelmingly supported the creation of Scotland's third National Park in Harris, the Scottish Government took no further action to work towards this.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. For more information please contact John Mayhew on 07787 195690, 0131 225 7012 or scnp-aprs@btconnect.com
2. The new report, *Tourism and Future National Parks in Scotland*, by Graham Barrow, can be read [here](#).
3. SCNP promotes the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of National Parks, potential National Parks and other nationally outstanding areas worthy of special protection. SCNP is a registered Scottish charity, No SC031008. www.scnp.org.uk
4. APRS promotes the care of **all** of Scotland's rural landscapes. APRS is a registered Scottish charity, No SC016139. www.ruralscotland.btck.co.uk

5. The *Unfinished Business* report calls for at least seven more National Parks to be established, covering Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount; a coastal and marine National Park, centred around Mull; The Cheviots; Galloway; Glen Affric; Harris; and Wester Ross
6. Copies of *Unfinished Business* are available from John Mayhew – see contact details above – or can be read online [here](#).
7. Images of the seven areas proposed as National Parks and a map showing their approximate locations are also available from John Mayhew.