

Bunchrew Land Declaration

This declaration was adopted following a meeting at Bunchrew House, by Inverness, Scotland on 19 and 20 March 2014 involving land policy and reform interests from Scotland, the rest of the UK and internationally and which explored land reform in Scotland within an international context and with particular reference to the achievement of greater social justice and the realisation of human rights.

Community Land Scotland:

having shared the experience of land ownership in Scotland, the effects of that ownership being in the hands of so few people, and its impact in contributing to the decline of communities historically and today, and in denying opportunity for more people and communities to take responsibility for and share in the bounty of the land;

having explored the parallels with land reform internationally and the solidarity felt with peoples facing dispossession of and clearance from their lands today;

knowing Scotland lags behind land reform interventions which in Europe delivered greater land justice in past centuries;

understanding the impacts on bio-diversity and on the degradation of land caused by land uses favoured by many current owners in Scotland; **desiring** to achieve more people-centred local land governance arrangements;

recognising the relevance and legitimacy of international legal frameworks, obligations and guidance to Scotland for change in land governance arrangements to help tackle land injustice and secure more sustainable futures for its people;

aware of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure 2012;

conscious of the possibilities flowing from the Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights to contributing to deliver change;

mindful of the consideration and scrutiny of the Scottish land reform question within the Land Reform Review Group within Scotland, and the Scottish Affairs Committee of the UK Parliament, and the development of the Community Empowerment Bill;

whereas calling for established land ownership interests to recognise the manifest unfairness of current land ownership patterns

Community Land Scotland:

re-affirms with renewed strength its commitment to pursue the just cause of establishing new land ownership patterns in Scotland

cites international and inter-governmental agreements in helping give legitimacy to nation states intervening in land ownership arrangements to create greater fairness and land justice

anticipates thus empowering more people and communities to negotiate with current land-owners to take ownership and responsibility for land and associated assets, such as housing, bringing a people centred approach to land governance in support of the common good;

associates itself with terms of the Antigua Declaration adopted by the International Land Coalition in 2013;

pledges to work in collaboration with others active in Scotland, the rest of the UK, and internationally, in pursuing policies to secure greater land ownership justice;

undertakes to learn from others what it is appropriate to learn and apply in Scotland;

offers to contribute to wider land reform movements and nations the Scottish experience in seeking to establish new land ownership patterns to serve the public interest, in combatting decline, expanding opportunity, developing stronger, more resilient, empowered and sustainable local communities and economies, and to achieve greater social justice.

Community Land Scotland

20 March 2014