

Stobo Hope June 2026 Update



A Landmark Opportunity for Change

The Stobo Hope campaign has become one of Scotland's most significant community-led environmental campaigns, challenging a large-scale Sitka spruce plantation proposed on heather moorland, wetlands and species-rich grasslands in the Upper Tweed Valley.

Thanks to public support, expert evidence and legal action, the campaign has already achieved major successes. Forestry operations were halted, a £2 million taxpayer-funded forestry grant was withdrawn, and Scottish Forestry accepted that a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required before any future decision can be made.

Why This Project Matters

Stobo Hope supports valuable moorland, grassland and wetland habitats that provide refuge for species such as black grouse, curlew, hen harrier, merlin, golden eagle and countless insect species.

Independent ecological research has shown that large-scale Sitka spruce plantations on semi-natural habitats can result in substantial biodiversity loss and long-term landscape change. The campaign seeks to ensure that these impacts are properly assessed and that decisions are based on sound scientific evidence.

Progress So Far

- An enforcement notice remains in place, preventing forestry works from proceeding.
- Scottish Forestry has conceded that a full Environmental Impact Assessment is required.
- A £2 million public forestry grant associated with the project was withdrawn.
- Public awareness of the environmental concerns surrounding the proposal has grown significantly.
- Independent ecological evidence has helped bring national attention to the importance of Stobo Hope and more widely to the environmental impact of commercial forestry.

What Happens Next

Environmental consultants are preparing an Environmental Impact Assessment report, which will be submitted to Scottish Forestry for consideration.

This assessment will be critical in determining whether the proposed plantation can proceed and whether its impacts on wildlife, habitats and landscape have been properly evaluated.

Why Funding Matters

While important progress has been achieved, the campaign is not over.

Continued support helps fund independent ecological expertise, scientific analysis, legal advice and public engagement. These resources are essential to ensuring that the Environmental Impact Assessment process is properly scrutinised and that environmental decisions are made transparently and lawfully.

Impact & Outcomes

The Stobo Hope campaign has already demonstrated the power of community action.

It has secured greater environmental scrutiny, prevented further damaging forestry operations, influenced public policy discussions and highlighted the importance of protecting Scotland's internationally valued landscapes and wildlife.

With continued support, the campaign can help establish stronger environmental accountability and ensure that future decisions affecting Scotland's natural heritage are guided by evidence, transparency and the public interest.

Thank You

Everything achieved so far has been made possible through the support of donors, volunteers, scientists and members of the public.

Together, we have already made a difference.
With continued support, we can help ensure that Stobo Hope receives the environmental protection and scrutiny it deserves.



Todrig Judicial Review June 2026 Update



A landmark legal victory for nature

In March 2026, Restore Nature Ltd secured a **significant win in the Court of Session**, successfully challenging Scottish Forestry’s decision to allow a large-scale Sitka spruce plantation at Todrig in the Scottish Borders **without an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**.

The Court ruled that Scottish Forestry had acted **unlawfully**, relying on a flawed approach to **assessing landscape impacts** and failing to properly consider risks to the **Northern Brown Argus butterfly**, a protected biodiversity species.

As a result, the original decision has been **legally cancelled** and must now be reconsidered.

Why this case matters

This case goes beyond a single site.

The Court rejected a method used by Scottish Forestry that assessed landscape impacts by simply calculating what **percentage of a wider landscape area** would be affected. This approach allowed even large developments to be dismissed as having “no significant effect.”

The ruling confirms that:

- Impacts must be assessed **on the site itself**, not diluted across a wider area
- Landscape character must be **properly evaluated**, not reduced to a calculation
- Biodiversity impacts – including on species like the Northern Brown Argus – must be **fully investigated before decisions are made**

Without this challenge, developments could have continued to **incrementally erode entire landscapes** without proper scrutiny.

What happens next

Scottish Forestry must now make a **new, lawful decision**.

This creates a critical opportunity to:

- Secure a **full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**
- Ensure **local communities and conservation bodies are properly consulted**
- Properly assess impacts on **landscape, habitats and species**

Restore Nature will continue working to ensure that this process is carried out **rigorously and transparently**, and that the Todrig site is protected from inappropriate development.

A wider impact across Scotland

This case has implications far beyond Todrig.

Between 2015 and 2023, Scottish Forestry required EIAs for **just 4 out of 729 woodland creation applications**.

This ruling has the potential to reshape how such decisions are made, ensuring that **future forestry developments are subject to proper environmental scrutiny**.

The challenge of defending nature

Bringing this case has required significant time, expertise and financial resources. Despite winning in court, Restore Nature continues to face **substantial legal costs** and must remain engaged to ensure the next decision is lawful and robust.

As a grassroots organisation, this work has only been possible through **public support and crowdfunding**.

How you can help

This case has already delivered real change – but the outcome is not yet secured.

With your support, we can:

- Ensure a full Environmental Impact Assessment takes place
- Continue legal and expert oversight of the process
- Help set a lasting precedent for environmental protection in Scotland

Many people have already helped bring this case this far – your support now can help finish the job.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/save-todrig-from-sitka-spruce-plantation-1>

Contact

Restore Nature Ltd
info@restorenature.co.uk

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