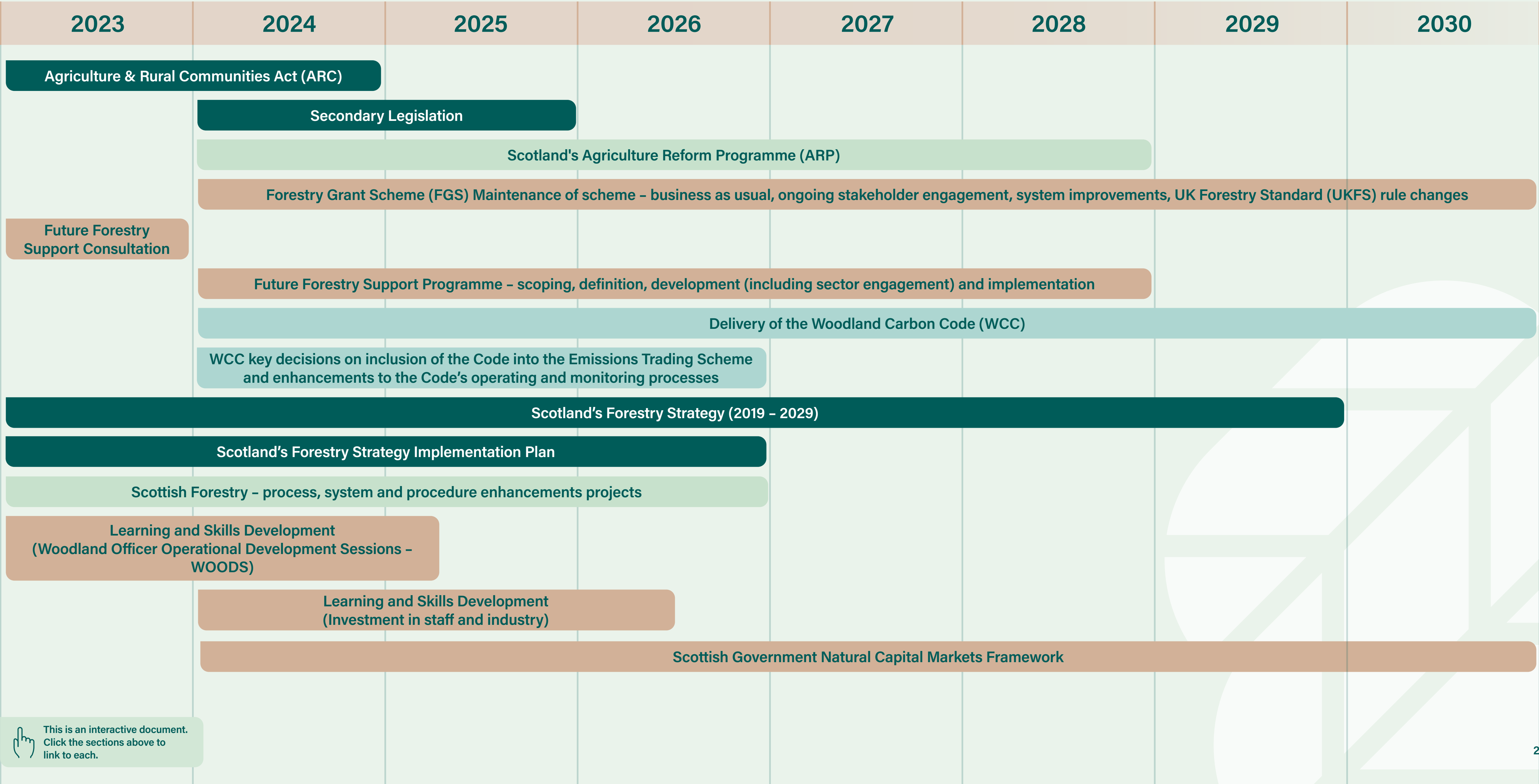


Scottish Government's Woodland Creation Route Map

A strategic summary setting out the direction, policies, and actions for delivering woodland creation in Scotland from now to 2030.



Woodland Creation – High Level Route Map



Woodland Creation – High Level Route Map Narratives

ARC Act & Secondary Legislation	Climate Change Plan	Agriculture Reform Programme	FGS Maintenance of scheme	Future Forestry Support Consultation	Future Forestry Support Programme
<p>Following the UK's exit from the EU, the Scottish Government must decide how to continue to provide support and make payments in support of farming, forestry, and rural communities.</p> <p>The Agriculture & Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024 provides Scottish Ministers with a new rural support framework.</p> <p>The ARC Act will be used to deliver the Scottish Government's Vision for Agriculture, which outlines the Scottish Government's wider agriculture policy aims and contains provisions for future forestry grant support.</p> <p>Forestry-specific secondary legislation will provide the detail of the approach the Scottish Government will take in supporting the forestry sector in Scotland.</p> <p>This will enable Scottish Ministers to continue to operate the Forestry Grant Scheme as well as any future iterations.</p>	<p>Scotland's ambitious climate change legislation sets a target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045.</p> <p>To meet Scotland's targets, a rapid transformation across all sectors of our economy and society is required and this is set out in the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan.</p> <p>Scottish Forestry is working with colleagues in the Scottish Government to prepare forestry's contribution to the revision of the Climate Change Plan, which will include woodland creation targets.</p>	<p>The Scottish Government's Agriculture Reform Programme will deliver the Vision for Agriculture and brings together work including the Route Map, the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act, Future Support Framework, Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB), and the National Test Programme (NTP).</p>	<p>The Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) was co-designed with industry stakeholders and has been purposefully created to meet the needs and demands of forestry in Scotland.</p> <p>During the current scheme's lifetime some grant options have been reviewed and updated in line with changes in demand, or to changes in policy or best practice over time.</p> <p>For the FGS to remain successful it must continue to be maintained to meet the evolving demands of the industry and stakeholders.</p>	<p>The consultation sought views on the evolution of the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS), with the aim to build on the success of the FGS, allowing it to further improve the delivery of the Scottish Government's priorities for Net Zero, biodiversity, community wealth building and the economy.</p>	<p>The initial scoping stage of the Future Forestry Support Programme, developing the themes from the consultation exercise and setting the context for the future support for forestry in Scotland.</p>



This is an interactive document.
Click the sections above to
link to each.

Woodland Creation – High Level Route Map Narratives

Woodland Carbon Code (WCC)	WCC – key decisions	Scotland’s Forestry Strategy (2019 – 2029)	Scotland’s Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan	Scottish Forestry – process, system and procedure enhancements projects	Learning and Skills Development (WOODS Programme)	Learning and Skills Development (Investment in staff and industry)
<p>The Woodland Carbon Code is the quality assurance standard for woodland carbon projects in the UK. The Code is internationally endorsed and provides confidence that projects are of high integrity and make a genuine difference to greenhouse gas emissions targets.</p> <p>Trust in the Code enables buyers and sellers to participate in the market with confidence. Revenues from carbon credits under the Code provide an additional source of funding for creating new woodlands.</p> <p>A series of updates and improvements to the Code are underway to help maintain market confidence and enable greater scale in future.</p> <p>Governance of the Code has been strengthened through the creation of the Nature Markets Strategy Board, comprising the chief executives of the forestry authorities across the UK.</p> <p>A review of the Additionality Test, led by EY consultants, is assessing the current operation of the test and whether changes will be required.</p> <p>A new carbon registry for the Code will be launched in autumn 2024 and will introduce improved functionality, efficiency and connectivity with the wider carbon market.</p> <p>The UK Land Carbon Registry will move to an upgraded platform in 2025 with improved functionality and the registry contract is also being retendered during 2025.</p>	<p>The woodland carbon market has expanded rapidly in recent years and the Woodland Carbon Code continues to evolve as the market matures.</p> <p>Developing more scale and efficiency is a major priority in the market.</p> <p>Rapid expansion of the woodland carbon market in recent years has seen the Woodland Carbon Code attract increasing amounts of private finance into woodland creation.</p> <p>A programme of enhancements to the Code’s operating procedures and monitoring processes will deliver greater scale through cost savings and efficiencies.</p> <p>Further integration with woodland creation grant schemes will enable public funding to be targeted across a greater number of woodland creation projects.</p> <p>A decision will likely be taken in 2025 on whether carbon credits under the Code will be sold into the UK Emissions Trading Scheme in the future.</p>	<p>Scotland’s Forestry Strategy sets out the 50-year vision and 10-year framework for action for our forests and woodlands and forestry sector.</p> <p>The Strategy clearly articulates Scotland’s ambition to have more forests and woodlands and for them to deliver more benefits to the people of Scotland, including carbon sequestration and climate change adaptation, enhancing and protecting biodiversity, growing the wellbeing economy, and helping people improve their health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Strategy underpins Scottish Ministers’ duty to promote sustainable forest management and exercising their forestry functions as set out under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 including providing forestry grants.</p>	<p>Actions to deliver Scotland’s Forestry Strategy are set out in shorter-lived implementation plans, structured according to the Strategy’s six priorities, including 'Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives'. Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Encourage and promote appropriate creation of a wide range of woodland types drawing on a variety of funding sources, and demonstrating the interim principles for responsible investment in natural capital;▪ Work with stakeholders to increase responsible private investment in new woodlands and grow the woodland carbon market by 50%;▪ Support the identification of opportunities for farmers and crofters to realise the benefits of tree planting and reduce the barriers to them doing so; and▪ Work with the forestry sector and communities to promote the principles set out in the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement and improve the opportunities for communities to be involved with the development of forestry proposals and plans. <p>The current plan is an example of successful collaboration across all aspects of the forestry sector, and has been extended until 2026 to focus resources on continued delivery.</p>	<p>As part of Scottish Forestry’s (SF) improvement programme a number of changes are being made to our systems, processes and provision of information.</p> <p>A key change is our intention to move our public consultation activities to an earlier stage, so they happen pre-application. Other improvements are being made to Long Term Forest Plans and Environmental Impact Assessments.</p> <p>We are continuing to make improvements to our case management systems, undertaking greater digitisation of case records and providing enhancements to our Public Register (of woodland creation proposals) which will allow us to digitally share more information about projects.</p> <p>These improvements will enhance consistency, transparency, and deliver efficiencies by reducing time spent on regulatory and grant applications.</p> <p>In 2025 we will launch a refreshed web site with a greater focus on the user experience.</p>	<p>A learning programme focussed on our (Assistant) Woodland Officers to boost their competence and confidence and which supports their vital role approving grant applications and advising landowners.</p>	<p>A new project aiming to improve the quality of woodland creation grant applications submitted by agents and ensure Scottish Forestry staff have the knowledge and skills they require to handle applications thereby improving consistency and efficiency of woodland creation case handling.</p>

Targets / Strategies

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle	*Programme for Government / Annual Budget Cycle
	Climate Change Plan published						Woodland cover increased to 21% of total area of Scotland
	Review of Climate Change Plan including woodland creation targets (ministerial engagement)						
		Scotland's Climate Change Adaption Programme					
	Annual target of 18k including 4,000 ha of native woodland	Increase woodland carbon market by at least 50%					
		Scottish Forestry's Corporate Plan and Strategy 2025 – 2030 published					
	June 2024 – publication of 2023 woodland creation delivery	June 2025 – publication of 2024 woodland creation delivery			Review of Scotland's Forestry Strategy		
		New Science and Innovation Strategy					

Legislation

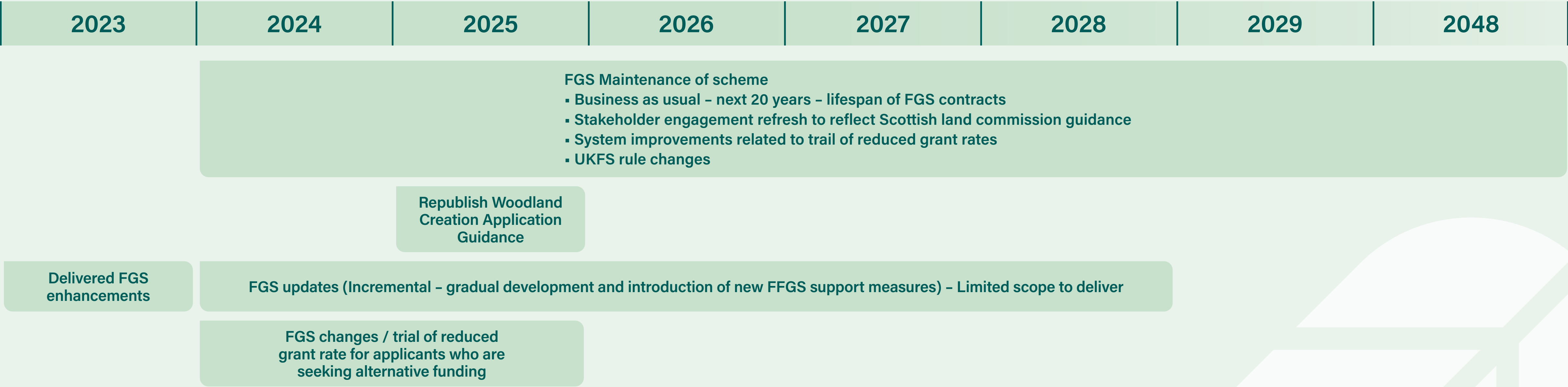
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	
	Agriculture & Rural Communities Bill (see Future Forestry Grant Scheme)								Sunset – retained EU law
		Rural Delivery Plan							
		Secondary legislation (for Future Forestry Grant Scheme)							

Scotland's Forestry Strategy

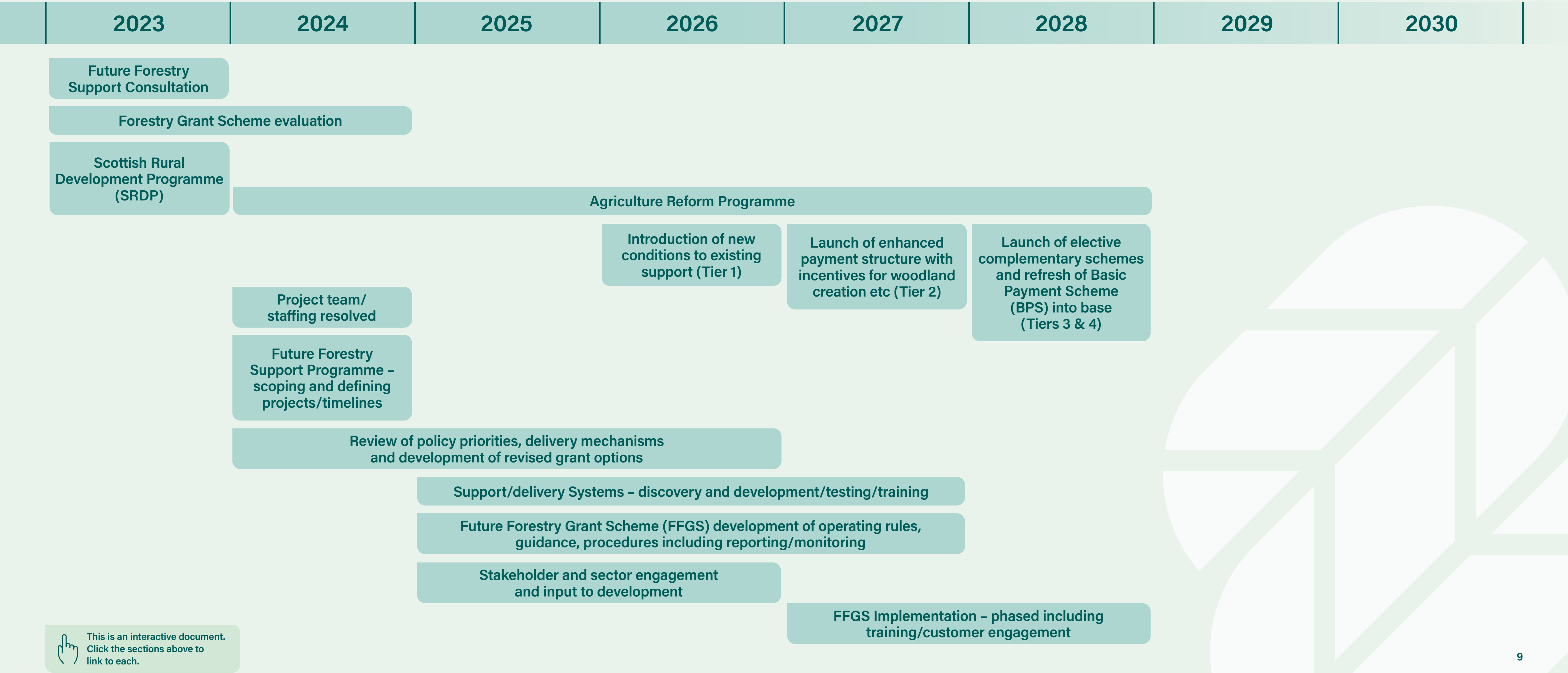
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	
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Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) – Current



Future Forestry Support & Agricultural Reform Programme



Natural Capital

2023	2024	2025	2026
	Woodland Carbon Code (WCC)	Development of protocols for biodiversity and water impacts, and potential credits	
	Publication of the Scottish Government Natural Capital Markets Framework	Improved workflow and registry processes to increase market efficiency Retender for new UK Land Carbon Registry services during 2025	
	Potential inclusion of the WCC into the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) Consultation	Decision on whether to admit credits from the Woodland Carbon Code into the UK ETS	
	Future funding of the WCC team. Increase registry fees (increase income)		
	Consultation on the WCC Additionality Test	Updates to the WCC to enhance rigour and efficiency	
	HMRC decision on the application of Tax (VAT, income tax, inheritance tax, capital gains etc.) to WCC credits/projects/land	HMRC VAT change take effect	

UKFS/ Forestry Regulations

2023	2024	2025	2026
UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) 5 published	UKFS - Scottish Forestry and industry training (July 2024 via ICF) UK wide sponsored by DEFRA		
	Application to be UKFS 5 compliant		
	UKFS 5 implementation from October 2024		
	Deer Mgt Consultation (closed March 2024)		

Land Use, Environment & Biodiversity

2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and Delivery Plan published	Land Reform Bill	Land Use Strategy				Nature positive & protected areas expanded to at least 30% (land & sea)
EIA enabling powers	Natural Environment Bill					
Statutory biodiversity targets						
Flood Resilience Strategy						

Process & Technology Enhancements

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
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- Woodland creation improvement projects
- Woodland creation process improvements programme
- Public Register enhancements
- Environmental Impact Assessment enhancements
- Long Term Forest Plans process improvements

Agriculture & Rural Economy (assumption ownership of Rural Payments & Services)

Lessons learned on 2023 claim year

Learning & Skills Development

