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FAO: NEWS DESKS, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENTS

RADICAL CHANGE COMING FOR LAND REFORM

The Scottish Government's announcement of a new group which is being set up to carry out a wide-ranging review of land reform in Scotland is being welcomed by Rob Gibson MSP.

Mr Gibson, convener of the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs Committee said there was reason for optimism following First Minister Alex Salmond announcing the Land Reform Review Group, which will be chaired by Dr Alison Elliot, the first woman Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Rob Gibson, the Caithness, Sutherland and Ross SNP MSP, said:

"This is exciting news which will be welcomed by aspirational communities, not just of my constituency, but in rural and urban communities across Scotland.

"By improving the relationship between our land and people - by addressing the glaring and outdated practices which must be put under the spotlight by the review - we can create stronger communities and deliver the economic growth that the people of Scotland quite rightly expect.

"I believe this review will bring real change developing new ideas which will improve current legislation as well as generating even more innovative proposals.

"Communities want the chance to take over their own affairs and these changes will help them on their way. The appetite for local control is growing in many communities that I represent - there is a mood that they can do things for themselves and need not be held back by others.

"Land reform and local empowerment are two of the core beliefs of the Scottish government. I am glad that they have acted on those principles with today's announcement and look forward to putting the case for more community control and ownership in the years to come."

ENDS

Notes: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2012/07/Land-Reform24072012>

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