

**NATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM
EASTERBROOK HALL, DUMFRIES
16 MAY 2018**

Driving Forward the Rural Economy

10:15 – 11:00 Registration

11:00 – 11:05 **Mr Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Business Innovation and Energy**
welcomes delegates and introduces the **First Minister**

11:05 – 11:20 **First Minister** *Opening Address*

11:20 – 11:40 Business keynote address – **Lindsay McQuade, ScottishPower
Renewables and Steve Dunlop, Scottish Canals**

11:40 -12:15 Q&A Panel with **First Minister, Lindsay McQuade, Steve Dunlop and
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, Mr Ewing MSP,**
facilitated by Mr Wheelhouse

12:15 – 13:00 Networking Lunch

13:00 – 14:25 Discussion groups – Chaired by Minister / facilitated by business leaders

- Creating a new Enterprise Agency for the South of Scotland
- National Council of Rural Advisers: 'Changing the Rules of the Game'
- Developing the Young Workforce – Building a bridge between education and employers
- Energy supply chains
- Digital opportunities in rural economies
- Natural capital
- Sustainable tourism

14:30 - 14:35 Mr Ewing welcomes delegates back for afternoon session

14:35 – 14:45 Business keynote **Alain Dupeyras**, Head of the Regional Development and
Tourism Division, OECD

14:45 – 15:20 Ministerial Q & A Panel facilitated by Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy
and Connectivity, Mr Ewing MSP,

- *Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills,
Mr Swinney MSP*
- *Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work, Mr Brown
MSP*
- *Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land
Reform, Roseanna Cunningham MSP*
- *Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, Fiona
Hyslop MSP*

15:20 – 15:30 Closing address from Deputy First Minister

15:30 NEF Close