

# Timber Development Programme 2007-2010

Annual Report 2007-08

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## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to document the progress of the Timber Development Programme (TDP) 2007/10.

## Background

The aim of the TDP is to contribute to the sustainable development of Scotland's economy by enabling the timber growing and processing sectors to find the highest value and most appropriate end market for Scotland's timber.

The TDP is structured as a three-year programme focussing on four prime objectives:

- Promote a predictable and stable timber supply.
- Encourage more use of timber and timber products
- Enable improvements to timber supply chain efficiency
- Encourage and enable improvements to the quality of the growing stock.

The three-year programme of 60 tasks addresses key issues within the timber supply chain identified through lengthy discussions with industry stakeholders.

The Environment Minister launched the programme in December 2007.

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) is assisted by an industry based steering group chaired by John Kissock OBE to determine the programme.

In recent weeks The Forest Industries Advisory Board (FIAB) has been announced. Initial discussions are underway on how best to integrate the TDP with the objectives of the FIAB.

## Progress to date

Thirty-six tasks were programmed to commence in 2007/08. Thirty-three tasks have been commenced with the remaining three re-prioritised until 2008/09. Most tasks cover more than one forest year, but eight have been completed.

## Headline Outputs of the Programme in 2007/08

A summary of the headline outputs categorised against the four key objectives of the programme is provided below.

### Promote a predictable and stable timber supply

#### *07/08 Outputs*

- After a series of discussions/workshops with industry representatives, FCS has constituted an industry working group to help develop a more accurate production forecast for 2011.
- Forest Research has produced an initial forecast based on quality with a red/green split. Further work in 08/09 will move towards a quality assessment derived from acoustic assessment.

#### *08/09 Tasks*

- FCS will host a series of working group meetings and industry seminars to agree a process for improving data gathering for the 2011 production forecast.
- Forest Research has been commissioned to validate a production forecast quality model.

### Encourage more use of timber and timber products

#### *07/08 Outputs*

- Various pieces of work were commissioned to the research sector, including investigation of larch durability, exposure trials for external cladding and a fire behaviour test for Sitka spruce cladding. These outputs will inform a publication highlighting the application and benefits of external wood cladding.
- Continue our financial support for Strategic Integrated Research in Timber. An early output of this project is a work plan to benchmark actual strength properties against acoustic readings from Sitka spruce stands across GB.
- FCS initiated the idea, along with Scottish Government Departments, of the Highland Housing Fair. This is the first national housing fair inspired by the Finnish model. Fifty-four permanent dwellings are to be built south of Inverness. A key aim of the project is to promote innovative design for sustainable housing. Timber will be the major component of 82% of the buildings. FCS is represented on the steering group.

- Publication of "New Timber Architecture in Scotland". This was a significant success in promoting the potential for the use of timber in building construction. 10k copies were distributed to key politicians, local authority planning departments, architects, housing associations and other developers. The publication got excellent press coverage and requests were received from as far as Canada and Australia.

### *08/09 Tasks*

- FCS will organise and host an industry conference at Napier University in January 09 based on the carbon benefits of timber in construction.
- Continue financial support for the Strategic Integrated Research in Timber project.
- Provide financial support for the Highland Housing Fair.
- Ensure outputs of research activities and outputs derived on behalf of FCS are disseminated timeously and appropriately.
- Continue to support initiatives such as Wood for Good and Central Point of Expertise in Timber.

## Enable improvements to timber supply chain efficiency

### *07/08 Outputs*

- Continued support for Timber Transport Forum Project Officer.
- FCS effectively managed the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (STTS). A total of 38 applications were received up to the end of March 2008. The cumulative value of applications to the scheme at this time was £13.4M against an original budget of £13m. A new financial agreement is now in place at £5m per annum for the next three years.
- The STTS was independently reviewed and as a result some minor revisions will be made to the process in consultation with the Timber Transport Forum.
- Forest Enterprise Scotland continued to support and manage a Modern Apprenticeship scheme. 20 individuals participated in harvesting and forest management duties.

### *08/09 Tasks*

- Continued support for Timber Transport Forum Project Officer. The initial three year funding period runs out in September 2008. FCS with other co-funders will discuss and review with the Timber Transport Forum, the future requirements for the continuation of this role before agreeing to further funding.

- In response to the outputs of the review of the STTS, revise guidance and re-launch STTS.
- Commission study to investigate remaining challenges in timber transport.
- Commission study to investigate potential shortfall of skilled labour in the forest supply chain.

Encourage and enable improvements to the quality of the growing stock.

### *07/08 Outputs*

- Continued support for industry working groups such as "improving conifer timber steering group".
- Included support for the use of improved (Vegetative Propagation) stock in the private sector through SRDP.

### *08/09 Tasks*

- Host an industry workshop to help identify key issues to be addressed to improve quality of growing stock for quality conifers.
- Host a series of seminars to help bridge the gaps identified from the workshop and other industry sources.
- Work closely with Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmills to organise workshops to develop Scottish hardwood strategy.

## Future projects

If you would like to share your view on current issues regarding the timber supply chain or would like more information on the programme, please contact:

Andy Leitch  
Timber Development Policy Advisor  
Forestry Commission Scotland  
Tel - 0131 314 6159  
Email - [andy.leitch@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:andy.leitch@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

Or

John Kissock  
Timber Development Programme

Steering Group Chair

Email - [j.kissock@JamesJones.co.uk](mailto:j.kissock@JamesJones.co.uk)