

Questions from our consultation

This form sets out the questions we ask in a consultation on restoring and expanding open habitats from woods and forests in England that we launched on 12 March 2009. The consultation ends on 5 June 2009. You can find the consultation at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-openhabitats-consultation or contact Dominic Driver, Forestry Commission for further information (contact details below).

Comments on any aspect of the consultation are welcome, but we are particularly interested in your responses to the questions below. This form is available at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-openhabitats-consultation.

Your name:	Results from small Workshop at
Your organisation (if any):	NE Landscaping Event
Date:	26.3.09

No	Question.
The nature of the change	
1.	Does your aspiration for the scale of the policy fit within our calculated range of 5,600 to 30,000 ha of restoration or expansion of open habitats from woodland or forest over 10 to 15 years? This is 370 to 3,000 ha each year. What level of intervention would you prefer and how is this justified?
Depends on getting the right management decision based on social, economic and environmental benefits. Should consider a mitigation exercise - do as developers do replace elsewhere.	
Desired outcomes	
2.	Have we developed a reasonable list of desired outcomes of the policy? Do you wish to suggest any amendments?
See 1 above also - no net loss and show demonstrable social, economic and environmental benefits.	
Measuring the success of the policy	
3.	Have we developed a reasonable set of indicators for evaluation? Do you wish to suggest any amendments to this indicator list?
No comment	
Policy proposals	
Elements present in the policy	
We will treat woodland and open habitats as potentially mutually beneficial	
1.	Do you agree that woodland and open habitats are potentially mutually beneficial? Is promotion of this idea helpful in gaining support for open habitat restoration and

No	Question.
	expansion from woodland?
outcome for each locality is important	
A presumption against removal of 'mature native woodland'	
5.	Do you agree with the principle that there should be a presumption against removal of ancient and 'mature native woodland'?
Yes	
6.	What do you think of our proposed outline definition of 'mature native woodland'?
Very Good	
We will expect practitioners to help local users to participate in development of the initial proposals	
7.	Do you agree that local participation in decision making is helpful? What is your preferred option for how we should apply this element?
local participation is essential - no brainer	
We will promote mechanisms for prioritising woodland removal at a regional level	
8.	Do you agree that prioritisation at a regional level is appropriate for this policy?
yes	
We will apply a framework for evaluation to projects	
9.	Do you agree with this framework for evaluation? What is your preferred option for how we should apply this element?
Not answered	
10.	How much and what kind of support do you think we should give to practitioners to help them evaluate their projects using this framework?
Holistic Help. Practitioners may need to help on public benefit evaluation and engagement tools.	
To avoid net deforestation in England we will try not to go over a threshold rate of woodland removal due to restoring and expanding open habitats.	
11.	Do you agree with the principle of an England scale threshold rate of woodland removal? What is your preferred mechanism by which such a threshold could be applied to policy?
No	

No	Question.
12.	Do you consider that the proposed threshold is about right, too high or too low?
	see above
Key variables	
What is the balance between achieving biodiversity objectives and the need to reduce green house gas emissions?	
13.	Is there a way, in the short term, we can better estimate the contribution to biodiversity objectives from different levels of restoration or expansion of open habitats?
	There are standard methods.
14.	Do you agree that management practices to minimise carbon emissions during restoration or expansion of open habitats should be adopted? Do you agree with the outline practices presented? How could we best ensure that such practices are adopted?
	Yes
15.	Do you agree that it is appropriate to include impact on long-term average carbon store <i>and</i> loss of potential to substitute timber for higher carbon materials and fuel in the calculations on carbon balance?
	Yes
16.	Where do you think the appropriate balance lies between achieving biodiversity objectives and the need to reduce carbon emissions? What processes might help to make this judgement?
	Case by Case
Should we be managing open habitats to keep them in 'favourable condition' or should we adopt a more dynamic approach to land management?	
17.	Outside SSSIs, do you agree that a more dynamic attitude to land management could deliver equivalent or greater gains for open habitats and species than one where success for all sites is based on assessments of condition as applied to SSSIs?
	Yes
18.	If so, how might such an approach be developed? Is there scope for modifying the conservation objectives on some SSSIs to incorporate a similar approach? If not, do you consider that the endpoint for all restoration proposals should be judged against favourable condition as defined for SSSI habitats?
	Not Answered

No	Question.
What level of woodland removal due to restoring or expanding open habitats could avoid a significant negative impact on the timber industry?	
19.	Can you provide any information on the likely links between any reduction in timber production and economic activity in the timber sector?
No but there is limited woodand in the NW so any loss is likely to have an impact.	
Different approaches to applying policy	
20.	Which of the three approaches by which we make decisions about woodland removal is your preferred option? Can you see any alternative types of approach based either on a combination of these approaches or on new ideas?
The role of compensatory planting	
21.	What is the appropriate role of compensatory planting in this policy?
Factors to consider when deciding which policy is likely to work best	
22.	Have we developed a reasonable set of questions for informing the decision on which policy is best? Do you wish to suggest any changes to the list of questions?
Implications for delivery mechanisms	
23.	Have we missed any major implications for delivery mechanisms? Would any be particularly welcome or unwelcome to you?
Other comments	
We welcome your input on any other aspect of this consultation.	

Please include the “information about you” form with your response.¹

Please send your completed forms to:

[Dominic Driver](#)

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¹ See www.forestry.gov.uk/england-openhabitats-consultation for a copy.

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By 17.00hrs, Friday 5 June 2009.