

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:	Adrian T-Berry
Your organisation (if any):	
Date:	2/6/09

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?
Yes at the higher end for high risk sites for timber production.	
Desired outcomes	
2.	Have we developed a reasonable list of desired outcomes of the policy? Do you wish to suggest any amendments?
Yes , assumption re cost of restored heathland is not applicable in the Uplands , figures reflect lowland heath management costs.	
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?
Policy proposals	
Elements present in the policy	
We will treat woodland and open habitats as potentially mutually beneficial	
4.	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 expansion from woodland?
Yes	

No	Question.
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'?
OK	
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?
Yes key in well populated areas, not such an issue in worst of remote non sustainable(Poor access and difficult sites)upland woods	
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?
A mixture of 3 & 4	
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?
This should be stated in regional Plan and where key regional habitats have been mapped	
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 should be UK wide view.	
12.	Do you consider that the proposed threshold is about right, too high or too low?

No	Question.
	probably about right at the higher end
<p>Key variables</p> <p>What is the balance between achieving biodiversity objectives and the need to reduce green house gas emissions?</p>	
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?
Yes where land adjacent to SSSI or similar status is returned to similar condition ie so ex woodland could be added to Designated Site	
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?
Not sure	
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?
Restoring peat , paerticularly blanket bog which has been dried out by a tree crop and associated drainage.	
<p>Should we be managing open habitats to keep them in 'favourable condition' or should we adopt a more dynamic approach to land management?</p>	
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?
Potentially 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?
Given the scientific criteria for assessing Upland SSSI's is still poorly interpreted, absolute adherence to these may be difficult.	

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	
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.