

Quality Report:

UK Wood Production and Trade

Introduction

Statistics on UK Wood Production and Trade comprise a series of annual surveys and data requests on the UK timber industry. Data are compiled by the Forestry Commission (in association with the Forest Service) on:

- removals of roundwood from UK woodlands;
- deliveries of roundwood to wood processors and others;
- production of wood products; and
- imports and exports of wood and wood products (based on overseas trade statistics published by HM Revenue & Customs).

Separate quality reports, covering the private sector softwood removals survey, sawmill survey, survey of round fencing manufacturers and survey of pellet and briquette production in more detail are also available.

Relevance

The main uses of statistics on UK Wood Production and Trade include:

- Deliveries of roundwood – Trends in the supply of, and demand for, UK grown timber are monitored by the Forestry Commission, the UK timber industry and others;
- International reporting – Data on wood production in the UK are provided to Eurostat, UNECE, FAO and others as part of the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (covering wood production and trade);
- Scottish Forestry Strategy Indicators – Sawmill log consumption and sawnwood output by sawmills in Scotland are reported annually;
- UK Government Departments and devolved administrations – deliveries of roundwood and/or sawnwood production are used in a number of statistical publications produced by other government bodies, including the Office for National Statistics (Environmental Accounts) and the Scottish Government (High Level Summary of Statistics).

The Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics (EGTTS), comprising representatives from the UK timber industry, the Forestry Commission and Forest Service are consulted regularly to ensure that UK wood production and trade statistics remain relevant to users (details on the EGTTS can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5rabj3).

Accuracy

A number of checks are performed on the data to ensure accuracy. These include checks against data for previous years, corrections of apparently incorrect data and quality assurance of data with experts from the UK timber industry (through the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics).

Timeliness and punctuality

Provisional results are published in *UK Wood Production and Trade: provisional figures* in mid-May, 4.5 months after the end of the reference period (calendar year).

Final results are published in *Forestry Statistics* at end September, 9 months after the end of the reference period (calendar year).

Accessibility and clarity

The annual *Forestry Statistics* publication, available on the Forestry Commission website at www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics provides the most comprehensive results, including background information on the sources, data collected, response rates, methodology, revisions and reporting. Excel versions of all tables are also available to download from *Forestry Statistics*. *Forestry Statistics* is published in line with the Forestry Commission's website accessibility statement.

Longer time series data, providing additional breakdowns for some statistics, are published in accompanying tables to *UK Wood Production and Trade: provisional figures*. These tables are available to download from the Forestry Commission website in Excel and PDF formats.

Summary results are also published in *Forestry Facts & Figures*, available on the Forestry Commission website at www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics.

Comparability

Most of the data collections on wood production have been run annually by the Statistics team in the Forestry Commission since 1994. Results for a 10-year period are published in *Forestry Statistics*.

The coverage has changed over time to take account of changes in uses of UK grown timber. This includes developments of data collections on roundwood exports, roundwood use for shavings and for wood fuel. In 2004, the surveys were extended to cover the UK (rather than GB) and in 2009 a new survey of UK pellet and briquette production was introduced.

A number of other refinements have been made to the surveys and data collections, in response to consultation with the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics and suggestions/issues raised by users and data providers. These include the addition of new data items on woodfuel and employment and changes to the frequency of, and size of mills covered by, the detailed sawmill survey.

Coherence

Data on UK softwood deliveries (obtained from the sawmill survey and other surveys and data requests) are compared with estimates of total UK softwood removals (obtained from Forestry Commission/Forest Service administrative systems and the Forestry Commission's Private Sector Softwood Removals Survey), available in the annual *Forestry Statistics* publication.

Revisions

The Forestry Commission's Revisions Policy, available at www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7zhk85, outlines our general approach to revisions.

Statistics from surveys of the timber industry (private sector softwood removals, sawmills, round fencing and pellets) are subject to annual revision, as new information becomes available. Further details are provided in the quality reports for each survey.

The statistics for woodbased panels and for pulp and paper are provided by industry associations, and are not normally revised after publication. On occasion a provisional figure or estimate may be published, and replaced by the actual figure in a subsequent publication.

Other timber statistics (wood fuel, other miscellaneous products, exports of roundwood) are not normally revised.

Information on significant revisions made to published statistics is available in the Annex.

Other issues related to quality

Statistical disclosure control checks are run on the sawmill survey and survey of round fencing manufacturers annually, prior to publication, to ensure that the results to be released are not likely to be disclosive for individual businesses. A paper describing the statistical disclosure control checks undertaken for the sawmill survey can be found at: [www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/disc_control_for_fc_surveys.pdf/\\$file/disc_control_for_fc_surveys.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/disc_control_for_fc_surveys.pdf/$file/disc_control_for_fc_surveys.pdf)

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Updated May 2012

Annex: Significant revisions to published statistics

Starting with the publication of 2004 data, published in August 2005, the scope of British Timber Statistics was extended to include Northern Ireland, and the title changed to *UK Timber Statistics*. All tables were revised to give figures for this wider scope, with estimates or indications of missing data in cases where relevant data were not available for Northern Ireland. From 2007, *Forestry Statistics* was extended to cover data previously published in *UK Timber Statistics* and this publication ceased.

A review of the methodology used to estimate the quantity of UK softwood removals from woodland that is not owned or managed by the Forestry Commission (in Great Britain) or the Forest Service (in Northern Ireland) was undertaken in 2011-2012. The *Methodology Review of Softwood Removals from Non-FC/ FS Woodland* paper presents the results from this review and the implications of the change in methodology. It can be found at:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/rem_methodology_rev2011-12.pdf/\\$FILE/rem_methodology_rev2011-12.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/rem_methodology_rev2011-12.pdf/$FILE/rem_methodology_rev2011-12.pdf)

The figures for inputs to woodbased panels in 2009 were revised upwards in May 2011 to correct an error in the original figures reported. This resulted in increases of around 130 thousand green tonnes (12%) of UK softwood roundwood and 270 thousand green tonnes (23%) of softwood sawmill products from the figures reported in *Forestry Statistics 2010* (Tables 2.6 and 2.23) and *Forestry Facts & Figures 2010* (Table 6a).

UK Timber Statistics 2006, released in August 2006, was republished in December 2006. This was primarily to correct a reporting error in the Sawmill Survey, in which data for two mills were switched. The UK totals were unaffected, but the corrections resulted in an increase in consumption and production in Scotland and a corresponding decrease in England. The opportunity was also taken to make some other revisions, taking account of some late returns and making some other minor amendments. These revisions resulted in a 2% reduction in the figure for non-FC softwood removals, a slight drop in sawmills' certified consumption and production, a slight increase in the percentage of other products being sold for bio-energy and a corresponding drop in other products being sold to wood processing industries.

The figures for 2004 for UK exports of roundwood and for total deliveries of UK roundwood were revised downwards by 320 thousand green tonnes after publication of *Forestry Statistics 2005*. The published total had been incorrect to include exports of wood chips produced by sawmills, because the roundwood producing these chips had already been counted as part of logs going to sawmills. This affected *UK Timber Statistics 2004* Tables 1, 2 and 26, *Forestry Facts & Figures 2005* Tables 8 and 9, and *Forestry Statistics 2005* Tables 2.3 and 3.1.

Imports and apparent consumption: the figures for imports in each year 1999 to 2002 were revised upwards between *Forestry Facts & Figures 2003* (table 9) and *Forestry Statistics 2003* (table 3.1), by 0.6-1.2 million m³ (around 2%), to reflect revisions to woodbased panel imports following additional data validation work. Corresponding revisions were made to apparent consumption in the same tables.