

The Scottish Forestry Strategy

2009-2012 Implementation Plan

& 2008-2009 Progress Report

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The Scottish Forestry Strategy

Introduction

The Scottish Government's Forestry Strategy was published in October 2006¹. The core of the Strategy is shown in the schematic below. It is focused on delivering forestry benefits to Scotland against the three main outcomes. A progress report for 2008-2009 is based on these outcomes. Recognising the crosscutting nature of forestry, the Strategy is organised around seven key themes. The 2009-2012 Implementation Plan lays out actions for the coming year for the 67 action partners, and directions for the following two years by theme. Theme reference groups have fed into this process. The five Regional Forestry Forums have defined additional local actions.

Our vision	<i>By the second half of this century, people are benefiting widely from Scotland's trees, woodlands and forests, actively engaging with and looking after them for the use and enjoyment of generations to come. The forestry resource has become a central part of our culture, economy and environment.</i>		
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable development – underpinned by sustainable forest management. • Social inclusion - through helping to provide opportunities for all, and helping to build stronger communities. • Forestry for and with people. • Integration with other land uses and businesses. 		
Outcomes	Improved health and well-being of people and their communities.	Competitive and innovative businesses contributing to the growth of the Scottish economy.	High quality, robust and adaptable environment.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist community participation. • Enhance opportunities for health and enjoyment. • Contribute to growth in learning and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a more efficient and competitive timber supply chain. • Facilitate the development of markets for forest products. • Facilitate rural business diversification and development. • Increase the contribution of forestry to tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to tackle climate change. • Contribute positively to soil, water and air quality. • Contribute to landscape quality. • Protect and promote the historic environment and cultural heritage. • Help to protect and enhance biodiversity.
Key themes	<p>The diagram features a large, dark blue double-headed arrow pointing left and right. Inside the arrow, seven smaller dark blue boxes are arranged in two rows. The top row contains three boxes: 'CLIMATE CHANGE' (centered), 'TIMBER' (left), and 'ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY' (right). The bottom row contains four boxes: 'BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT' (left), 'ACCESS AND HEALTH' (center), and 'BIODIVERSITY' (right). The 'CLIMATE CHANGE' box is positioned above the 'TIMBER' and 'ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY' boxes. The 'BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT' box is positioned below the 'TIMBER' box. The 'ACCESS AND HEALTH' box is positioned below the 'COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT' box. The 'BIODIVERSITY' box is positioned below the 'ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY' box.</p>		

¹ www.forestry.gov.uk/sfs

Progress report for 2008-2009

Overview

The Scottish Forestry Strategy makes a commitment to the publication of implementation plans to guide delivery. This progress report summarises what FCS and the 61 2008-2009 action partners have delivered during the year against the three Strategy outcomes. More detail on progress is given in each of the theme and regional sections of the attached 2009-2012 Implementation Plan.

Of the 187 actions in the 2008-2009 Implementation Plan, 88% were achieved. Twenty two have been carried over into the 2009-2011 plan and none have been superseded.

Theme/region	Action achieved/ underway	Carried over into 2009-10	Action superseded
Climate change	14	1	0
Timber	17	1	0
Business development	23	3	0
Community Development	26	3	0
Access and health	16	0	0
Environmental quality	16	5	0
Biodiversity	12	3	0
South Scotland	5	2	0
Central Scotland	7	0	0
Perth and Argyll	11	2	0
Grampian	7	1	0
Highland	5	1	0

Indicator development continues. By establishing a consistent and representative indicator set for the forestry sector we can better demonstrate what the sector is delivering, and focus effort and resources where it is most needed.

Of 62 indicators reported for the SFS strategy, seven are still to be finalised. For those indicators updated annually, useful time-series data are now emerging.

Improved health and wellbeing of people and their communities

Recognition continues to grow of the health and wellbeing benefits that can be delivered by forestry. A two-year study on the valuation of forestry for people in Scotland² was published during the year, providing important data on the number of jobs and gross value added associated with the social and environmental aspects of forestry. Indications are that this approaches the significance of commercial forestry activity. The study also provides data on the extent of the community woodlands and volunteering sectors, and on public perceptions of forestry.

Scotland's new National Planning Framework, currently before Parliament, recognises the role of greenspace and woodland, with one of the proposed National Developments being a Central Scotland Green Network; being taken forward by a partnership including FCS and the Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT). A strategic but targeted approach to investment will be needed to fulfil the emerging vision, and this will be supported by the Social Investment in Forestry Tool (SIFT) GIS tool that was completed during the year.

The launch of Woods In and Around Towns phase II affirms the place of WIAT as a core Scottish Government delivery mechanism. It is being supported by a new WIAT Challenge Fund, introduced during the year to support urban woodland management, along with a WIAT supplement for woodland creation. Woods In and Around Towns has also been a focus of the Forest Enterprise Scotland repositioning programme with acquisitions near Lesmahagow and Johnstone near Glasgow for urban woodland creation.

The new Single Outcome Agreements will define how local authorities set their priorities over the coming years. FCS and other greenspace partners are actively involved with Community Planning Partnerships to encourage local authorities to continue investing for high quality green networks.

2008 saw further development of woodland-based education and health programmes. The Forest Education Initiative goes from strength to strength. There are now 17 local cluster groups around Scotland delivering a range of innovative learning programmes for young people and school leaders. Woodlands have particular potential as a health resource, providing opportunities for physical exercise and the mental wellbeing associated with a natural environment. Woods are also proving to be an ideal setting for environmental volunteering and other group activities. Pilot projects are showing the benefits of health walk and GP referral schemes, and opportunities are being explored to make better use of hospital and clinic grounds as a health resource. Projects to deliver social benefits from woodlands and increase social capacity are being supported by the Forestry for People Challenge Fund introduced during the year.

The role of woodlands and the national forest estate in supporting community participation continues to grow. FCS opened a new element of the National Forest Land Scheme to encourage the development of forest crofts, and is supporting this initiative

² <http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/fr/INFD-6S8CSP>

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with a dedicated project officer. Interest in community renewables is growing with the Latheron, Lybster and Clyth Community Development Company applying for the first national forest land transfer for a renewable energy scheme, in this case a wind farm. A number of projects have focused on recording, promoting and celebrating Scotland's woodland culture, such as the work of Albanach, and the Touchwood history project on Lochaweside 'Smell of the Rosin, Noise of the Saw'.

Competitive and innovative businesses contributing to the growth of the Scottish economy

2008 saw a sudden and dramatic slowdown in the British economy. The close link between the construction and the timber processing sectors led to very rapid knock-on impacts, with many mills having to reduce throughput and, in some cases, lay off staff. This impact has spread back up the supply chain to the haulage and forest management sectors. The weakening of sterling has, however, enabled domestic producers to remain competitive and maintain market share. Several major saw-millers remain committed to significant investments in modern processing capacity, for example James Jones have started construction of their new £20M Lockerbie facility.

The wood energy sector continues to grow strongly. The E.ON plant at Lockerbie was officially opened by the First Minister, and will require 480,000 tonnes of wood fuel per year. As well as utilising round wood, this plant is stimulating further development of the recycled wood supply chain, and the establishment of new brash and tree stump supply chains, which are rapidly becoming significant sources of forestry employment. Major new biomass facilities are currently under construction for Balcas at Invergordon and Caledonian Paper at Irvine. A spread of smaller facilities across Scotland has been commissioned during the year, stimulated by funding from the Scottish Biomass Support Scheme. The recommendations of the Wood Fuel Taskforce were accepted by the Scottish Government and are being implemented, including the establishment of a network of wood fuel information officers around Scotland, supported by a successful bid for £600,000 of European Structural Funds. The Scottish Government's Renewable Heat Strategy, published during the year, signals a continued focus on making the most of Scotland's wood fuel potential.

Many in the forestry sector are looking closely at how energy markets might shape forestry in the future. FCS is establishing a network of energy forestry research and demonstration areas to explore different forms of energy forestry. A period of high prices for arable crops and the growing debate about food security is shifting the focus from short rotation coppice on prime agricultural land towards short rotation forestry – 10 to 15 year rotations of coppicing broadleaf species, eucalyptus or conifers – on lower quality land. Research at these sites is underway to investigate what species and systems will offer the best calorific yields on lower quality ground in Scotland.

The Forest Industries Advisory Board was established at the beginning of the year to provide sector leadership following the conclusion of the Scottish Forest Industries Cluster. The Board have identified initial priority areas: research, development and innovation; skills and careers and; supply chain and markets. The sustainability

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credentials of timber are becoming increasingly recognised through promotional campaigns like Wood for Good, and work to make it easier to specify, source and use timber, for example through FCS's Timber Development Programme. A successful conference on the carbon benefits of timber in construction was held at Napier University in January.

During 2008 the Forestry Commission increased its focus on production forecasting through the creation of the Inventory, Forecasting and Operational Support Unit. A Private Sector Production Forecast Working Group has been established to recommend how to improve the quality of private sector forecasts.

The Timber Transport Forum has effectively focused the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme on critical bottlenecks. Significant projects approved during this year include the Rathad na Mara floating pier project and Craik road improvements, which will link directly into the previously supported Eskdalemuir timber transport routes.

Skills development, identified as a significant forestry sector issue, was given a boost by the launch of the SRDP Skills Development Scheme. One Community Woodland Association skills training project was approved.

High quality, robust and adaptable environment

Forestry has a distinctive role to play in Scotland's commitment to help tackle climate change. An FCS Climate Change Action Plan was published during the year³, laying out a set of practical actions to protect and manage existing forests, harness the carbon sequestration benefits of woodland creation, help Scotland to adapt, increase the flow of sustainably produced wood for energy and construction, and reduce the forestry sector's carbon footprint.

Actions must be based on the best available information and Forest Research undertook a wide-ranging knowledge review of the carbon and greenhouse gas balance of UK forests. This review has provided a good basis for a UK Assessment of Forestry and Climate Change, chaired by Sir David Read, Vice President of the Royal Society, which will report during 2009. The review has also informed the new Forestry and Climate Change Guidelines that will shortly be issued for public consultation.

The Scottish Climate Change Bill was laid before Parliament in December and proposes an 80% cut in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. A policy overview project is looking at the action needed to achieve that target. Scotland is unique within the UK in having a forestry carbon saving target, published in the 2006 Scottish Climate Change Programme. As part of the overview project, FCS has analysed the potential to increase forestry's contribution and what delivery mechanisms would be required to achieve it. Woodland creation and increasing the use of wood as a fuel remain the areas with greatest potential. Increasing the use of wood in construction has less impact on domestic greenhouse gas emissions due to import/export issues, but will have a

³ www.forestry.gov.uk/ccapscotland

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significant role to play in the wider Scottish Government target of reducing our global ecological footprint.

A Forests and Carbon Advisory Group was convened during the year to support development of a code of good practice for UK-based forest carbon management projects. The draft code will be published for public consultation in 2009. It is intended to underpin development of a woodland carbon assurance scheme to regularise the UK forestry carbon offsetting sector.

Management of pest, disease and weather threats has come increasingly into focus over 2008. Red band needle blight is now probably the most serious disease of conifers in Scotland, with preliminary results from this year's survey showing it to be significantly more prevalent than anticipated, causing significant mortality in Lodgepole pine, and some infection in Scots pine. *Phytophthora ramorum* and *P. kernoviae* have been found in the west of Scotland associated with horticultural nursery stock. The Pine-tree Lappet moth and bleeding canker of Horse chestnut are also causes for concern. The role of forestry in sustainable flood management is gaining increased attention, and a contingency plan for catastrophic windblow is in preparation. DCS, FCS and SNH produced a new joint agency strategy for wild deer, and the forestry sector worked closely with SEPA on preparation of River Basin Management Plans.

An FCS Biodiversity Programme⁴ was published during the year to prioritise biodiversity activity. This was accompanied by action statements for red squirrel, capercaillie and black grouse. A targeted strategy for red squirrel conservation was issued for public consultation, bringing together three key strands of effort: establishing red squirrel strongholds, control of grey squirrels and the squirrelpox virus, and local conservation projects to maintain red squirrel range. Development of a new suite of grant incentives contributed to a temporary slowing of progress towards UKBAP targets. However, the full survey of Scotland's native woodlands gathered momentum, with 30% being completed by the end of the year. CSFT ran a year long campaign (Alarm bell for bluebells) to help safeguard the Scottish Bluebell including planting 50,000 bulbs across central Scotland.

The Historic Environment gained greater recognition through publication of Scotland's Woodlands and the Historic Environment⁵ and a forthcoming consultation on the new Forests and the Cultural Environment Guidelines.

Cross-cutting developments

During 2008 a suite of grant incentives was launched to support the new Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP). This was an important milestone given that private sector forestry had been without an open grant support mechanism for two years. For the first time, forestry, agricultural and environmental incentives have been integrated into Rural Development Contracts giving the forestry sector access to a wide range of business, woodland creation and management, and rural development grants. Introducing such a major scheme has been challenging and the Scottish Government has

⁴ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5xflvj>

⁵ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5xfmdu>

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been working closely with the forestry sector to streamline the process. The joint approach to Rural Development Contracts is being extended to other areas of service delivery through the Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services (SEARS) initiative.

The Scottish Government has affirmed its commitment to woodland expansion for climate change and other benefits. A public consultation took place during the year on the Scottish Government's rationale for woodland expansion⁶, which identifies what can be delivered through achievement of the 25% woodland cover aspiration, and points at the land types most suitable for woodland creation.

Current progress towards this aspiration is disappointing, with just 4162 ha of woodland created in 2008/09. The Scottish Government is looking at creative ways to increase woodland planting. In addition to the existing national forest estate repositioning programme, there has also been a major consultation on how the estate might make a greater contribution to tackling climate change. The proposal to lease out the more commercial parts of the estate to raise resources for investing in woodland creation and wood fuel projects is not being pursued, but other options are being considered. The consultation also proposed establishing a legal basis for FCS to enter into renewable energy joint ventures, which is being pursued through the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill.

A number of developments during the year were focused on forestry and land use planning. FCS worked closely with Scottish Government planners to embed forestry into the new National Planning Framework. In support of this, a woodland removal policy⁷ was published, which aims to better protect existing woodland cover, define where woodland removal is in the public interest and establish the principal of compensatory planting. A suite of new Indicative Forestry Strategies is in preparation, for example in Argyll and Bute, Perth and Kinross, and Angus. Best practice is being captured in revised planning guidance on preparation of Indicative Forestry Strategies. At a national level, the Scottish Government initiated a Rural Land Use Study to better understand how to make the most of Scotland's limited land resources.

At the UK level, the Forestry Commission is launching a consultation on a revised UK Forestry Standard and a new suite of Guidelines. The new Standard lays out the legal basis for forestry protection and management, and a set of good forestry practice requirements as a basis for grant support. This new approach will be underpinned by research and monitoring, and Forest Research announced the formation of three research centres to focus effort: a Centre for Forestry and Climate Change, a Centre for Forest Resource Management and a Centre for Ecology and Human Sciences.

⁶ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7FWEQ5>

⁷ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7HYHWE>

Progress indicators

The Scottish Forestry Strategy laid out a set of indicators for each key theme. These indicators will be used to gauge progress over the intended 10-year life of the current strategy.

Wherever feasible existing data sets are being used. However, aspects of the Strategy have required the development of new indicators. Some of these are challenging and still under development. Streamlined data monitoring procedures associated with the new Rural Development Contract system may affect the ability to report against several indicators. Details on the definition, interpretation and data source for each indicator are published separately⁸.

Climate change

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Area of new planting	FCS	2005/06 2006/07 2007/08	3975ha 6571ha 4162ha	1 year
Annual net carbon sequestration by new woodlands	FC	2006 2007 2008	0.36MtCO ₂ 0.40MtCO ₂ 0.42MtCO ₂	1 year
Installed capacity of wood energy plant (in megawatt thermal and electrical)	FCS	2006 2007 2008	58 MW ^t 0 MW ^e 67 MW ^t 44 MW ^e 64 MW ^t 44 MW ^e (86 MW ^t 103 MW ^e including recycled material)	1 year
Number of non-domestic, wood fuelled energy systems installed	FCS	2006 2007 2008	49 91 154	1 year
Area of short rotation coppice grant aided	FCS	2005/06 2006/07 2007/08	34ha 162ha 487 ha	1 year
Index of roundwood road miles	FR	2006 (provisional) 2009	51 miles/t	3 years

Timber

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Actual wood production	FC	2005 2006 2007	6.6Mm ³ obs 6.7Mm ³ obs 7.2Mm ³ obs	1 year
Forecast wood availability in the private sector	FC	2007-11	3.7Mm ³ obs	5 years

⁸ [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/sfsindicators.pdf/\\$FILE/sfsindicators.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/sfsindicators.pdf/$FILE/sfsindicators.pdf)

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Forecast wood availability from the national forest estate	FC	2007-11	3.2Mm ³ obs	5 years
Timber's contribution to Scottish gross value-added	FC	2006	£460M (0.5%)	4 years
Sawmill log consumption		2005 2006 2007	2.3Mm ³ 2.4Mm ³ 2.6 Mm ³	1 year
Sawmill sawnwood output	FC	2005 2006 2007	1.2Mm ³ 1.3Mm ³ 1.5 Mm ³	1 year
Scottish wood's value share of the UK market	FC	2005 2006 2007	4.2% 4.0% 5.0%	1 year
Timber use in construction relative to other materials		to be established in 2009		
Area of new coniferous woodland	FCS	2005/06 2006/07 2007/08	974ha 1954ha 719ha	1 year
Area of new broadleaved woodland where timber production is a significant management objective	FCS	2006 2007 2008	84ha 311ha 272ha	1 year
Sales of improved nursery stock		2007 2008	22.3M plants 22.0M plants	1 year
Volume of certified timber from Scottish forests	FC	2005 2006 2007	5.5Mm ³ obs 5.5Mm ³ obs 6.1Mm ³ obs	1 year

Business development

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Forestry's contribution to Scottish gross value-added	FC	2008	£669M	4 years
Employment supported by the forestry related sector	FC	2008	31,100 FTE	4 years
Uptake of Rural Development Contracts	FCS	2008	270	1 year
Proportion of statutory development plans recognising woodland benefits	FCS	2007	59%	5 year
Numbers of people enrolling or registering for forestry related short courses, qualifications and Modern Apprenticeship programmes	Lantra	2007	1,542	3 years
Numbers of people completing forestry related short courses, qualifications and Modern Apprenticeship programmes	Lantra	2007	1,070	3 years

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Forestry's contribution to Scottish tourism gross value-added	FCS	2008	£209M	4 years
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Community development

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Number of schools involved in woodland based learning activities	FCS	2007 2008	569 484	1 year
Number of community groups involved in owning or managing woodland	CWA	2002 2007	51 138	3 years
Number of schools providing vocational courses that include forestry related skills	Lantra	2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	4 13 38	1 year
Proportion of adults and/or family members who attended an organised learning activity or event linked with Scottish woodlands in the previous 12 months.	FC	2005 2007	10% 15%	2 years
Proportion of adults who have heard or read about Scottish woodlands in the previous 12 months.	FC	2005 2007	26% 58%	2 years
Number of land parcels sold or leased under the National Forest Land Scheme.	FCS	2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	17 3 2	1 year
Area of land parcels sold or leased under the National Forest Land Scheme.	FCS	2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	877 ha 7 ha 2 ha	1 year
Independent satisfaction rating of community partnerships on the national forest estate.	CWA	2006	70%	3 years

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Access and health

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Proportion of the population with accessible woodland greater than 2 hectares within 500 metres of their home	WTS	2006	23%	3 years
Proportion of the population with accessible woodland greater than 20 hectares within 4 kilometres of their home	WTS	2006	68%	3 years
Proportion of adults (16 years +) who visited woodland in previous 12 months	FC	2005 2007	50% 72%	2 years
Number of visits to national forests	FCS	2006	8.7M	3 years
Number and length of Core Paths in woodlands	FCS	to be established in 2009		3 years
Proportion of visitors satisfied with woodland recreation provision	FC	2007	58%	3 years
Proportion of people who used woodland, forest or tree covered park for exercise at least twice per week in the last four weeks	Scottish Health Survey	to be established in 2009		1 year
Number of 'volunteer days' associated with woodland activity	FCS	2007	47,444	3 years

Environmental quality

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Length/area of baseline rivers/lochs in forested catchments where ecological quality is of good or high status	SEPA	2008	719 km rivers 16 km ² lochs	1 year
Length/area of baseline rivers/lochs affected by acidification where forestry is a significant exacerbating factor	SEPA	to be advised		1 year
Number of forestry operations or activities leading to direct pollution of the water environment	SEPA	2006 2007 2008	5 6 to be advised	1 year
Proportion of woodlands covered	FCS	2006	57%	5 years

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by approved forest plans in areas designated for their landscapes				
Proportion of woodland area managed under low impact silvicultural systems	FCS	2006 2007	4.3% 5.2	1 year
Number of current management plans for scheduled monuments in forests on the National Forest Estate	FCS	2007 2008	321 327	1 year
Number of monuments in forests protected under a current forest management plan or agreement	FCS	2007 2008	13,679 (54% of all monuments in all woodlands) 14,026	1 year

Biodiversity

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Area of native woodland	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8	392K ha 398K ha 399K ha	1 year
Proportion of woodland SSSIs in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	SNH	1999-2005 2007 2008	57% 61% 70%	1 year from 2007
Progress against Habitat Action Plan targets for native woodland condition	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8	3.3K ha 8.4K ha 10.7K ha	1 year
Progress against Habitat Action Plan targets for native woodland restoration	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8	0.4K ha 1.2K ha 2.1K ha	1 year
Progress against Habitat Action Plan targets for native woodland expansion	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8	4.3K ha 4.6K ha 7.0K ha	1 year
Proportion of woodland related UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats identified as stable or increasing/ recovering or in favourable condition	SNH	2005 2008	74% 75%	3 years
Area of PAWS with a commitment to restoration under long-term plans	FCS	2007 2008	34.5K ha 35.5K ha	1 year
Area of woodland with active, approved deer management plans	FCS	2007 2008	665K ha 732K ha	1 year
Loss of ancient, semi-natural woodland to development		to be established from 2011		

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Woodland Bird Index	BTO	2006 2007	124 133	1 year
Woodland structure: mean deadwood volume	FR	1995-1999	4.4m ³ /ha	6 years from 2007
Woodland structure and composition: mean understorey shrub layer cover	FR	1995-1999	17%	6 years from 2007
Woodland structure and composition: mean no. tree and shrub species within stands	FR	1995-1999	2.2	6 years from 2007
Woodland structure and composition: old growth as a proportion of Scotland's woodland cover	FR	1995-1999	4.8%	6 years from 2007

Implementation Plan - key themes

Key theme 1: Climate change

Progress and priorities

Following extensive consultation, the FCS Climate Change Action Plan⁹ was published in February and lays out what will be done over the next three years to increase the contribution and response of Scottish forestry to the challenges of climate change. Woodland creation is one important response and a further consultation was undertaken on the Scottish Government's rationale for woodland expansion¹⁰. A further element was publication of the Scottish Government's policy on control of woodland removal¹¹.

Plant health issues are a cause of concern in Scotland, with Red band needle blight, *Phytophthora ramorum* and *P. kernoviae*, and the Pine-tree Lappet moth having the potential to cause serious damage. This highlights the need to maintain readiness for new pests and pathogens in our changing climate. Direct weather threats are also a concern and a windblow contingency plan for Scotland is in preparation.

'Carbon' has been the focus of considerable activity during the year. Forest Research completed a forest carbon knowledge review; a carbon balance sheet methodology for Scottish forestry options is under development; Forests and Climate Change Guidelines will soon be issued for consultation; and a Carbon Advisory Group was established to help develop a Code of Good Practice on Forest Carbon Offsetting.

FCS is supporting the development of policies to meet Scotland's ambitious greenhouse gas reduction aspirations. A recent study on Mitigating Against Climate Change in Scotland identified several forestry related policies¹² as a high priority. In particular, afforestation and wood for energy show significant potential for further carbon savings. The Scottish Climate Change Bill also gave an opportunity to explore, through a consultation¹³ on its forestry provisions, what legislative changes could provide greater flexibility in the use of the national forest estate for tackling climate change. As a result of the consultation, the Scottish Government will continue to seek enabling powers to allow FCS to enter into joint ventures for renewable energy programmes. The concept of leasing "cutting rights" to raise funds for creation of more woodland will not be pursued.

Increasing the contribution of wood fuel to the production of renewable energy, particularly heat, has involved establishing a network of energy forestry demonstration sites on the national forest estate; setting up a Regional Biomass Advice Network; implementing the recommendations of the Wood Fuel Taskforce; opening the new £2M Biomass Heat Scheme; and developing site selection guidance for stump harvesting.

⁹ www.forestry.gov.uk/ccapscotland

¹⁰ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7FWEQ5>

¹¹ www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7HYHWE

¹² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/11/19142102/0>

¹³ www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7KUMVM

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For the period of this plan effort will be focused on improving forestry's preparedness for climate change and in achieving the forest sector's carbon saving targets. Improving the research evidence base will continue to be a priority to increasing preparedness, guide sustainable forest management, build ecosystem resilience, deliver environmental services, and reduce the forestry sector's carbon footprint.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Increasing awareness of the forestry sector's contribution

- Summarise the key information on the stocks and fluxes of carbon in UK forests and how they are affected by forest dynamics and management practices (FR).
- Develop a carbon balance sheet methodology for Scottish forestry options (FCS).
- Publish detailed implementation guidance for the control of woodland removal (FCS).
- Develop and implement, if feasible, a simplified roundwood timber miles methodology (FCS, TTF).
- Using UKCP09 scenarios, refine the 2008 models on the potential impacts of climate change on forestry in Scotland (FR).
- Raise and monitor awareness of forestry's role in responding to climate change (FCS).

Adapting to climate change

- Publish the Forests and Climate Change Guidelines (FC).
- Develop guidance on the role of lower impact silvicultural systems in Scotland as a climate change adaptation measure (FR).
- Initiate research on pest species/climate change interactions (FR).

Mitigating climate change

- Propose revised forestry carbon savings targets (FCS).
- Advance proposals through the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill for increasing the contribution of the national forest estate to tackling climate change through development of renewable energy potential (FCS).
- Complete the establishment of a network of energy forestry demonstration sites on the national forest estate. (FCS).
- Implement forestry-related recommendations in the Renewable Heat Action Plan and the Renewable Energy Action Plan (FCS).
- Publish interim guidance on site selection for stump harvesting (FR).

Increasing carbon sequestration and retention

- Disseminate the policy on control of woodland removal to the planning sector and promote its use in development management (FCS, SGDBE).
- Achieve 850 ha of woodland creation on the National Forest Estate (FES).
- Consult on a code of good practice for woodland carbon offsetting (FC).
- Review uptake of Rural Development Contracts and explore opportunities to stimulate additional woodland creation activity (FCS).

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An outline programme for 2010-2012

Increasing awareness of the forestry sector's contribution

- Review the FCS Climate Change Action Plan in 2011.
- Enhance and extend the dissemination of clear forestry and climate change information and evidence relevant to Scotland.
- Stimulate an increasingly regional focus on the Climate Change Action Plan through the Regional Forestry Forums.
- Help to ensure the UK LULUCF¹⁴ carbon accounting and reporting rules adequately reflect the contribution that forests make to climate change mitigation.
- Monitor public awareness of forestry's role in helping to combat climate change.

Adapting to climate change

- Identify and promote priority sites for the expansion or restoration of vulnerable woodland types.
- Encourage FHN development and appropriate management, and monitor progress of woodland connectivity.
- Identify where silvicultural and forest civil engineering practices are becoming inappropriate to Scotland's changing climate and provide practical alternative systems.
- Promote research and field trials to evaluate the potential of alternative productive tree species and origins/provenances in Scotland's future climate.
- Review pests and disease risks and, where necessary, develop detailed risk management plans to inform species choice, management decisions and control measures.

Mitigating climate change

- Maintain progress against the forestry-related actions in the Renewable Heat and the Renewable Energy Action Plans, and the Wood Fuel Taskforce report.
- Review progress on the climate change implications of the FCS Timber Development Programme.
- Review wood fuel market development.
- With the forestry and transport sectors, investigate efficient and cost effective options for reducing the environmental impact and net cost of transporting timber.

Increasing carbon sequestration and retention

- Produce regularly updated data, using nationally accepted protocols, on the contribution of Scottish forestry to Scotland's greenhouse gas balance.
- Publish industry-wide guidance on minimising carbon losses in forest based civil engineering.
- Monitor progress on woodland expansion and, if necessary, adjust delivery measures to facilitate the creation of the desired quantity and range of woodland types.
- Achieve 2000ha of woodland creation on the national forest estate each year.

¹⁴ www.edinburgh.ceh.ac.uk/ukcarbon/

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Key theme 2: Timber

Progress and priorities

Scotland's 1.3m hectares of woodland and forest currently produce some 7.2 million cubic metres of softwood round timber per annum. This harvest is forecast to exceed 8.9 million cubic metres by 2016. Currently over 70% of this is processed in Scotland. Supporting 13,200 jobs and generating £460m in gross added value, the timber industry provides an important contribution to the Scottish economy and the delivery of the Scottish Government strategic objectives. Analysis of industry statistics suggests that with timber consumption at 5.9Mm³, Scotland is *de facto* self-sufficient in wood related material.

The Timber Development Programme was launched in 2007 and the annual report is hosted on the FCS web site. The Programme aims to contribute to the sustainable development of Scotland's economy by enabling the timber and processing sector to find the highest value and most appropriate end market for Scotland's timber. An industry working group was brought together to determine more accurate data from privately owned forests into the next production forecast. Outputs of recent research will enable an estimate of quality, as well as quantity, to be included in the next production forecast.

The second phase of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme commenced in April 2008 with a budget of £5m per annum until March 2011 and revised guidance. A report outlining the outputs of the first phase was published on the FCS web site. Supported projects will facilitate the sustainable transport of over 10 million tonnes of timber over the next 10 years in rural Scotland benefiting local communities and the environment.

A range of reports has been published to encourage greater understanding and use of timber to explore areas that will encourage more use of timber. These include, durability of home-grown larch, guidance for using home-grown timber in construction, systems for valuing timber and fire test for external cladding. We hosted a conference to explore the carbon benefits of timber in construction that was well attended by a range of people across the timber industry, building sector, local authorities and government.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Promoting predictable and stable timber supplies

- Revise the system of valuing timber using new technology linked to end markets (FR).
- Improve the quality and accuracy of the private sector element of the next national production forecast (PSPFWG).
- Raise awareness of the developments in terrestrial laser scanning and other forms of remote sensing for improving the economic return from harvesting operations (FCS).
- Develop and implement a methodology for forecasting log quality in the production forecast (FR).

Encouraging more use of timber

- Support research into innovative uses of wood for high-end value markets (FCS).

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- Increase awareness of the benefits of and opportunities to use timber products (FCS).
- Explore, and support where appropriate, opportunities for increased use of home grown timber and timber products (SE, FCS).
- Work with others to produce comprehensive data on the carbon impact of growing and bringing Scottish timber to the market (FCS, FR).
- Explore potential for an industry web site to host all outputs from recent research in timber (SE, FCS).
- Provide advice to Scottish Government and public bodies on sustainable procurement of timber and paper (FCS).

Increasing timber supply chain efficiency

- Commission work to examine remaining timber transport challenges and, where required to identify issues and make recommendations for solutions (TTF).
- Identify and assess further potential projects that may require support from the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (FCS, TTF).
- Support a Timber Transport Project Officer post to lead on timber transport development work (FCS, SE, ConFor).

Developing the hardwood and premium softwood sector

- Develop guidance on managing small woodlands for growing quality timber (FR).
- Explore the potential for the establishment of hardwood seed orchards from selected material (FR, FES, FCPSSB).
- Organise and support events to improve understanding of best practice in growing and marketing quality hardwoods (FR, FCS, ASHS).
- Establish demonstration plots on managing hardwoods for quality timber production (FES, FCS).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Promoting predictable and stable timber supplies

- Determine appropriate actions within the forest sector for the segregation and use of recycled wood.
- Complete a scoping study into the possibility of certification bodies agreeing to a lower cost approach to certification where woods are in approved long-term forest plans.
- Review comparative carbon capture and retention under different silvicultural systems.

Encouraging more use of timber

- Through consultation with the industry hold a workshop to review the progress of current research and development programmes, consider market needs and agree appropriate research and other actions to overcome barriers to realising new market opportunities.
- Explore specific opportunities for increased use of homegrown timber and timber products such as the 2014 Commonwealth Games.
- Commission a report on changes in global market situations that could impact on markets and prices for Scotland's timber products.

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- Support research into innovative uses of wood for high-end value markets.

Increasing timber supply chain efficiency

- Develop a strategy for efficient and effective timber transport involving non-road network elements from remote areas of Scotland.
- Evaluate logistics optimisation systems in forestry and seek to extend the use within Scotland of any successful models.

Developing the hardwood and premium softwood sector

- Undertake local initiatives to engage owners of under-managed farm woods and those in areas most suitable for expansion of productive woodlands.
- Produce improved forecasts to estimate total biomass production from hardwood stands.
- Ensure grant incentives promote best silvicultural practice for growing quality broadleaves.

Key theme 3: Business development

Progress and priorities

The new Scottish Rural Development Programme was launched during the year. FCS has been working closely with colleagues in the Scottish Government to provide an effective delivery mechanism through the Scottish Rural Delivery Service. 270 forestry projects were approved in the first year of applications to the scheme. A steering group was established to oversee the implementation of the Wood Fuel Taskforce recommendations, and reported back on progress to the Minister. FCS published its business development strategy setting out its framework for supporting business and economic development in the forest products and tourism sectors. A new Scottish Biomass Heat Scheme was opened to applications to build on the success of the previous support scheme.

The second phase of the woodland tourism project, which seeks to improve wildlife viewing through a more joined up and co-ordinated approach is underway. All FCS recreation and tourism staff have now received '100k Welcomes' training to develop the culture and expertise of the organisation and its staff in better serving the tourism sector. Huntly Peregrine Watch was awarded a second Visit Scotland Scottish Thistle Award for customer care, and new sea eagle viewing facilities were opened on Mull. The building has raised the bar in quality of visitor service provision and shows the potential for semi-mobile timber buildings for a recreational business use.

An innovative pilot scheme in Galloway for using volunteering as a way into work proved successful for six volunteers, who spent eight weeks in the forest becoming proficient in planting techniques. Research¹⁵ estimates that the number of volunteers in forest-related work in Scotland is around 7500. Highland Council facilitated a workshop for FCS staff and others involved in delivering the Skills for Work - Rural Skills course (SVQ level 1) to enable sharing of ideas, resources and problem solving. We obtained ESF funding to expand the modern apprenticeship scheme to 30 apprenticeships across the FCS estate until 2011-2012. During the year, the number of apprenticeships has grown to 19. Of those completing their apprenticeship, 10 have gained positions with the Forestry Commission.

Forestry sector business confidence remains positive, despite the unprecedented trading conditions created by the economic slowdown. A key priority is for the Forest Industries Advisory Board and the Regional Clusters to effectively support business development, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and HIE. Progress will be supported by implementation of the Wood Fuel Taskforce recommendations and running the Scottish Biomass Heat Scheme. Scotland will host the World Mountain Bike Conference on Sustainability in 2009. A further priority will be to encourage the uptake of forestry business diversification measures in the SRDP. A wide range of actions around skills and learning will be undertaken to improve the attractiveness of the sector to prospective employees, and raise the level of existing skills.

¹⁵ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/publications.nsf/WebPubsByISBN/B7A8C612D53CC2B4802574BA004EDD10>

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What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Realising economic potential

- Implement action plan items, relating to improving the Rural Priorities application process, flowing from 2009 SRDP review (FCS, SGRPID).
- Promote Rural Development Contract business development grants to the forestry sector (FCS).
- Develop proposals for renewable energy joint ventures to stimulate increased economic activity on the national forest estate (FES).
- Hold a national conference on non-timber forest products and promote the development of a supplier association (FCS, SE, P&KC, RS).
- Deliver a co-ordinated biomass development programme through the Regional Biomass Advice Network (FCS).
- Contribute to the work of the Forest Industries Advisory Board to promote innovation, collaboration and competitiveness in sector development (FCS, ConFor, SE, HIE).
- Work with industry and the research sector to develop new models for supporting research and development (FIAB, FCS, SE, HIE, ConFor).
- Review Wood Fuel Taskforce delivery progress (FCS).

Contributing to rural development

- Make land available for affordable housing sites, and the first woodland crofts under the National Forest Land Scheme (FES).
- Publish an Energy Forestry Handbook and Practice Guide (FCS).

Tourism

- Support a series of regional seminars on Forestry and Tourism to explore ways in which businesses can capture revenue from forest tourism (FCS, SE, VS).
- Promote business development opportunities based on woodland tourism through Rural Development Contracts (FCS).
- Implement a cultural heritage events programme on the national forest estate for the 2009 Year of Homecoming (FES).
- Improve the national wildlife viewing offering through better collaboration (FES).

Skills

- Promote to the forestry sector the One Stop Shop for training provision (Lantra).
- Expand modern apprenticeships on the national forest estate and explore potential to expand into the private sector (FES/FCS).
- Explore feasibility of developing an on-line competency framework for the harvesting sector within forestry (Lantra).
- Extend recognised continuing professional development to a wider range of conferences and seminars in Scotland (ICF).
- Explore new ways of promoting careers in the forest industry at school, college and university levels (FCS).
- Disseminate the Tree Trunk Career Toolkit through regional career teacher workshops (FCS, FEI, SDS)
- Encourage secondary school vocational qualifications with forestry content (FCS).

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- Raise awareness amongst women, minority ethnic groups and other diversity groups of career opportunities in forestry (FCS).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Realising Economic Potential

- Improve availability of suitable sites for timber processing facilities.
- Build on the forestry sector's exemplar role in sustainable development, tackling climate change and conservation of biodiversity.
- Develop online e-commerce systems for the bio-energy sector.
- Promote woodlands as locations for a broad range of renewable heat projects.

Contributing to rural development

- Co-ordinate biomass marketing programme to improve accessibility, consistency and reliability of information about the sector and its supply streams.
- Improve the evidence base on ways to increase economic benefit from woods in and around communities.
- Facilitate the provision of sites for affordable housing, other community facilities and, where applicable, woodland crofts.
- Promote a joined up approach to land management, through identifying the strategic potential for forest based renewable energy developments.

Tourism

- Promote modernisation and upgrading of the woodland related recreation and tourism infrastructure where this will make the most significant economic gains for the local and national economy, whilst reducing carbon footprint.
- Ensure forests contribute fully to the quality and breadth of Scotland's growing eco-tourism sector.
- Promote business development opportunities based on woodland tourism.

Skills

- Support forestry content in secondary school vocational qualifications.
- Engage with higher and further education providers to help ensure that the forestry content of courses as relevant as possible to modern forestry.
- Develop further the Career Toolkit and participation at careers events.

Key theme 4: Community development

Progress and priorities

Interest and involvement of communities in woodland continues to grow. The National Forest Land Scheme has been extended to include woodland crofts. FCS is finalising a wider framework for community engagement on the National Forest Estate (NFE). FCS appointed a Community Development Advisor in January 2008 and a part time Woodland Crofts Project Officer in December. Guidance was produced on increasing delivery community benefits on the NFE in general and community renewables in particular.

Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT) is now established as a delivery mechanism for improving quality of life and well-being across urban Scotland. Phase II was launched in May by the Forestry Minister and in November the first Challenge fund round attracted considerable interest. The Social Investment through Forestry Tool (SIFT) was piloted in September. Using geospatial health, deprivation, access, recreation and outdoor education data, SIFT has been designed to help make decisions about prioritising investment in woodland creation and woodland management for social benefits.

Urban woodlands often deliver most when they are part of high quality greenspace networks. Good progress is being made through partnerships like the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network, the Central Scotland Forest and the Edinburgh & Lothians Forest Habitat Network. The National Planning Framework has set out an ambition to establish a Central Scotland Green Network and FCS is a lead partner. Single Outcome Agreements have changed the relationship between Central and Local Government and FCS is refocusing its engagement accordingly. Interaction with the land-use planning system has also been a key area of work for the Social Planning Policy Team and revised planning guidance on forestry and woodland strategies has been developed.

It was a busy year for the Forest Education Initiative (FEI) with the establishment of three new cluster groups (bringing the total to 17), funding for a FEI Forest School Development Project and a number of successful Forestry for People Challenge fund applications for increasing FEI delivery capacity. Even accommodating the 120 delegates who attended the November FEI Networking Event, it was significantly over-subscribed. In November FCS hosted the first Scottish Ranger Rendezvous, delivering a series of workshops including Forestry for People and Forest Education.

During the year the Tree Trunk web site was extended to provide best practice guidelines for work placements; the Forestry Career Guidance Toolkit was improved; and links between forestry and the content of National Qualifications in Secondary Schools strengthened. A series of Case Studies was launched in June showcasing the opportunities and benefits of volunteering on the National Forest Estate. Areas for further development include the role of Forest Schools, forest kindergartens and natural play to address educational needs and children's health.

During the year, FCS led the Working Group to draft the Forest and People Guidelines, shortly to be published for consultation. Building the evidence base for the economic and

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social contribution of forestry remains a priority. In September Forest Research published *A Valuation of the Social and Economic Benefits of Forestry for People in Scotland*¹⁶ which set out latest findings on seven key themes and 30 quantitative indicators.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

- Help to improve the quality of life and well-being of people across Scotland
- Increase the involvement of Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services (SEARS) partners in WIAT delivery (SEARS).
- Identify a national network of National Forest Estate WIAT demonstration sites covering Scotland's city regions (FES).
- Support the development of local authority capacity in the planning and management of WIAT woodland and green networks (FCS).
- Strengthen the evidence base for the contribution of woodlands to delivering urban/economic regeneration outcomes (FR, FCS).

Develop forestry's role in education and lifelong learning

- Improve school materials contributing to A Curriculum for Excellence and National Qualifications that focus on forests and climate change. (FCS)
- Promote a CPD programme for teachers using woods for learning (FCS, FEI).
- Deliver a training event for FCS staff engaged with learning (FCS, FEI).
- Develop and promote Outdoor Learning in Schools with partners on the Scottish Government Outdoor Learning Strategic Advisory Group. (FCS, SNH, SGED, LTS)
- Produce a 3-year Action Plan for FEI /Forest School in Scotland. (FCS, FEI).
- Seek funding for a co-ordinator to take forward Forest Schools in Scotland (FEI).
- Host a GB FEI forest school networking event (FEI).

Enhance forestry's engagement with communities

- Rollout the community engagement training package (FCS).
- Review the mechanisms to support community engagement with forestry (CWA).
- Form a short-life working group on attracting women into forestry careers (FCS).
- Support the development of the Central Scotland Green Network concept and its inclusion as a key theme within relevant development plans (FCS).
- Promote recognition of forestry benefits in Single Outcome Agreements through participation in Community Planning Partnerships (FCS).
- Disseminate updated guidance on forestry to the planning sector (FCS, SGDBE).
- Support Local Authorities in development of new Indicative Forestry Strategies linked to development plans (FCS).

Support community ownership and management on the national forest estate, where this will bring increased benefits

- Establish whether the Public Service Reform Bill could be used to secure legal cover to lease national forest estate woodlands to communities (FCS).
- Disseminate the new community engagement framework (FCS).
- Undertake volunteer 'Working with Difference' training (FCS).

¹⁶ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/publications.nsf/WebPubsByISBN/B7A8C612D53CC2B4802574BA004EDD10>

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- Promote opportunities for the National Forest Land Scheme to deliver wider community benefits such as community renewables and allotments (FES).
- Support community organisations seeking to acquire land for woodland crofts (FCS).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Help to improve the quality of life and well-being of people across Scotland

- Deliver WIAT targets and activities in line with Government priorities.
- Publish an interim progress report for WIAT II and explore opportunities for an appropriate promotional event.
- Increase WIAT focus on Scottish Government Climate Change, Economic Regeneration and Quality of Life priorities.
- Identify the opportunity for a major international WIAT conference.

Develop forestry's role in education and lifelong learning

- Support Woods for Learning through CPD and resources for teachers and others.
- Working with children, integrate Natural Play/Forest Kindergarten and Forest School into A Curriculum for Excellence.
- Develop and promote Outdoor Learning in schools with partners.
- Implement the FEI/Forest School Action Plan.

Enhance forestry's engagement with communities

- Publish and promote Forests and People Guideline.
- Review community partnerships on the national forest estate.
- Bring a forestry presence to minority target group events such as the Glasgow and Edinburgh Mela Festivals.
- Support the development of the Central Scotland Green Network concept and its inclusion as a key theme within relevant development plans.
- Engage with the planning system to promote understanding by planners of the contribution of woodlands to a range of national and local objectives.
- Facilitate appropriate woodland creation and reduce woodland loss by supporting Local Authorities who wish to develop new Indicative Forestry Strategies.
- Contribute to the review and development of Single Outcome Agreements to ensure that forestry and woodland priorities are reflected in them.

Support community ownership and management on the national forest estate, where this will bring increased benefits

- Support community ownership and management through the community engagement framework.

Key theme 5: Access and health

Progress and priorities

An increasing body of research evidence is pointing to the therapeutic health benefits and cost savings of using greenspace in general and urban woodlands. Using mental health services, the FCS/NHS Branching Out partnership initiative has been instrumental in demonstrating these benefits in Scotland and the results were showcased at a Public Health Conference in November.

The capacity of FCS to address access and health was given a boost by two appointments during the year: an Access, Health & Recreation Policy Advisor in February 2008 and a Health Advisor in Central Scotland Conservancy. Following the launch of the 'Woods for Health' programme, involving the forestry and health sectors, a part time Health Advisor was appointed to Highland and Islands Conservancy. A Specialist Registrar in Public Health Medicine from NHS Highland was also seconded to investigate the possibility of greening up the NHS estate. The Registrar will work with NHS estate colleagues to map NHS Highland woodlands and greenspace and establish the potential for greening up existing NHS estate and hospital grounds across the Highland area.

The Forestry for People Challenge fund was launched in May alongside the WIAT Challenge. It has been designed to support local involvement in woodland projects for health, learning and strengthening communities. A specific area for development is working with Health Boards and hospitals on the creation and management of woodlands to aid recovery from physical and mental ill health.

A Parliamentary reception for MSPs in September showcased practical examples of what urban woodlands can deliver and results from the valuation of forestry for people research. Competitive judging in November resulted in eight unconditional and four conditional approvals for a variety of Forestry for People initiatives including woodland walking groups, volunteer groups and local Forest Education Initiative projects.

Tackling the equality and diversity agenda is seen as a key implementation priority for 2009 and beyond. Internally, FCS is examining ways in which the proportion of staff from minority groups can be increased. Externally, a framework for mainstreaming diversity in FC Scotland has been developed, setting out our approach to people, delivery of services, community engagement, and communication. We are appointing a Diversity Officer in Central Scotland Conservancy to spearhead the diversity agenda regionally and establishing an Equality and Diversity Reference Group to assist us in meeting our equality and diversity obligations and aspirations throughout Scotland.

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What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Contribute to health improvement and narrowing the health gap in Scotland by increasing the number of people who visit woodlands and the outdoors

- Publish a new Woods for Health strategy with increased focus on health inequalities, mental health and wellbeing, child health and equality and diversity (FCS).
- Promote woods for health to key professional audiences including GPs, clinical practitioners, community pharmacies and allied health professionals (FCS).
- Complete a review of woodland parks (FES).
- Develop and promote the framework for evaluation of social forestry including mechanisms for capturing data on health and education outcomes (FR).
- Extend evaluation of health focused forestry initiatives (FCS).

Make access to woodlands easier for all sectors of society

- Ensure forestry sector issues are dealt with at the National Access Forum and local access forums (NAF).
- Increase focus on black and ethnic minority community engagement work in Central Scotland (FCS).
- Disseminate findings from the “Live it, Breathe it, Walk it” community engagement project in Castlemilk woodlands (FCS).
- Use Scottish Rural Development Plan grant incentives to increase woodland access opportunities (FCS).
- Run a one-day Woodlands and Health seminar (FCS, NHS, SNH).
- Establish and monitor a walking and cycling corridor in woodlands as a safe and active route to school project (FCS, Sustrans).

Use woodland access to help improve physical and mental health in Scotland

- Define key health actions in Forest District Strategic plans (FCS, FES).
- Promote Branching Out conservation and greenspace on referral service and associated resource guide with NHS Boards across Scotland (FCS, NHS, PH).
- Develop a pathfinder project on use of hospital woodlands to promote physical, mental and social health outcomes for patients, staff and visitors (FCS, NHS).
- Publish a series of woodlands for health case studies (FCS).
- Work with Central Scotland and Highland health advisors to pilot woodland health walks on prescription with GP surgeries and clinical practitioners (FCS, NHS).
- Develop a national programme of woodland health walks (FCS, PH).
- Disseminate short films to showcase health and education projects in woodlands (FCS).

Provide a greater range of ways for people to enjoy woodlands

- Develop links with Disability Forums to promote a greater range of ways for people to enjoy woodlands (FCS).
- Commission research on barriers and motivations of black and ethnic minority groups for woodland use (FCS, FR).

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- Pilot the use of an Equality and Diversity Reference Group to advise on relevant aspects of policy development and delivery (FCS).

An outline programme for 2010- 2012

Making access easier

- Investigate the role of woodlands in reducing health inequalities.
- Engage more first time visitors and new users in woodland recreation and relaxation opportunities.
- Promote the use of woodlands as part of the Healthy Working Lives award scheme.
- Promote active forms of travel to school and work through woodlands and forests.
- Promote the use of green bus stops for woodland walking.
- Produce woodland maps and public information at priority locations.

Helping to improve the nation's health

- Focus on reducing health inequalities and narrowing the health gap in line with Government priorities.
- Promote effective partnership working between environment and health sectors
- Increase the number of woodland and greenspace referrals by health professionals
- Extend national program of woodland health walks.
- Publish reports in interim progress of the Woods for Health strategy.
- Publish findings of pathfinder projects and social forestry initiatives focussed on health.

Enabling people to enjoy woodlands

- Increase woodland recreational and health opportunities for equality and diversity groups.
- Reduce barriers to access for disadvantaged and excluded groups living in our communities

Key theme 6: Environmental quality

Progress and priorities

The UK Forestry Standard and associated suite of Guidelines have been reviewed and updated after discussions with key organisations, and are about to be published for full public consultation.

FCS has worked closely with SEPA to develop the draft River Basin Management Plans and Area Management Plans, and with Scottish Government to develop the forthcoming Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Bill (FRM Bill). Scottish Government led a Natural Flood Management (NFM) Group to help improve understanding of how different NFM techniques contribute to sustainable flood risk management. Scottish Government also published the Scottish Soils Framework to raise awareness of the pressures on soils, and set out their vision for their sustainable management. At the end of 2008, SEPA launched a six-month public consultation on the draft Scotland and Solway Tweed river basin management plans.

Forest Enterprise Scotland has achieved full coverage of the National Forest Estate with Forest Design Plans. As part of the Scottish Rural Development Plan (SRDP) Woodland Improvement Grant option, new simplified guidance has been provided for the preparation of a Forest Plan to encourage its uptake for privately owned woodlands. Guidance has also been developed that promotes the restoration and management of ancient wood pasture. Building on previous work to prepare a toolbox of information that contributes towards the design of urban woodlands, an exemplar model design plan illustrating 'best practice' has been developed for training courses.

The FCS Policy Statement 'Scotland's Woodlands and the Historic Environment' has been well received by all sectors. FCS has joined the Shared On-line Data Group, which meets several times a year to improve the sharing of data on the historic environment. Also, FCS has set up a study to review the availability of advice on the historic environment for woodland managers.

Priorities for this implementation plan period are:

- Publishing the revised UK Forestry Standard and associated suite of Guidelines, including the development and provision of education and training courses.
- Develop and disseminate best practice guidance to provide empirical evidence to support the role of forestry in protecting and enhancing Scotland's water, soils and air resources.
- Development and prioritisation of actions for Scotland's trees and woodlands that respond to the aspirations of the European Landscape Convention, and incorporate the anticipated changes from climate change.
- Build on existing initiatives to consolidate historic environment data sources at the national, regional and local level.

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What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Help to protect Scotland's water, soil and air resource

- Publish and promote the Forests and Soils Guidelines (FC).
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the 2003 Forests and Water Guidelines (FC).
- Establish a forestry Monitored Priority Catchment to assess the implementation of Forests and Water Guidelines measures, especially those designed to mitigate acidification (SEPA, FCS, FR).
- Deliver forestry actions identified in the Scottish Soils Framework (SGEQD, FCS).
- Through River Basin Management Plans, support the implementation of forestry measures required to deliver the Water Framework Directive (FCS).
- Deliver Climate Change Action Plan actions on forestry and slope instability (FCS).
- Publish the results of the Scottish Government's natural flood management scoping study and help develop catchments trials (SGEQD, FCS).

Contribute to Scotland's diverse and attractive landscapes

- Publish and promote the new Forests and the Landscape Guidelines (FC).
- Deliver guidance and training in landscape skills for those formulating and delivering landscape objectives in woodland options of the SRDP (FCS).
- Carry out a National Overview of Scotland's landscapes to develop a better understanding of their regional identity and diversity (SNH).
- Engage stakeholders in the ongoing assessment of the potential impacts on Scottish landscapes through climate change and their contribution to quality of life (SNH).

Help to manage Scotland's historic environment and its interpretation and enjoyment

- Publish and promote the new Forests and the Historic Environment Guidelines (FC).
- Publish a field guide for the identification of archaeological features (FCS).
- Promote the development of The Ancient Tree Hunt (WTS).
- Review available sources of information and further data needs for non-inventory historic gardens and designed landscapes (ALGAO, HS, RCAHMS, SNH).
- Revise the memorandum on monument management plans (FCS, HS).
- Carry out research into the history of Scotland's woodland culture (RCAHMS, FCS).
- Develop and deliver the 'Forest Heritage Scotland' project on the national forest estate (FCS, RCAHMS).
- Develop shared access to historic environment data sources through SEARS and the Shared Online Data Sharing Group (RCAHMS, HS).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Help to protect Scotland's water, soil and air resource

- Publish the revised Forests and Water Guidelines and identify training needs.
- Through River Basin Management Plans support the implementation of forestry measures required to deliver the aims of the Water Framework Directive.
- Support development of a national strategy for natural flood management.

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- Improve the evidence base and guidance on woodland measures to protect and enhance water quality.
- Contribute to a Scottish geodiversity framework.

Contribute to Scotland's diverse and attractive landscapes

- Sign up to Scotland's Landscape Charter, supporting European Landscape Convention.
- Promote the new Forests and the Landscape Guidelines including the development and delivery of associated education and training and practical guidance.
- Use the National Overview project to inform national and regional policy and guidance.
- Carry out a study on the application of forest landscape design principles to forest restructuring to achieve structural and species diversity.
- Carry out a study on the potential for and implications of forest management practices focussing on low impact management systems in areas sensitive to landscape change.
- Develop and deliver appropriate guidance on view management that enhances the visual impact of woodlands on both internal and external views.
- Contribute towards the development of landscape strategies and management plans for protected and sensitive landscapes.
- Incorporate climate change thinking into guidance for the conservation and management of designed landscapes.
- Deliver a 100% increase in the area of privately owned woodlands covered by an approved Forest Plan.

Help to manage Scotland's historic environment and its interpretation and enjoyment

- Promote the new Forests and the Historic Environment Guidelines, including the development and delivery of associated education and training and practical and technical guidance.
- Promote, facilitate and provide appropriate guidance to woodland managers on the use of the Historic Land Use Assessment.
- Promote the integration of The Ancient Tree Hunt with other land data sets.
- Develop and deliver accredited historic environment training for woodland managers.
- Develop guidance on the sympathetic management of trees and woodlands in designed landscapes.
- Standardise heritage data held by the national forest estate and fully integrate into management systems.
- Develop guidance that promotes the stewardship of all scheduled monuments in woodlands under an agreed management plan.

Key theme 7: Biodiversity

Progress and priorities

In the summer of 2008, FCS published its Biodiversity programme for 2008-2011, along with programmes for capercaillie, black grouse and red squirrel. During 2008/09, FCS worked with Plantlife, Butterfly Conservation and SNH to develop programmes for juniper, chequered skipper and pearl-bordered fritillary. FCS and SNH are consulting on a set of proposed red squirrel stronghold sites, linked to a grey squirrel control strategy. SNH, FCS, Scottish Wildlife Trust and Red Squirrels South Scotland are working in partnership to prevent the spread of the squirrelpox virus in southern Scotland. A project officer has been appointed to lead the Argyll rhododendron control strategy. DCS published the Wild Deer Strategy and started its implementation.

The Scottish Programme for Protected Woodland Sites was launched in April. Now that Rural Development Contracts (RDC) are available, FCS, SNH, DCS and SGRPID are encouraging woodland owners to apply for grant support to carry out the necessary work. The area of schemes agreed within the year has been below the target of 3000ha. Guidance notes were published on using RDC options for restoration of open habitats and conservation of juniper and key butterfly species in woodlands. Further guidance is in preparation.

Work progresses to develop habitat networks, including publication of a Glasgow and Clyde Valley green network plan, appointment of a project officer for the Edinburgh and Lothians network plan, Scottish Government habitat network workshops and publication by FCS of guidance and maps of high conservation value woodland networks throughout Scotland. Advice on woodland biodiversity has been included in draft guidance for local authorities on planning and forestry.

Consultation drafts of new Forests and Biodiversity Guidelines and UK Forestry Standard are about to be published. Over 30% of the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland has been completed. A new GB-wide national forestry inventory was piloted, encompassing key biodiversity information needs.

In autumn 2008 a new implementation structure for the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy was launched and a Woodland Ecosystem Group set up to co-ordinate woodland biodiversity planning and delivery including all relevant priority habitats and species. This Group is advising on Scottish Forestry Strategy implementation.

The strategic issues identified are:

- Habitat network tools and guidance.
- Use of native species in climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- More action on non-native invasive species such as rhododendron.

The Scottish Forestry Strategy

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Help reverse biodiversity decline by targeted action

- Increase the rate at which designated woodland features and other native woodlands are brought into management towards favourable condition (FCS).
- Increase the rate of PAWS restoration, particularly in the private sector (FCS).
- Implement pearl-bordered fritillary, chequered skipper and juniper programmes (FCS).
- Publish a red squirrel conservation strategy including red squirrel stronghold sites and approach to grey squirrel control (FCS, SNH).
- Provide biodiversity advice for preparation of Indicative Forestry Strategies and Development Plans (FCS).

Help reverse biodiversity decline by broader actions

- Increase the rate of creation of new or converted native woodland (FCS).
- Publish guidance on ecological networks (SNH).
- Develop and trial a GIS tool for designing habitat and greenspace networks (SNH).
- Promote registration and management of native tree seed stands (FCS).

Increase awareness of woodland biodiversity

- Include woodlands in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy awareness campaign (SNH, WEG).

Improve knowledge for better decision making

- Complete the digital woodland map and 50% of the ground survey for the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (FCS).
- Publish a woodland grazing management planning and monitoring toolkit, and assess potential for RDC support (FCS, FR).
- Publish the new UK Forestry Standard and Forests and Biodiversity Guidelines (FC).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Help reverse biodiversity decline by targeted action

- Each year bring at least 3000ha of designated woodland features and 3,000ha of other native woodlands into management towards favourable condition.
- Each year bring at least 1000ha of non-native PAWS sites into restoration towards native woodlands.
- Complete programmes of work for black grouse and capercaillie as set out in FCS species action notes.
- Publish advice on UKBAP priority species found in Scottish woodlands.
- Set up a series of juniper 'orchards' to supply cuttings, based on seed collections across the ranges of Scottish seed zones.
- Publish plans for management and restoration of key open habitats on the National Forest Estate.
- Assess the feasibility of using digitised spatial data to monitor losses of woodlands of high conservation value to development

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Help reverse biodiversity decline by broader actions

- Create at least 4500ha per annum of new or converted native woodland to help meet HAP targets and develop habitat networks.
- Develop one or more major landscape restoration demonstration projects, integrating with projects such as River Basin Catchment Plans and Ecosystem Approach Framework Plans.
- Extend the landscape scale approach to rhododendron management piloted in Argyll.
- Publish best practice guidance on diversifying planted forests for biodiversity.

Increase awareness of woodland biodiversity

- Publish biodiversity-related guidance for planning and managing urban/post-industrial woods in green networks.

Improve knowledge for better decision-making

- Publish research and guidance on native woodlands and climate change mitigation/adaptation.
- Publish research and initial guidance on converting plantations to native woodland and forest landscape restoration indicators.
- Complete the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland and publish reports on at least a third of the local authority areas in Scotland.
- Complete sampling for the National Forest Inventory in Scotland and estimate revised values of indicators of woodland structure and composition.

The Scottish Forestry Strategy

South Scotland

(Borders, Dumfries and Galloway and part of Ayrshire SEARS regions)

Progress and priorities

South Scotland is a predominantly rural area, characterised by small to medium sized market towns. The natural environment is particularly diverse, ranging from montane scrub habitats in the uplands, right through to lowland raised mires and fertile river valleys. The population is widely dispersed, at roughly half the average density of the rest of Scotland. The economy is characterised by low wages, with average wages significantly below the national average.

The area contains about 25% of the total forest resource of Scotland, and as such presents unique opportunities for contributing to the local economy. The region's rural character and extensive woodland cover, present significant opportunities for the further development of wood fuel as an energy source. As an existing active hub for the forestry sector, the region is well placed to develop capacity to service the increasing demands for appropriate skills and development for this growing sector. Forests and rivers are an important characteristic of the upland areas, where good forest design and implementation will contribute to achieving the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. The woodland resource also creates unparalleled opportunities to develop the tourism and leisure sectors in many areas including activity sports, wildlife and health.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Climate Change

- Facilitate the creation of wood fuel producer groups covering the whole region (SE).

Timber

- Promote forest expansion with appropriate and relevant species where it helps to support a sustainable local forest products industry (FCS).

Business development

- Promote the forest sector as a tourism resource and rural development asset (FCS).

Community development

- Bring forward a programme of open days in woodlands adjoining communities to demonstrate their potential role in sustainable development and climate change (BFT, CWA).

Access and health

- Obtain information from each of health boards about their 'Paths for Health' projects and group walking initiatives, identifying where any of them particularly use forest

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resources. Work with the health boards to subsequently maximise this usage. (FCS, NHS).

Environment

- Support the development of area River Basin Management Plans for Clyde, Solway and Tweed, including the potential for forestry in sustainable flood management, reducing acidification impacts and reducing leaching of nitrates (FCS, SEPA).

Biodiversity

- Enhance the scarce montane scrub habitat in south of Scotland. (FCS, FES)

An outline programme for 2011-2012

Climate Change

- Advise and facilitate the uptake of wood fuel for renewable energy through the South Scotland Woodfuel Information Officer.
- Produce guidance for the appropriate expansion of short rotation forestry in the south of Scotland.

Timber

- Support and promote the work of the region's three timber transport groups and associated projects.

Business Development

- Progress the creation of a forest industry 'centre of excellence' based in the South of Scotland.
- Produce development guidelines for future forestry based projects in South Scotland.
- Engage resource within the FEI programme in the south of Scotland to promote in schools opportunities with the Forestry sector.

Community Development

- Facilitate expansion of capacity within the Community sector in the south of Scotland.

Access and Health

- Encourage the sharing and adoption of best practice from other regions on delivery of health and recreation benefits from forests.

Environmental Quality

- Review cultural heritage data sources, forest habitat network development and vacant and derelict land distribution to identify potential priority locations for action.

Biodiversity

- Develop regional strategies for management of damaging invasive species such as Japanese knotweed and grey squirrels.

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Central Scotland

(Clyde Valley, part of Forth and part of Ayrshire SEARS regions)

Progress and priorities

Central Scotland has around 3 million people (around 60% of Scotland's total population) living within the area. The region's woodland resource, roughly 140,000 hectares, takes in a range of landscapes, from those with a high environmental value, such as the Campsie and Pentland Hills, to those suffering significant environmental blight and degradation through previous industrial activities. The 2008/9 priorities focussed on climate change, business development, community development, access and health, and biodiversity.

To help tackle the effects of climate change, we successfully developed and launched a regional biomass advice centre and, to assist with business development, we identified two exemplar sites to demonstrate the role of forestry in urban regeneration and place making. We have also finalised and published our Communications Strategy for Central Scotland. A Forest Kindergarten feasibility study was completed and an Officer will be appointed in 09/10 to take this forward. In co-operation with CSFT, we completed regional guidance for land acquisition in Central Scotland. We continued work with Scottish Government to identify Projects that would contribute to the legacy of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. In collaboration with partners, we published and disseminated information on Integrated Habitat Networks (woodlands, wetlands and grasslands) to planners and wider stakeholders throughout Glasgow and the Clyde Valley.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Climate change

- Support the development of a mature biomass energy industry through the provision of advice and assistance to primary producers, supply chain businesses and energy end-users throughout Central Scotland (FCS)
- Develop proposals for a Challenge Fund to support woodland creation as part of the Central Scotland Green Network (FCS, CSFT).
- Promote native woodland creation in Central Scotland to help with climate change adaptation and mitigation (WTS).
- Launch the Lanarkshire Wood Energy Project (CSFT).
- Direct resources to promoting woodland creation and the SRDP in the Central Scotland Forest (CSFT).

Timber

- Promote the increased use of timber in construction, particularly in urban regeneration projects (FCS).

Community Development

- Recruit the new Forest Kindergarten Officer to implement and promote the Forest Kindergarten programme in West Central Scotland (FCS)

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- Facilitate delivery of the Central Scotland Communications Strategy (FCS, CSFT).
- Appoint an Engagement Officer to explore how Central Scotland's woodlands can better benefit minority groups (FCS).

Access and Health

- Work with the Commonwealth Games 2014 Legacy Team to develop a programme of forestry and environmental initiatives linked to the games (FCS).
- Seek long-term funding for Phase 2 of Branching Out patient referral programme (FCS/NHSGG).
- Launch the natural play pilot in Merrylee Primary school in Glasgow. (FCS, GCC)
- Trial innovative mobile phone interpretation in urban woodlands in West Lothian (WTS).
- Work with health boards to maximise access and health outcomes on Health Trust land (CSFT).

Environmental Quality

- Continue work with SEPA on forest related actions to improve poor status water bodies in both the Forth and Clyde River Catchments (FCS).

Biodiversity

- Promote and deliver Integrated Habitat Networks projects in Central Scotland (FCS).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Climate change

- Build the work of the Regional Biomass Advice Centre delivering a programme of advice, support and information to biomass renewable energy projects.
- Review and update Indicative Forestry Strategies within Central Scotland.

Timber

- Encourage timber production from under-managed farm woodlands.

Community Development

- Roll out Forest Kindergarten activity and associated teacher training, building on pilot schemes identified in West Central Scotland.

Access and Health

- Promote and implement the programme of forestry and environmental initiatives linked to the Commonwealth Games and to promote the use of sustainable wood in the games.
- Use SRDP incentives to increase woodland access opportunities.

Biodiversity

- Increase promotional activity and support of Central Scotland integrated habitat network projects.

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Perth and Argyll

(Argyll, Tayside and part of Forth SEARS regions)

Progress and priorities

Perth and Argyll Conservancy covers some of the most diverse range of cultural, historic and natural landscapes in Scotland ranging from the machairs of the Argyll islands to the cities of Stirling and Dundee and the productive farmlands of Perthshire, Angus and Fife. It covers four major FES Districts and includes Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park as well as being the southern gateway to the Cairngorms. Around 16% of Scotland's population live within the region and the larger part of the urban population of Scotland is within an hour, offering significant opportunities for outdoor, forest-based, tourism, recreation and education.

Twenty-two percent of the area is forested, a reflection of the long history of forest management by traditional estates. It is a region open to new approaches to integrated land use where a diversity of objectives can be delivered by well-targeted public support.

Regional priorities for 2008-2011 focus on climate change mitigation and wood energy, Woods in and Around Towns, agricultural diversification, woodland-based tourism and biodiversity.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Climate Change

- Promote woodland creation in line with Indicative Forestry Strategies and Local Woodland and Forestry Frameworks (FCS, LLTNPA)
- Review and revise the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Local Woodland and Forestry Framework (LLTNPA, FCS).
- Complete the Argyll and Bute Indicative Forestry Strategy, and the Perth and Kinross, and Angus Local Woodland & Forestry Frameworks (A&BC, P&KC, AnC, FCS).
- Support a biomass information service for Argyll and Bute (FCS, A&BC, ALIenergy).

Timber

- Support the Argyll and Stirling, and Tayside Timber Transport Groups and revise the Stirling and Tayside agreed routes maps (S&TTTG, TACTRANS, FCS).
- Support wood fuel clusters in Argyll and Eastern Central Scotland and agree actions for woodfuel development (FCS, SE, ALIenergy)

Business Development

- Extend the BIFF collaborative approach to other areas in the region (FCS, LLTNPA, SNW, A&BAF).
- Help develop a collaborative approach to forest tourism in Argyll (FCS, VS, HIE).
- Run a workshop on SRDP economic development measures (FCS, SE, ConFor)

Community Development

- Support and promote existing pathfinder projects (FCS, CWA).

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Access and Health

- Encourage greater participation in the WIAT and Forestry for People challenge funds (FCS).
- Develop a health and well-being delivery plan for the region's woods (FCS, NHS).

Biodiversity

- Develop a collaborative project on the historic oakwoods of Argyll (FCS, HS).
- Promote red squirrel conservation via the Tayside Red Squirrel Project and other local red squirrel initiatives (SNH, SWT, FCS).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Climate Change

- Encourage riparian planting as a catchment management measure.

Timber

- Maintain the impetus on growing quality hardwoods.

Business Development

- Evaluate the strategic approach to forest tourism already taken in Perthshire.
- Help build capacity on forestry skills development within the land management sector.

Community Development

- Build capacity through existing bodies such as the Community Woodland Association for supporting community involvement in the urban areas of Dundee, Perth, Stirling and Clackmannan.
- Support education initiatives which promote greater understanding of the rural forestry sector by urban consumers.

Access & Health

- Implement an Action Plan to increase the health contribution of the region's woods.
- Monitor the effects of any changes to the national forest estate on the provision of forest access and recreation facilities.

Biodiversity

- Identify new opportunities for landscape-scale woodland restoration building on current projects in the Argyll Forest Park, Bute, the Ochils and Perthshire.
- Identify opportunities for forest habitat network creation and management to support vulnerable forest-dependent species.
- Extend the Argyll Islands Native Woodland Partnership to cover all the Argyll Islands.

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Grampian

(Grampian and Moray SEARS region)

Progress and priorities

Grampian has 155,000 ha of woodlands, which produce over 700,000 tonnes of timber annually and support thriving processing and nursery industries.

Over the last year significant support has been given to the development of the woodfuel sector including the appointment of a Biomass Development Officer. Community involvement has focused on the continuing WIAT partnership covering Aberdeen City and the surrounding satellite towns. WIAT and F4P challenge schemes have also been agreed in Moray for the first time.

We have been working closely with SEPA to identify opportunities for forestry to contribute to implementation of the Water Framework Directive. For targeting woodland expansion and restoration a Forest Habitat Network approach has been established, this work is also being used for Red Squirrel conservation efforts.

Grampian has been at the forefront in bringing in the new SRDP RDCs. We will concentrate on a customer focused approach to maximise the benefits that forestry can deliver under the SRDP. Over the coming year actions to mitigate climate change such as woodland expansion and increased use of woodfuel will be key priorities.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Climate Change

- Increase the number of woodfuel boilers installed in the region (AC, SE, AREG).
- Deliver 300ha of woodland expansion through SRDP RDCs (SGRIPD, FCS).
- Disseminate information and best practice on emerging forest health issues (FR).
- Support the submission of two formal planning applications for windfarms on the national forest estate at Aultmore and Clashindarroch (FES).

Timber

- Seek funding for a Timber Transport Project Officer (GTTG).
- Gather and interpret timber production data for Grampian (FCS, NEFIC).

Community Development

- Appoint a full time Forest Education Initiative Project Officer (NEFEI, FCS)
- Promote further uptake of WIAT and F4P incentives (CWA, MC, AC, ACC, FCS).

Access and health

- Extend the work of health walk co-ordinators focusing on high SIMD wards, promoting safe health walks and supporting active school co-ordinators (NHS, FCS).

Environmental Quality

- Use woodlands to contribute to achieving good ecological and chemical status in Grampian's water bodies through proactive engagement with owners (SEPA, FCS).

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- Promote riparian woodland expansion (CNPA, DDSFB, FCS).
- Complete the assessment of designed landscapes in Grampian (FCS, GHS, AC).

Biodiversity

- Conserve and protect the north-east Red Squirrel population (NELBAP, FCS).
- Hold a woodland related protected species seminar (NELBAP, FCS).
- Agree management works for designated sites on the national forest estate to achieve favourable condition by 2010 (FES, SNH).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Climate Change

- Work with the Grampian Biomass Working Group and other partners to deliver actions from the Grampian Biomass Action Plan.
- Raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on forestry.
- Promote the expansion of woodlands in line with regional strategies.

Timber

- Following the Scots pine timber quality project, promote Scots Pine as a commercial species for higher value markets.
- Encourage production, particularly thinning, from under-managed woodlands.
- Increase forest certification, especially amongst owners of small woodland.
- Encourage development of timber transport infrastructure projects.
- Promote greater use of local timber in construction.

Business Development

- Implement the Grampian Forest Initiative working with farm businesses to increase the extent, management and utilisation of farm woodlands.

Community development

- Implement the Grampian Woods for Learning Plan.

Access and Health

- Promote wider involvement in the WIAT Initiative.

Environmental Quality

- Work with SEPA on forest related actions to improve poor status water bodies.

Biodiversity

- Through joint working progress towards favourable condition on all designated woodland sites.
- Use the Grampian Forest Habitat Network data to support strategic planning and funding decisions for woodland restoration and expansion.
- Review progress of forestry relevant species and habitat action plans.

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Highland and Islands

(Highland, Western Isles and Northern Isles SEARS regions)

Progress and priorities

Sea transportation of timber on the west coast has received a boost during the year. A link road and pier interface construction is near completion at Eileanreach estate in Glenelg. This will provide temporary access to a floating pontoon structure and is one of three sites investigated for high quality transportable sea loading facilities.

The Balcas factory at Invergordon is under construction, now well advanced. It will use 350,000 tons of low quality timber, supplying electricity to the National grid and producing high quality pellets to various markets including domestic.

Due to the current downturn the Highland Housing Fair has been postponed for a year. A project officer has been appointed for the Scots pine resource project.

Bids have been submitted for ERDF funding to provide advice and support for developing the wood fuel market in the Highlands and Islands.

A Highland Health Advisor has been appointed to develop, promote and implement the Woods for Health Strategy and health components of Woodlands in and Around Towns and Forestry for People programmes throughout Highland Region.

The National Forest Land Scheme has been extended to include Woodland Crofts and interest in this type of development is increasing. The Embo community have applied to create woodland crofts at Fourpenny Wood in Sutherland.

As part of the legacy from the 2007 Year of Culture, the Touchwood History project produced a second book about the social history of forestry in the twentieth century, in the Great Glen and a further two are being developed for Strathspey and southwest Sutherland. A three and a half year project extending activities to all of Scotland has been agreed with FCS, the University of the Highlands and Islands (Centre for History) and the Scottish Forestry Trust. The project will start in early 2009.

What needs to be done in 2009-2010

Climate Change

- Deliver renewable heat advice and support in the Highlands and Islands, with particular emphasis on wood fuel (FCS, HC, HIE, HB).
- Support the expansion of woodland cover in the Northern and Western Isles, in line with local strategies through SRDP, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Northern Isles Councils (FCS, CES, OIC, SIC).

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Timber

- Improve promotion of Scots pine as a commercial species for higher value markets (FCS, FR, HB).

Community development

- Improve opportunities for tourism and related businesses in southeast Sutherland to benefit local communities (FCS, HC, SNH, HB).
- Publish the Small Woodlands Handbook to support crofter forestry (FCS).

Access and health

- Improve the health and wellbeing of people and their communities through the Highland Health Advisor, working with the NHS, GPs and health professionals (FCS, HC, SNH, CWA).

Biodiversity

- Establish a habitat network programme in the Cairngorms to reduce native woodland fragmentation and promote montane scrub and riparian woodland (FCS, CNPA, HB).
- In support of the Peatland Strategy, plan incentives and practical action for the restoration of peatland affected by inappropriate past afforestation (FCS, SNH, RSPB).

An outline programme for 2010-2012

Timber

- Reduce the impact of timber transport on north Highland roads.
- Develop aspen as a commercial species within a native woodland context.

Business Development

- Promote timber use in building at the Highland Housing Fair.
- Move towards the establishment of an East Sutherland Forest Park.

Community Development

- Support development of woodland crofts in suitable locations.

Access and Health

- Expand volunteering as a positive method of contribution and exercise on forest activities.

Environmental Quality

- Develop previously established new native woodlands through enrichment of grazing and habitat enhancement.

Biodiversity

- Clear rhododendron and other invasive species from key habitats.

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Annex 1: listing of action leaders

Aberdeenshire Council	AC
Aberdeen City Council	ACC
Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group	AREG
Angus Council	AnC
Argyll, Lomond and the Islands Energy Agency	ALIenergy
Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum	A&BAF
Argyll and Bute Council	A&BC
Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers UK	ALGAO
Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmillers	ASHS
Borders Forest Trust	BFT
Cairngorms National Park Authority	CNPA
Central Scotland Forest Trust	CSFT
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	CES
Community Woodland Association	CWA
Confederation of Forest Industries (UK) Ltd	ConFor
Dee District Salmon Fisheries Board	DDSFB
Forest Industries Advisory Board	FIAB
Forest Research	FR
Forest Education Initiative	FEI
Forest Enterprise Scotland	FES
Forestry Commission	FC
Forestry Commission Plant and Seed Supply Branch	FCPSSB
Forestry Commission Scotland	FCS
Garden History Society	GHS
Glasgow City Council	GCC
Grampian Timber Transport Group	GTTG
Highland Birchwoods	HB
The Highland Council	HC
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	HIE
Historic Scotland	HS
Institute of Chartered Foresters	ICF
Lantra – the sector skills council for the environment and land-based sector	Lantra
Learning Teaching Scotland	LTS
Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority	LL&TNP
Moray Council	MC
National Access Forum	NAF
National Health Service Greater Glasgow	NHSGG
National Health Service Scotland	NHS
North East Forest Education Initiative	NEFEI
North East Forest Industries Cluster	NEFIC
North East Local Biodiversity Action Plan	NELBAP
Orkney Islands Council	OIC
Paths to Health	PH
Perth and Kinross Council	P&KC
Private Sector Production Forecast Working Group	PSPFWG
Reforestation Scotland	RS
Royal Commission for Antiquities and Historic Monuments in Scotland	RCAHMS

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Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	RSPB
Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services	SEARS
Scottish Enterprise	SE
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	SEPA
Scottish Government Directorate for the Built Environment	SGDBE
Scottish Government Education Directorate	SGED
Scottish Government Environmental Quality Directorate	SGEQD
Scottish Government Rural Payment and Inspections Directorate	SGRPID
Scottish Native Woodlands	SNW
Scottish Natural Heritage	SNH
Scottish Wildlife Trust	SWT
Shetland Islands Council	SIC
Skills Development Scotland	SDS
Stirling & Tayside Timber Transport Group	S&TTTG
Sustrans – the sustainable transport NGO	Sustrans
Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership	Tactrans
The Timber Transport Forum	TTF
Visit Scotland	VS
Woodland Ecosystem Group	WEG
Woodland Trust Scotland	WTS

The Scottish Forestry Strategy

Forestry Commission Scotland serves as the forestry directorate of the Scottish Government and is responsible to Scottish Ministers.

You can get this document on tape, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact us for information on language translations, additional copies, or to discuss any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

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