

Forestry Commission

Corporate Plan 2008-2011

Great Britain Activities

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Ministerial Foreword

This plan sets out the programme we have agreed with the Forestry Commission for those activities it carries out across Great Britain. It also describes the strategic direction that the Forestry Commission will take up to 2011, and how their activities contribute to a number of our Government agendas.

In its GB role, funded by the Westminster parliament, the Forestry Commission provides advice and support to the UK Government and to the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales. The FC sets the standards for sustainable forest management, encourages good forestry practice and conducts forestry research. It also delivers a range of service functions, on behalf of all 3 countries and funded by them.

There are a number of key challenges that the Forestry Commission will be focusing efforts on, and undoubtedly the biggest is climate change. The FC is working hard to raise awareness of forestry's role in this area, both internationally and domestically.

The Forestry Commission will also continue to champion sustainable forestry internationally and promote it throughout the UK. The FC can make a valuable contribution to taking forward the strategic priorities described in our Sustainable Development strategy by developing solutions to cope with climate change and protecting the countryside and natural environment.

This is obviously a challenging and important agenda but I am confident that the FC will achieve the targets outlined in this Corporate Plan.

Joan Ruddock

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
(Climate Change, Biodiversity and Waste)

Introduction

This Corporate Plan describes our current activities for Great Britain, the strategic direction of our work up to 2011 and the specific actions we are taking forward in 2008/09.

Forestry is a devolved subject and the Forestry Commission (FC) answers separately to Ministers in England, Scotland and Wales. The Commissioners' programmes to deliver each country's forestry strategy are set out in Corporate Plans for England, Scotland and Wales. These programmes are directed and financed by the three administrations to which the FC is directly accountable. In addition, as the Forestry Commission operates across GB, central support services are provided to the entire organisation.

The Forestry Commission in Great Britain

Ministers have agreed that, whilst most of the FC's work is now done at country level, a number of the FC's functions would be funded directly by Westminster and operated on a cross-GB basis by Corporate and Forestry Support Division. In this GB role, we provide advice and support to the UK Government and to the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales. We set the standards for sustainable forest management and encourage good forestry practice. We conduct forestry research, provide information and have statutory duties for some regulations that, by agreement with Ministers, are GB-wide. These functions are outlined in more detail below:

Expert advice for policy and practice – This provides input across a range of subjects and specialisms where other parts of the FC do not have the breadth or depth within their own teams. Examples include climate change, water and waste management policy, biofuels, social science, timber technology and wildlife conservation.

European and international forestry policy – The FC's international policy staff, working with officials from other departments, formulate and represent UK policy for international and European negotiations, develop and review the UK's national forest programme and advise on the implementation of international and European obligations.

Cross-GB regulation – By agreement with the devolved administrations, the FC develops and implements regulation at EU and GB level in two areas: Plant Health and Forest Reproductive Material. The first has the vital task of protecting UK and EU forests and timber from harmful pests and diseases. The regulation of Forest Reproductive Material (seeds and cuttings) provides a system to ensure that planting stock is traceable throughout the collection and production process.

Forestry research – The FC has a science budget of approximately £11 million that is deployed to implement the *Science and Innovation Strategy for British Forestry*. The Strategy sets out to improve the base of scientific evidence for effective policy and practice, with increased emphasis on communications and knowledge transfer. Feedback from a consultation has led to resources being switched to support research on the social elements of forestry and of climate change.

Development and implementation are under the direction of a Research Strategy Management Board, membership of which includes the Northern Ireland Forest Service. The Head of Corporate and Forestry Support also acts as departmental sponsor for the FC's research Agency, Forest Research. Forest Research's Corporate Plan is published separately and covers the Agency's key aims, actions and targets.

Setting cross-UK forestry standards and guidance – The FC is responsible for developing and maintaining the UK Forestry Standard as the statement of sustainable development in the forestry sector. Support for the independent and voluntary certification scheme, the UK Woodland Assurance Standard, is also provided. These tasks involve the production of more detailed guidelines and guidance to support the standards. The FC also has a role in developing government standards in economics and statistics and providing guidance on their application across the organisation.

Governance - The Forestry Commission's current governance structure was implemented following the Forest Devolution Review in 2003 and has since been reviewed and amended in line with HM Treasury's Code of Good Practice.

The Corporate Services team provides support to the Forestry Commissioners, Executive Board and Forestry Ministers' Group, implements central Government Initiatives including Open Information and provides security of FC systems and assets.

The Commission also has an independent Internal Audit unit, set up within the FC to evaluate its systems and make recommendations where risks are not identified and managed, and where controls are weak or missing. It is part of the corporate governance framework and functions by examining and evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of all other elements of the framework.

Supporting the Delivery of Country Forestry Strategies

Forestry and Sustainable Development

In 2005, the UK government and the devolved administrations adopted, 'Securing the Future' as the framework for sustainable development, with the following purpose:

"The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations."

The following shared UK principles bring together and build on the various previously existing UK principles to set out an overarching approach:

- Living Within Environmental Limits
- Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society
- Achieving a Sustainable Economy
- Promoting Good Governance
- Using Sound Science Responsibly.

The priority areas for immediate action, shared across the UK, are: Sustainable Consumption and Production; Climate Change and Energy; Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement; and Sustainable Communities.

The strategic objective for international sustainable development is to support multilateral and national institutions that can ensure effective integration of social, environmental and economic objectives to deliver sustainable development, especially for the poorest members of society.

Defra leads on sustainable development but all UK Departments share responsibility for making it a reality. The Forestry Commission has a place in taking forward the strategic priorities, including developing solutions to cope with the effects of climate change and protecting the countryside and natural environment. The Strategy will shape our future work in delivering forestry's contribution to sustainable development.

Sustainable forestry recognises the same wide objectives and the importance of linking the economic, environmental and social values of forests. At its simplest, it means making sure that today's forests are still here for our children and grandchildren. We also have a duty to be careful stewards of the inheritance that we pass on to future generations. They will rightly expect that their forests and woodlands will offer the same benefits and opportunities (or if possible more) as we enjoy. The Government's commitment to sustainable forestry is set out in the UK National Forest Programme published in February 2003.

Sustainable forest management was defined in 1993 by the Second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in Helsinki as:

“the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.”

Following agreement on the Helsinki Guidelines, European countries adopted a set of Pan-European Criteria (PEC) in 1998 to be applied to forests throughout Europe, whatever their location or circumstance. The PEC are:

- maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles;
- maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality;
- maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood);
- maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems;
- maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water);
- maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions.

The United Nations has established a Forum on Forests which promotes the implementation of sustainable forest management world-wide. Working closely with other Government departments, the Forestry Commission aims to ensure that the UK is both a leading proponent and exemplar of sustainable forest management. This will be achieved through, among its other actions, its contributions to key international events; in particular the United Nations Forum on Forests, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and European forest condition monitoring through such things as UK Habitat Action Plan reporting.

At the global level the framework for sustainable forest management was established by the Rio Forest Principles agreed in 1992 and most recently through agreement of the four global objectives on forests by the United Nations Forum Forests at its sixth session in 2006.

Forestry and climate change

Climate change continues to be one of the biggest challenges that we face. Major events took place in 2007 that increased awareness of forestry's role in tackling climate change. At an international level, the IPCC's 4th Assessment Report underlined forestry's very significant contribution as a low-cost approach to mitigating climate change but added that most of this potential is still to be realised. The Bali negotiations in December placed the importance of tackling deforestation firmly on the world stage. In the UK, the Forestry Commission organised a high profile conference in London in November to promote clear messages about how forestry can contribute to this issue in the future. The conference was attended by a wide range of national and international stakeholders, and received key note addresses from Phil Woolas, Minister for the Environment, and Tim Rollinson, the FC's Director General.

There is a clear need for the sector to be proactive in promoting straightforward and consistent messages about how forestry can tackle climate change, and to raise awareness of the knowledge, expertise and skills that we have in helping to deliver practical solutions.

Following the conference in November 2007, six key actions concerning forestry and climate change have been identified. These are to:

1. **protect and manage** the forests that we already have;
2. **reduce** deforestation;
3. **restore** forest cover;
4. **use** wood for energy;
5. **replace** other materials with wood; and,
6. **plan** to adapt to our changing climate.

In taking forward these actions, it will be essential to have accurate and robust information. To this end, the Forestry Commission will establish a centre for Forests and Climate Change that would provide an information resource for the sector, other industries and the public. Detailed plans for the centre are still under development, but it will be critical that it acts as a trusted source of information available in a readily accessible format.

In order to ensure leadership and co-ordination in forestry and climate change, the Forestry Commission has established a Climate Change Strategy Group chaired by the Director-General and comprising senior staff across the Commission. This group will have a key role in the strategic direction of the Commission's work in tackling climate change and in overseeing key areas of work.

Actions for 2008/09:

- co-ordinate FC policies on climate change and lead on policy areas that have a GB remit and on international policy on forestry and climate change;
- bring together FC resources in a co-ordinated way to take forward a proactive programme of work;
- develop an authoritative repository of robust facts and figures on forestry and climate change;
- conduct a strategic review of the Commission's research programme on forestry and climate change; and,
- work with experts across the forestry sector and extend our discussions and working relationships with wider communities of interest.

Expert advice for policy and practice

We provide expert advice over a range of subjects and specialisms, where other parts of the FC do not have the breadth or depth within their own teams. Examples include economics, statistics, valuing ecosystem services, water and soils policy, bioenergy, social science, forest products, landscape ecology and sustainable forest management. The FC sits on a range of cross-sectoral and interdepartmental bodies such as Defra's Invasive and non-native species program board and the Environmental Research Funders Forum.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Provide training in the use of social science for informing policy function and delivery;
- Promote the use of wood as a sustainable material through support of 'Wood for Good';
- Support 'Wood for Gold' the initiative promoting the use of legal and sustainable timber at the 2012 Olympics;
- Continue to support Forest Education through involvement in Napier University's Centre for Timber Engineering and Wood for Good's on-line learning initiative;
- Develop guidelines on carbon offsetting in forestry;
- Support Defra in implementing sustainable timber procurement policies.

Economics and Statistics

Economics staff provide economic information and analysis across the Forestry Commission, including appraisals of policy and investment options. We have an advisory and training function to enable staff to incorporate economic issues into their work, and to ensure that the Commission's involvement in economic work is robust. We commission economic research on forestry, both through Forest Research and with external contractors.

Statistics staff produce UK forestry statistics publications, for which we will continue to improve availability of statistics through the FC website. We provide UK data for international statistics and indicators, including a UK report in 2008/09 for the Global Forest Resources Assessment. We support countries in developing indicators for their country strategies and will commission the biennial public opinion surveys in early 2009.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Further economic analysis of forestry's role in tackling climate change will be carried out in 2008/09 and we will work with others, including Defra, on valuing ecosystem services;
- We will participate in new Government-wide arrangements for statistical independence to be introduced from April 2008, following the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007.

European and International Forestry Policy

Our strategic objective is to ensure that, both internationally and within Europe, forestry contributes effectively to sustainable development in line with the UK Government Sustainable Development strategy, *Securing the Future*.

International Policy champions the contribution of forests to sustainable development internationally through identifying, communicating and promoting sustainable forest management across Whitehall, within Europe and Internationally. This role includes:

- engaging with people
- raising awareness
- developing and reforming policies that make delivery happen, and
- working with partners nationally, regionally and globally to build capacity.

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forest in Europe (MCPFE) sets the political framework and agreed standards for the sustainable management of Europe's forests and provides a European regional perspective on forests for global processes. The UK plays a key role within the MCPFE in identifying and negotiating the actions needed to deliver sustainable forest management.

The EU Forest Action Plan (FAP) agreed in 2006 promotes and enhances the sustainable management and multifunctional role of forests in Europe. The UK contributed to the European Commission's development of a five year work programme, which will be the subject of a review in 2009 and 2011. The Forestry Commission co-ordinates the UK's input to the work programme to deliver the EU FAP. The Forestry Commission also provides forestry expertise and champions the role of forests in delivering other key EU Strategies on the Environment, CAP and Rural Development.

The UK plays a leading role in promoting the sustainable management of forests globally, in particular action on its implementation. The United Nations Forum on Forests concluded agreement on a Non Legally Binding Instrument on Forests (NLBI) and a Multi Year Programme of Work, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007. The NLBI reaffirmed the four global objectives on forests¹. Through providing a forestry element to the UK's sustainable development dialogues, in close collaboration with Defra, FCO and other government departments, we aim to underline the role of forests to sustainable development.

¹ The Global Objectives on Forests aim to:

- Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management (SFM), including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;
- Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people;
- Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products derived from sustainably managed forests; and
- Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly- increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM.

Also at the international level we continue to work with IUCN and WWF to promote the restoration of forests globally.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Use the EU FAP to promote the role of forests in delivering on the EU Sustainable Development Strategy;
- Contribute to the European Commission's CAP Health Check on the role of forests in the key areas of rural development, climate change, water and energy;
- Demonstrate the role of forests in sustainable development by providing a forestry element to the UK's Sustainable Development Dialogues with China, Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa;
- Along with IUCN, WWF and other Partners continue to build the partnership and establish the learning network;
- Co-ordinate the preparations for the Commonwealth Forestry Conference in Edinburgh in 2010;
- Work with Defra to ensure a comprehensive and effective review of the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity in May 2008.

Cross GB Regulation

Better Regulation

Our first Simplification Plan in 2006, set out the measures to reduce the burden on stakeholders by forestry regulations. These measures are now in place, saving our stakeholders £375,000 each year (26% of the total administrative burden). We therefore met the 5-year target set for us in the first year. In addition, measures aimed at stakeholders (timber merchants, haulage contractors, etc.) who, although not affected by regulatory control, face administrative costs when dealing with us, are now in place saving these businesses some £1.3 million each year (a reduction in their costs of some 30%).

Our second Simplification Plan, *Making Regulation Work for Everyone* launched in December 2007 sets out further measures that will potentially save our Plant Health stakeholders some £16,000 per year and timber hauliers/contractors a minimum of some £40,000 per year. Although these savings might seem small they are significant in terms of the businesses involved.

Action for 2008/09:

- Implement Making Regulation Work for Everyone.

Forest Reproductive Material

The Forest Reproductive Material Regulations provide a system of control for seed, cuttings and planting stock that is used for forestry purposes in Great Britain. The Forestry Commission maintains a control system, in accordance with an EU Directive, which ensures that all reproductive material remains separated and clearly identified throughout the entire plant production process from collector, to grower and to end user.

To ensure compliance with the Regulations, three different types of inspections are carried out. These are:

- Inspections of basic material (stands and orchards);
- Inspections of registered suppliers (their premises, seed labelling, seed separation and paperwork);
- Inspections of seed collections.

These inspections ensure that planting stock is traceable throughout the collection and production process to a registered source of basic material.

Action for 2008/09:

- We will continue to work with registered suppliers to ensure that the implications and benefits of the regulations are fully understood and met.

Plant Health

The Plant Health Service, with support from Forest Research, protects our woodlands against the entry of harmful pests and diseases from overseas and controls those that may become established. We also protect forests elsewhere in the world from the movement of harmful pests from and through Great Britain, notably in controls on the use of wood packaging material used in international trade.

One of the prime objectives of good regulation in this area is to minimise burdens on business and to facilitate trade. This links to the UK policy agenda for Better Regulation and in January 2008 we introduced reduced frequencies of inspection of imports of wood of maple from the USA and Canada which will significantly reduce the costs associated with inspections of consignments at ports.

The threats to our forests include a number of pests that are currently causes of concern to Britain. These include North American and European bark beetles and longhorn wood boring beetles from Asia. Such insects threaten a variety of woodland types and some may become even more of a threat under climate change. Two pests of recent concern are Pitch Pine Canker and Oak Processionary Moth, which has been detected locally in parts of London. We have implemented EU emergency measures against Pitch Pine Canker and have supplemented our eradication programme against Oak Processionary Moth with emergency import controls.

Actions for 2008/09:

- We will continue our eradication programme for Oak Processionary Moth, working closely with key stakeholders in the affected London Boroughs;
- We are continuing to work with the Plant Health services of Defra and the Scottish Government Rural Directorate to combat *Phytophthora ramorum* and *Phytophthora kernoviae* and we shall be reviewing our policy against both diseases following the outcome of a consultation launched in spring 2008.

Forestry Research

The FC has a science budget of £11.6 million that is deployed to implement the Science and Innovation Strategy for British Forestry. The Strategy sets out to improve the base of scientific evidence for effective policy and practice with increased emphasis on communications and knowledge transfer. There is also an increased emphasis on climate change and social forestry research.

Development of ongoing and future research programmes is led by a series of programmes advisory groups that includes representatives from all four countries including Northern Ireland. The implementation and strategic management of these programmes are under the direction of an independently chaired Research Strategy Management Board comprising members from all four countries. The Head of Corporate and Forestry Support also acts as departmental sponsor for the FC's Research Agency, Forest Research. Forest Research's Corporate Plan is published separately and covers the Agency's key aims, actions and targets.

The Forestry Commission was a lead partner with OST in piloting the Chief Scientist's Ethical Code and Good Practice Guidelines for Scientists. We expect the Agency to adopt the Code and Guidelines and will include this in the forthcoming revision to the Agency's framework document. This adds to the existing in-house ethical code for social research in the Agency.

FR continues to participate in a number of pan-European research projects and attract substantial associated research funding. Although the FC necessarily provides an element of matching funds for European research we see this as a core activity for the agency, not only in generating increasing income from research but maintaining the Agency's reputation and developing networks and new skills. It also helps the Agency to build closer relations with other research institutes at home and abroad and thus enables the UK to be at the leading edge of forest research in Europe and forefront of best practice development and implementation.

We continue to build skills and capacity in social and economics research, with research of this type accounting for around 10% of the current research budget. Our new research procurement procedures will ensure that we continue to develop research skills and capacity in line with the requirements of national offices.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Continue to implement the new research commissioning, governance and quality management systems to deliver the Science & Innovation Strategy objectives;
- Support Forest Research in delivering their Development Strategy;
- Produce a major new publication; Managing Native Broadleaved Woodlands;
- Host a conference on Social Science in Forestry;
- Host a Cost Action Workshop on Entrepreneurship in Forestry;
- Contribute as a member of the Great Britain Non-native Species Programme Board;
- Contribute as a main board member of the Environmental Research Funders' Forum;
 - Participate in Europe wide research collaborations such as Wood Wisdom Net.

Setting cross-UK forestry standards and guidance

The FC (together with colleagues in Northern Ireland) is responsible for the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) as the UK Government approach to sustainable development in the forestry sector. A range of Forest Guidelines on various aspects of forest management supports the UK Forestry Standard.

In 2007, work on a substantial project to update and revise both the UKFS and the various Forestry Guidelines reached the consultation stage.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Publish a new suite of the UKFS and supporting Guidelines.

Improving how we work – an efficient, effective and sustainable organisation

The Forestry Commission operates across Great Britain (GB) as a cross-border public body. This allows England, Scotland and Wales to benefit from the economies of scale that a GB-wide body is able to offer. This includes services on finance, human resource management, IT, forestry operations, external communications and internal audit that are organised centrally but paid for by the countries.

People

We will continue work on the priority workstreams identified in our new People Strategy, which was published in 2007. Implementation of improved policies, systems and processes is planned over the course of this Corporate Plan period.

Diversity

We will publish a Diversity strategy laying out our commitment to reflecting the communities we serve in every aspect of our business, as well as our aims and objectives in respect of increasing the diversity of our workforce and those with whom we engage. We will implement a comprehensive training programme to ensure that all staff are aware of those aims and objectives and committed to their implementation.

Staff Development

We will implement a learning and development strategy to ensure employees are competent in their current post and developed to meet their career aspirations and potential. We will introduce a new competency framework that is appropriate to our business needs and linked to the Professional Skills for Government model. Delivery will include increased use of coaching, mentoring and externally delivered assessment, linked to our continuing commitment to the Investors in People standard. Each part of the FC will develop a workforce plan which identifies our existing and future staffing and skills requirements.

Leadership and Management

We will introduce a comprehensive programme to develop the future leaders of the FC, including a Management Development Programme to help middle managers identify their training and development needs and to identify those with high potential, a Graduate Development Programme aimed at bringing new talent into the organisation and Succession Planning to ensure adequate availability of people with the leadership and management skills required.

Health & Safety

We will continue to provide expert advice regarding safety, health and environment issues, reflecting the changing nature of our business. We will extend the "Your Good Health" initiative to cover all parts of the FC, to encourage all our employees to be aware of issues which affect their health and well-being.

HR Processes

We will examine our HR policies and processes to ensure they are fit for purpose, as efficient and effective as they can be and communicated in plain English. Early topics will include our conduct, grievance and discipline procedure, our postfilling/recruitment processes and our pay and reward system.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Publish Diversity Strategy, commence roll out of four levels of diversity training to all staff and review Race Equality Scheme;
- Introduce Competency Framework into recruitment process;
- Publish Learning & Development Strategy;
- Introduce Management Development Programme Level 1;
- Review and modernise HR policies on Grievance & Discipline and Post-Filling;
- Review the health and safety management of construction on FC managed land and buildings;
- Work with HSE, the forest industry and Electricity Companies to develop nationally recognised good practice for forestry work close to Overhead Electric Powerlines.

Finance and Accounting (FAS)

FAS is a customer focussed, shared service provider committed to working in partnership with customers to deliver effective, cost efficient, high quality solutions to finance and accounting related issues. The services provided comprise the following:

Business Accounting

Development and maintenance of business planning and monitoring systems, Silvan House management accounting support and production of the annual report and accounts for each of the three country administrations.

Finance Services

Implement accounting policies and procedures including accounting inspections. Provide efficient banking and credit management services to the FC as a whole. Develop policies and procedures in collaboration with country representatives relating to the valuation of land assets including the impact of International Accounting Standards.

Finance Systems Development

Identifying and developing new opportunities for systems improvement for our corporate financial and commercial systems and keeping such systems up to date through regular systems upgrades.

Procurement

Tendering and management of central contracts in line with organisational requirements, relevant legislation and best practice. Development of a procurement strategy and the provision of procurement guidance to FC staff including advice on legal issues and contract management.

Finance Policy

Ensuring the management of risk across the FC continues to evolve and improve. Prepare, publish and update finance guidance via the Money Matters booklets. Manage the FC efficiency programme liaising with all appropriate internal and external stakeholders.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Complete implementation of the Accounting by Objectives project designed to link the allocation of resources to wider government objectives;
- Identify accounting issues under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and produce re-stated accounts on the new IFRS basis;
- Further expansion of e-Business for Forestry initiative including rollout of mobile technology programme;
- Finalise and roll out a revised procurement strategy;
- Benchmark the finance function utilising the central models prepared by UK Public Sector Audit Agencies Value for Money in the Public Sector Corporate Services;
- Develop business continuity plans for the central shared services.

Information Systems Services

Driven by the Executive Board's mandated policies set out in our Information Technology (I-Tec) strategy, the Information Systems (IS) Strategy is centred round eight main themes and underpinned by a set of overarching principles. It aims to enable and support the FC going forward by aligning with our business strategies and processes, and fully exploiting technology.

Corporate Desktop

The Corporate Desktop program will provide the means to control and manage all FC desktops and laptops electronically from the centre. It will ensure that only FC approved hardware and software can be attached to our network. Efficiencies will be gained by obviating the need to manually instal new software and upgrades, security patches etc.

Internet Telephony (VOIP)

We will complete the rollout of Voice over IP (VOIP) or Internet Telephony to leverage the investment we have made into our Wide Area and Local Area networks.

Office 2007

The core corporate Desktop software, MS Office '97, is outdated, unsupported and preventing progress. Upgrading this to Office 2007 will go hand in hand with an exercise to upgrade all desktop hardware to an equivalent standard.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Roll out the corporate desktop and Office 2007 across FC;
- Comply with ISO27001;
- Support and contribute technology to Greenerways initiatives;
- Complete VOIP roll out.

Business Units

The Forestry Business Units (FBUs) exist to provide essential services to forestry operations in England, Wales and Scotland in areas where a common approach across geographies makes sense. These services comprise Civil and Mechanical Engineering, Plant and Seed Supply and incipiently, Renewable Energy Development. FBU also provide services to support Country objectives such as added value from specialist structures and mountainbike facilities which attract visitors to the forest, the use of low carbon emission vehicles and an asset survey of accesses, roads, etc.

The FBU's remit is to deliver these services efficiently and effectively to agreed financial targets and other performance indicators.

To undertake the services mentioned above, FBUs employ 342 staff and have a planned spend in 2008/09 of £39.7m rising to £40.6m in 2010/11.

Through the 'BusinessWise' or Value for Money Delivery Plan the FBUs intend to incorporate an accumulated saving of £2.2m over the three-year CSR07 period. The savings will be realised by a combination of efficiency initiatives and increases in external income. Over and above this, the FBU sees it as a duty to critically appraise all aspects of cost to determine if a better way can be found to decrease forest operational costs while maintaining other targets.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Reductions in fuel consumption;
- Introduction of Timberlink software;
- External sales of wildlife video monitoring and fleet management services;
- Improved road construction planning, including better road construction lifecycle and better balance of internal/external resource use in road building/maintenance;
- Sales/marketing of stress laminated bridge technology;
- Increased external seed supply;
- The new Renewable Energy Development Unit will deliver significant added value to Countries (already the negotiation project has achieved an annual terms improvement of £2.4 million in Scotland).

Greenerways

Greenerways is the Forestry Commission's corporate sustainable development programme. It considers the environmental performance and impact of our back-office function; how we embed environmental improvements in our day to day business; the actions and ethos of our staff, and how we are perceived by Government, business associates, and other stakeholders.

Greenerways operates within an environmental management framework, governed by a staged implementation process that will lead to ISO 14001 accreditation. Our aim is to service our sustainable development action plan through meeting internal and Government set carbon reduction targets, and ensuring legal compliance with environmental legislation.

Improved environmental management brings with it cost savings; business advantages; employee satisfaction and good publicity. Greenerways is not only about how we manage our resources, but also about how we manage ourselves.

Actions for 2008/09:

- To monitor our use of energy in buildings to achieve a saving of 3% p.a against our recorded energy levels from 2007-08. This target will be reviewed in early 2009, to ensure that it reflects Government objectives and the Commission's business needs;
- To monitor our travel and transport in order to achieve savings of 5% p.a. in carbon emissions from administrative travel. These savings relate to use of cars and light vans for administrative travel, and to use of all forms of transport for administrative purposes. The savings will be made against the travel data from 2007-08. This target will be reviewed in early 2009 to ensure that it reflects Government objectives and the Commission's business needs;
- To establish a baseline figure for 2008-9 for our waste arising from all of our activities except forest management, and a 2008-9 baseline figure for the volume of that waste which is recycled;
- To seek accreditation to levels I and II of BS8555, as we further develop our environmental management scheme and make progress towards full ISO140001 status for the organisation.

Beyond 2008, we shall continue to review targets for energy reduction and reductions in carbon emissions from travel, in line with government policy. We shall also set targets for reductions in the volumes of waste sent to landfill, and for increases in the volumes sent for recycling. We shall put in place support programmes for all staff to help them to achieve these targets, and we shall progress further towards full ISO14001 status.

We also intend to develop policies on the management of our built estate to help ensure that our office facilities and other buildings are fit for purpose in the context of sustainability.

We will be working with other parts of the Commission to develop policies and introduce practical measures that will help staff to make the necessary savings in energy, water and waste. By encouraging alternative business solutions such as meetings management, water conservation measures, and strategies for waste reduction, we hope to achieve the desired sustainable outcomes demanded by Government, stakeholders, and the public.

Ultimately, Greenerways should empower all staff to make changes in their working practices that promote and enhance the environmental credentials of the organisation.

Operational Support

Operational Support Unit (OSU) exists to develop products and provide services that the three countries have determined best delivered through a collaborative approach. These include the corporate forest inventory, forest planning and forest operations systems necessary to translate forest management policy into practise. The three countries fund and direct OSU through a Service Board, which is in turn supported by a number of cross-country business groups.

Three main areas of work are undertaken:

1. Specification, procurement and support of forest management information systems; principally the 'Forester' suite of GIS applications (Association of Geographic Information – Innovation and Best Practice Award – Central Government: Winner).
2. Development, maintenance and communication of best practise principally through the suite of 'Operational Guidance Booklets' (Plain English Campaign - Inside Write Award: Winner).
3. Provision of cartographic and data stewardship services across FC in order to ensure that plans and programmes are underpinned by sound data.

Actions for 2008/09:

- Complete a Stage 1 software build that allows the impact of New Growth and Yield Models on forecast outputs to be understood & reviewed in 2009;
- Secure private sector investment in inventory;
- Complete the five-year programme of 'Forester' development meeting both defined strategic business needs and end user requirements. Versions 3.3 and 3.4 to be released and implemented;
- Review and update Operational Guidance strategy;
- Deliver programme of 4 new and 7 revised booklets;
- We will deliver agreed data capture and data improvement programmes in accordance with requirements defined by each country.

Communications

Promoting forests' role in mitigating Climate Change and actions for adapting forests and woodlands to our changing climate will be our communications priorities for 2008-09. This will involve the creation of new publicity and information materials, a revised Forests and Climate Change web presence, and the arrangement and promotion of events.

Actions for 2008/09:

- We expect to play an active role in the preparations for, and delivery of, European Forest Week in October 2008;
- Further development work to strengthen the Commission's corporate identity and brand will also be undertaken.

Annex A

Source and Use of Funds

£m	2006-07 Outturn	2007-08 Budget	2008-09 Budget	2009-10 Indicative	2010-11 Indicative
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SOURCE OF FUNDS					
Parliamentary funding					
Revenue funding	16.40	18.20	15.00	15.00	15.00
Capital funding	1.30	1.50	2.00	2.00	2.00
GB Total Parliamentary funding	17.70	19.70	17.00	17.00	17.00

USE OF FUNDS					
Research and Development	11.70	11.60	11.40	11.40	11.40
GB Policy, Administration & Support	4.70	6.60	3.60	3.60	3.60
Capital Expenditure	1.30	1.50	2.00	2.00	2.00
GB Total Expenditure	17.70	19.70	17.00	17.00	17.00

The services on finance, human resource management, IT, forestry operations, external communications and internal audit are organised centrally but paid for by the countries. The cost of these services is included in the Corporate Plans for each country and Forest Research.

Figures for 2009/10 and 2010/11 are indicative only, pending confirmation of our Spending Review settlement for these years.

Meeting our customers' needs

Anyone with comments on this Plan, or suggestions for future Plans, is welcome to write to the address below.

You can get this document on tape, in large print and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies or to arrange for an officer to either telephone or meet with you to explain any area/(s) of the publication that you would like clarified.

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