

No.	Commitment	Regulatory Task Force Recommendation	Owner	Who	How	When	FC	Links
<b>Guiding Principles</b>								
1	Continue to promote the benefits of woods. The Natural Environment White Paper stated that we are aiming for a major increase in the area of woodland in England and for a much larger proportion of existing woodlands to be brought into active management.	1. In the light of the National Ecosystem Assessment, the Government should recognise and actively promote the value of woodlands and their contribution to society and the economy.	Defra with FC	Dom Driver	Report on all work in progress, likely to be extracted from FC England annual reporting and/or corporate planning. The report will use the FC's indicator framework and clarity on levels of ambition arising from Minister's response to the Independent Forestry Panel to set the context. Available May 2013 (aligned with the likely timing of publication of the 13/14 corporate plan).	May-13	NEt	
2	Consider ways to better enable landowners and land managers choose woodland creation and woodland management where it helps them realise opportunities while increasing public benefits.	2. The multiple benefits that well-managed forests and woodlands provide to society should be recognised by all government departments in policy development and implementation and this should be reflected in a presumption in favour of permission for creating, establishing, protecting and sustainably managing forests.	All/FC	Dom Driver	Report on all work in progress, likely to be extracted from FC England annual reporting and/or corporate planning. The report will use the FC's indicator framework and clarity on levels of ambition arising from Minister's response to the Independent Forestry Panel to set the context. Available May 2013 (aligned with the likely timing of publication of the 13/14 corporate plan).	May-13	NEt	
3	Further develop a more focussed and risk based approach, particularly in response to the concept of earned recognition. This approach will be based on the forestry sector's generally high level of compliance.	3. When enforcing regulations the Government should acknowledge that the Forestry Sector is compact and its members demonstrate high levels of compliance with regulations.	All/FC	Poppy Saunders Steve Hunt	Report outcome of work in progress 12/13. E.g. Use Felling License restock conditions as example of risk based approach to decision making	Mar-13	SFM	8
4	Continually update the available evidence to inform public policy	4. In light of the National Ecosystem Assessment, the Government should ensure that public policy is fully informed by ensuring that the economic value of forestry, the sector and it's goods and services is incorporated into the Impact Assessment and Post Implementation Review economic analysis mechanisms.	Defra with FC	Dom Driver	This will be covered by relevant statements in the Science and Innovation Strategy for British Forestry, which is being refreshed in 2012/13. The revised strategy is planned for publication in July 2013	Jul-13	NEt	
<b>Long Term Management plans</b>								
5	The Forestry Commission will work with others, including Natural England, to develop joint permissions within long term management plans, wherever possible.	5. Long-term management plans which meet the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard should be accepted by all government bodies as evidence of sustainable forest management and these long-term management plans should attract the benefit of approval for a range of forest operations for the duration of the management plan.	FC/NE	Poppy Saunders & Steve Hunt NE - Adele McGerk & Catherine Murray	Will need statement of progress on current joint licences & permissions work Joint felling licence/SSSI permission close. Question over feasibility of integrating permissions requiring operational detail in long term strategic management plans.	Mar-13	SFM	8
6	Promote the use of the UK Forestry Standard in dealing with other codes and regulations that relate to forest management.	7. Where long-term management plans are devised, approved and implemented, the Government should explicitly state that they meet the UK Forestry Standard and accept them as satisfying the requirements of, for example, the Woodland Carbon Code and EU Timber Regulations (2013).	FC	Joe Watts lead. (Jane Hull National Planning Policy Framework, see commitment 35. Ian Tubby procurement standards).	Report on all work in progress, likely to be extracted from FC England annual reporting and/or corporate planning.	May-13	NEt	35
7	The Forestry Commission will develop a series of UK Forestry Standard compliant management plan templates for a range of forest types.	6. In collaboration with a diverse range of Forestry Sector organisations, the Government should develop UK Forestry Standard compliant management plan templates for a range of forest types and scales including those designed for landscape scale use.	FC	Kevin May to lead. NE input required - via Rob Green	Working group to be established.	Mar-13	SFM	
<b>Earned Recognition</b>								
8	Develop a system of earned recognition as a high priority.	8. Working together with the private sector, the Government should develop, pilot and implement a system of earned recognition for the forestry sector which provides a clear framework for a reduced burden of regulation and inspection for woodland managers/owners based upon long-term forest management plans and an assessment of risk. The Task Force acknowledges that EU regulations may require random inspections for some grant schemes.	FC/NE	Andy Hall/Nigel Hobday lead. NE input required - via Rob Green	Working group required. Do we need a pilot? Query what if any FC/NE processes can be covered by same system? Pilot or live commence by Apr 13.	Apr-13	SFM	7
9	The Forestry Commission will incorporate risk assessments into existing practice and ensure that they take into account a broad range of evidence and consider this when developing a system of earned recognition.	9. When developing a system of earned recognition, risk assessments should take full account of a broad range of evidence including for example compliance with existing legislation and standards, reports of non-compliance, membership of professional bodies, training and Continuing Professional Development.	FC	Poppy Saunders	Report progress. Some current work re restocking risks.	Mar-13	SFM	3 8
<b>Woodland partnership</b>								
10	The Forestry Commission will further embed partnership working into its work with woodland owners and managers.	10. The Forestry Commission England should actively engage in a Woodland Partnership which has a clear remit to promote and communicate the benefits of sustainable forest management to a wider public audience and further to actively engage with the owners of under-managed woodlands and seek to attract owners into creating new woodland. This should be done in partnership with the private sector, landowners, non-government organisations and other government departments.	FC	Richard Britton	Further work pending Panel. Business Plans include Partnership projects, now fewer Partnerships but more relating to woodland management and creation. Need to demonstrate increase in quality, not volume. Report of progress.	Mar-13	FSD	15
11	The Forestry Commission will work with other Defra organisations to clarify and streamline processes where possible to ensure that customers' interaction with Government is as straightforward as possible.	13. A Woodland Partnership should harness collaboration across government departments, particularly those with an interest in the wider community, social, health, economic and energy benefits which woodlands provide. This collaboration should be led by Defra and its agencies such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission.	FC	Andy Hall - to Development & Change Group	Several aspects pursued by e-forms and website improvements. Report of progress.	Mar-13	SDT	5, 7, 14, 17, 19,

12	The Forestry Commission will look into developing an improved methodology to identify owners of unmanaged woodlands and to gain a better understanding of what would best enable them to manage their woodland.	14. The Forestry Commission should coordinate a survey that characterises and identifies the ownership of the unmanaged woodlands across England and seeks to determine the aspirations and objectives of the owners as an aid to policy formulation, grant product development and the allocation of resources.	FC	Alan Betts lead NE - Christine Reid	In hand via FCE contract with FR. Also Defra contract out to tender.	TBC, Alan to confirm.	NEt	
<b>More Effective regulation and Delivery by the Forestry Commission</b>								
13	The Forestry Commission will explore the feasibility of civil sanctions under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act.	16. The Forestry Commission should explore the feasibility of civil sanctions under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008.	FC	Poppy Saunders	Paper review	Mar-13	SFM	
14	The Forestry Commission will make changes to its website by July 2012.	17. The Forestry Commission should use its web site to ensure that it better promotes the benefits that accrue to society, in urban, peri-urban and rural areas, from sustainable woodland management. The website should be more widely used to promote the importance of silviculture and to ensure that all relevant forms and regulations are clearly 'signposted'.	FC	Andy Hall - to Development & Change Group	Navigation of Grant & Reg pages made pictorial Better link to climate change pages. Consider need for woodland owner/agent entry points - and add more technical material? Likely higher profile of direct.gov		SDT	
15	The Forestry Commission will refresh and streamline its partnership working to have greater impact and value for everyone involved.	18. Forestry Commission staff should work closely with colleagues in Forest Enterprise to promote joint partnerships at local and regional levels and to pump-prime local woodland management initiatives.	FC	Richard Britton			FSD	10
<b>Grants</b>								
16	The Forestry Commission will ensure that any forestry grant scheme is appropriate for the delivery of the next Rural Development Programme.	19. The Task Force recommends that the Government re-designs its Forestry grants to integrate with the long-term management plan approach outlined above and that new, simpler Forestry grants products are launched to coincide with the beginning of the next Rural Development Programme for England round in 2014.	FC	Andrew Smith	Working group linked to EWGS/HLS activity - land management grants with NE	Ongoing to 2014	SFM	
17	The Forestry Commission will ensure that the applicant experience is considered in taking forward the re-design of grant schemes.	20. The Task Force recommends that an end-to-end process review of grants is carried out which seeks to reduce customers' administrative burden and to simplify the complex application processes. This review must include representatives from across the private Forestry Sector, the Rural Payments Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission and be completed and operational by 2014.	FC	Andrew Smith	As 16	As 16	SFM	16
18	The Forestry Commission will consider whether eligibility to claim Woodland Management Grant should be dependent on certification when developing the grant scheme under the next Rural Development Programme for 2014.	21. The Government should secure transition arrangements, including funding, to provide grants for forestry during the period when a current Rural Development Regulation expires and a new Regulation is approved and implemented.	FC	Andrew Smith	As 16	As 16	SFM	16
19	The Forestry Commission will ensure all forestry related forms are made available electronically and will seek to introduce these from April 2012.	g) The Government should make all its Forestry related forms available electronically so that customers can electronically amend, save and submit template forms.	FC	Andy Goodsir	In hand	April 12 onwards	SDT	
<b>Felling Licences</b>								
20	The Forestry Commission will retain felling licences as a mechanism to manage woodlands outside of a long term management plan.	h) Felling Licences should be retained as a valued mechanism to manage woodlands outside of a long-term management plan.	FC	Steve Hunt	No further action. Note changes to application/monitoring to enable open habitat tracking.		SFM	
21	The Forestry Commission will establish a web based reporting method for illegal felling by March 2013.	j) Appropriate mechanisms should be developed to ensure that members of the public are able to monitor and comment upon potential illegal felling in their local area.	FC	Steve Hunt & Andy Goodsir	Must be tested with "Joe public" before deployment	Mar-13	SFM SDT	19
22	The Forestry Commission will supplement the web based illegal felling reporting method with information on telephone and email contacts for Forestry Commission Area Offices.	j) Appropriate mechanisms should be developed to ensure that members of the public are able to monitor and comment upon potential illegal felling in their local area.	FC	Jacky Morton & Steph Rhodes	Work in progress - ensure details are on new Area web pages - link to National Office Comms (Colin Morton)	Mar-13	SDT SFM	
<b>Mapping</b>								
23	The Forestry Commission will promote the availability of the free electronic Ordnance survey map.	26) The Government should work with the private sector to develop a simple, low-cost and effective solution designed to meet the mapping requirements of the owners of the mainly smaller woodlands found in England.	FC	Rob Pole & Simon Dunn	Procedure documents required that lists skills & understanding public will need to interpret the data. GPS & GI technical standards for Agents' kit also required		SDT M&G	7
<b>Biosecurity and resilience</b>								
24	Enhance capability by better co-ordinating our approach and increasing research spend through the Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity Action Plan	27) Given the emerging threat of pests and diseases the Government should retain adequate resources to protect England's existing woodland resource, ensuring it can respond rapidly to, contain and control threats to biosecurity.	Defra/Fera /FC	Roger Coppock FERA - Martin Ward			FC GB	
<b>UK Forestry Standard and Compliance</b>								
25	The Forestry Commission will produce a 'Quick Start Guide' for the UK Forestry Standard by 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2012.	31. In line with the Government's Code of Practice on Guidance on Regulation (2009), the Government should publish a 'Quick Start Guide' for the UK Forestry Standard. This 'Quick Start Guide' should be tailored to customers' needs, ensuring it provides a concise guide for practitioners and the owners of small woodlands.	FC	Richard Howe Joe Watts	Further assess whether draft is "quick" enough. Note interaction with commitment 35.	end April 2012	NEt	7 & 35
26	The Forestry Commission will work with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard partnership to identify scope for harmonisation between the UK Forestry Standard and UK Woodland Assurance Standard.	30. We urge all parties with a stake in the UK Forestry Standard and in the UK Woodland Assurance Standard to look at approaches that might harmonise the requirements of the two standards, looking particularly at the needs of smaller and less intensively managed woodlands.	FC	Richard Howe (Joe Watts)	Limited scope as both recently reviewed but we still need to see this being done - agenda item at appropriate UKWAS steering group	tbc - Joe to ask Richard Howe	NEt	7
27	Promote the UK Forestry Standard across Government as the consistent benchmark for sustainability in forestry.	32. We recommend that the UK Forestry Standard is the benchmark against which sustainable forest management is judged by the Government and should be used in the proposed approach to earned recognition through the production of long-term forest management plans and associated support mechanisms.	FC	Joe Watts lead. (Jane Hull NPPF, Ian Tubby procurement).	Same as reporting for commitment 6	Depends on NPPF and bioenergy strategy	NEt	6, 7
<b>Health and Safety at Work Act</b>								
28	The Health and Safety Executive have held a safety summit on 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2012.	33. That the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) works with the Forestry Sector to set up a 'safety summit' and to improve the sector's overall safety performance including an industry-led refresher training process for chainsaw operatives.	HSE	Brian Mahony FE & Andrew Smith for FS	Would FC Woodland officers benefit from safety awareness course - run by Safety Health & Environment (Eimily Ramsay)? Get Emily to talk to FSMB. Scope ability to make FC sign making tool available to public.		SFM FE	
<b>Gangmasters Licensing</b>								
29	As part of the Red Tape Challenge process, the Government will continue to look at what more the GLA needs to do to tackle non-compliant operators and any legal changes needed to support this.	35. In the short-term Forestry should be exempt from the cost and administrative burden of the requirement for licensing and inspection under the Gangmasters Licensing Act	Defra/BIS	Poppy Saunders to talk to IFOS			SFM	

30	The Government supports the GLA's Forestry Pilot which is applying a light touch approach to regulating the forestry sector and establishing "earned recognition".	35. In the short-term Forestry should be exempt from the cost and administrative burden of the requirement for licensing and inspection under the Gangmasters Licensing Act	Defra/BIS	Poppy Saunders to talk to IFOS			SFM	
<b>Wildlife regulations</b>								
31	The Forestry Commission will work with the forestry sector, species experts and Natural England to improve the current Forestry Commission guidance on managing woodland with protected species to underpin the UK Forestry Standard in England, ensuring that this work is consistent with any relevant decisions following Defra's Habitats Directive implementation Review	36. In light of comments received by the Task Force suggesting that the Habitats Regulations are deterring active woodland management, we recommend that more resources are devoted to establishing a sound evidence base for determining to what degree approved woodland management activities affect European Protected Species	FC/NE	Poppy Saunders/Jonathan Spencer GB - Sallie Baillie	As per recent telecon Is this a lack of perception of existing guidance? Does existing guidance need refreshing? Refresher training for agents/owners?		NEt SFM	
32	Continue to fund research on the effect of woodland management on European Protected Species	36. In light of comments received by the Task Force suggesting that the Habitats Regulations are deterring active woodland management, we recommend that more resources are devoted to establishing a sound evidence base for determining to what degree approved woodland management activities affect European Protected Species	NE/Defra	Sallie Baillie (GB) Jonathan Spencer / Poppy Saunders (for FS)			NEt SFM	
<b>Rural Land Register</b>								
33	The Rural Payments Agency will review the land registration process for forestry schemes under the Rural Development Programme for England.	38. The Rural Payments Agency should work with the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the private sector, to produce a simplified land registration process aimed specifically at the needs and timescales of the forestry sector.	RPA	FC link - Steve Hunt FC	FC needs to ensure solution is adequate. Will consider online GI tools reqd for applicants as part of woodland mgmt planning workgroup, no7.		SFM	7
<b>Planning - Local Authorities</b>								
34	The Department for Communities and Local Government will give careful consideration to consultation responses on the draft National Planning Policy Framework with regard to policy protection for ancient woodlands.	39. The new National Planning Policy Framework states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.	DCLG	FC link - Jane Hull	No further action - completed		NEt	
35	The Department for Communities and Local Government will consider what guidance will be appropriate to accompany the new National Planning Policy Framework.	I. The Government should reaffirm with planning authorities the biodiversity value of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodlands and Planted Ancient Woodland Sites.	DCLG with FC	Jane Hull (NE - Heather Rennie?)	Work with DCLG to determine nature of guidance that is appropriate. Current proposal is to focus on quick start guide to UKFS for planners. Note that the response sets this commitment mainly in the context of ancient woodland.	TBC, Dom to ask Jane	NEt	27
<b>Highways Act</b>								
36	The Forestry Commission will work with the forestry sector, via the Timber Transport forum, to continue to disseminate the guidance on resolving timber transport issues and support local discussions about this.	40. Forestry traffic is not considered to be extraordinary traffic, aligning forestry traffic with farming traffic.	FC	Crispin Thorn	Ongoing		FSD	
<b>European Union</b>								
37	When negotiating within the European Union, actively promote the multiple benefits actively managed forests can provide.	41. When negotiating within the EU, the Government actively promotes the multiple benefits and ecosystems services that accrue to society and the economy from actively managed woodlands.	Defra/FC	Frances Snaith (FC GB)/Mike Render (FCE)			FCGB SFM	
<b>Other commitments in body of text:</b>								
<b>Grants:</b>								
	Whilst the Government recognises the benefit of forest owners in long term plans being required to confirm their intention to claim replanting grant by a given trigger point in the year we believe this may cause increased bureaucracy for the Forestry Commission and woodland owners. This is because of the process that may be required to alert the many hundreds of owners with replanting grants and then communicating their responses each year. <b>However, this recommendation will be considered as part of the end to end process review of woodland grants. Similarly the thresholds for woodland which requires certification will be considered in this review.</b>	e) Owners in long-term plans are required to confirm their intention to claim replanting grant by a given trigger point in the year when felling work will be underway or commissioned ahead of replanting before year end. This will support the Forestry Commission by affording earlier clarity on market led activity, thus allowing greater flexibility in targeting grants.	FC	Andrew Smith	As per 16		SFM	16
		f) Eligibility to claim Woodland Management grant should not be dependent on certification.		Andrew Smith	As per 16		SFM	16
<b>Felling Licenses:</b>								
	We understand that making a Restocking Notice a burden or 'charge' for the 15 or so cases a year that cause concern would also mean making land charges of all conditional restocking licenses (which amount to around 2000 a year). Therefore we believe this would be unduly onerous on woodland owners and Forestry Commission administration under present guidance. <b>However, if an opportunity arises to further strengthen the case for restocking after illegal felling using a land based condition then we will consider it.</b>	25) Consideration should be given to whether a Restocking Notice could be a burden or 'charge' applicable to the parcel of land in addition to the landowner, akin to grant repayment obligations and Tree Preservation Order legislation.	FC	Steve Hunt	Watching brief on legislative change		SFM	
	The current legislation does not allow the Forestry Commission to insist on entry to a long term management plan hence cannot be used as a condition of re-stocking notices. Many owners do come into management plans as the result of first contact with Forestry Commission staff through application for a felling licence. However other owners, (typically with small infrequently worked woodland) feel that entry to a longer term scheme does not meet their needs or is not worth their while. <b>Should there be a need to revise the Forestry Act (1967), the Forestry Commission will look again at whether it can be used to bring more woodland into management through an effective plan.</b>	i) The requirement for a long-term management plan for the woodland should be used as a condition of restocking notices and any refusal to comply within a set time period should attract greater penalties.	FC	Steve Hunt	Watching brief on legislative change		SFM	