

Background to the Committee

The Forestry Commission's Expert Committee on Forest Science has been established for two years. The Committee provides independent, expert advice on the provision of science to support forestry in the UK, as set out in the Science and Innovation Strategy for British Forestry, and also on the quality of science provided by the Forestry Commission's research agency Forest Research and other providers.

Expert Committee on Forest Science - Terms of reference

1. To provide independent assurance, through undertaking peer review, on the robustness of the science proposed to address the research questions in the commissioned research programmes.
2. To review the quality of science provided by Forest Research and other external providers to ensure it is fit for purpose
3. To provide a perspective on the quality and applicability of applied research, particularly where it is not subject to formal external peer review.
4. To support Forest Research through the mentoring and development of its staff, by complementing the work being done by FR itself.
5. To give advice on opportunities for collaboration and new research programmes.
6. To provide an independent view to the Forestry Commission on forthcoming challenges, which may require a research focus in the future.

Forestry is devolved, so research priorities are determined by each country responding to its own policy agenda. This creates both challenges and opportunities for forestry research, particularly as the organisational structures are evolving. However, many of the issues facing forests are similar and can be best delivered through cross-border cooperation. The common evidence needs are brought together in the Science and Innovation Strategy for British Forestry.

Members of the Expert Committee on Forest Science have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the development of forest science in the UK. The Committee's work will focus on the research delivered under the direction of the new Science and Innovation Strategy for Forestry in Great Britain. Ensuring there is access to high quality, credible applied science is of prime importance at a time of unprecedented change and interest in forestry.

Members are appointed by the Chair and the Forestry Commission to provide a balance of skills and experience required to deliver the business of the Committee. This will ensure a balance of expertise while allowing members to express their opinions or question any aspects of committee business. We aim at all times to find the person who is most suited to the role and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds - men and women, people with disabilities, people of all ages, sexual orientations, ethnicities, religions and beliefs.

Membership

Professor Julian Evans OBE FICFor is the Chair of the Committee and the current membership is:

Professor Jaboury Ghazoul - Chair of Ecosystem Management at ETH Zurich

Professor Monique Simmonds - Deputy Keeper of the Jodrell Laboratory at Kew

Professor Andrew Watkinson - Director of Environmental Futures Ltd and a Professor in the Schools of Environmental Sciences and of Biology at the University of East Anglia

Mr. Peter Whitfield - Timber Operations Director at UPM Tilhill

Mr. Roger Coppock – Head of Analysts at the Forestry Commission

Professor Peter Freer-Smith – Chief Scientific Advisor to the Forestry Commission

Conditions of appointment

Appointments are made for up to 3 years. Members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Appointees are members in their own right and should not serve as representatives of stakeholder organisations. Members are unpaid but reasonable out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

There will be 2 meetings each year and members must be free to commit to attending and carrying out the necessary preparatory work. The next meeting is scheduled for 26th and 27th October 2015.