

Forestry culture, then is important in several senses:

- it is part of the cultural value, especially of the northern forests, which deserves to be developed and exploited, to encourage tourism, and for the benefit of locals and tourists
- it can help in promoting an understanding of current forestry practices
- it is part of the culture of forestry employees, which leads them to have a sense of heritage and pride in their work.

However, an 'empty-bucket' model of stakeholder 'education' belongs more to a colonial era; the flow of values in a participatory model would be more from the stakeholders to the managers than the other way around.

The staff of bodies like the Forestry Commission that are concerned with land management have their own culture based on their education and experience. Currently there is a strong culture of nature conservation that arose in the 1980s and 90s in response to the Rio Earth Summit and the ensuing processes (Biodiversity Action Plans, Habitat Action Plans), but there has been no parallel development of cultural conservation, and this is reflected in the relatively weak planning systems which are in place to conserve the meaning and history of landscape:

"Interviewer: So those landscapes might have an importance which is not being taken into account in the usual acquisition appraisal?

Could well be. People aren't aware of that, or it's not thought about because people feel that that landscape is already lost and is not an issue, yet if you ask local people those particular fields have still got particular names associated with them, the old Hafods, homesteads that are up in the hills, particularly Coed y Brenin, but Gwydyr as well. We've still got those remnant features in those now very forested landscapes." (FC employee, Wales).

The Forestry Commission is currently subjected to intense pressure on resources, and this makes it difficult for staff to take on new ideas, to operate outside what might be understood as 'core-business'. In many cases, for a government department like the FC, 'core-business' carries with it legal obligations, and these must be met before progress can be made with things that may be considered peripheral:

"We do our growing timber thing, and if local communities want to use the wood for different purposes, rec. and access or whatever, we're not against it, but it's very peripheral. Just to look at the Cyd Coed thing; that really helped communities make links with woodlands and there were quite a lot of projects that happened on the estate, but I think it's fair to say that it wasn't easy, because it's seen as a....it's had up until now a much lower status - it's not viewed as core business, our core business is growing timber, and so most of the operational stuff - we haven't really..... had patchy teams of people who deal with communities and 'cultural services' but they are usually project-based, so they are here for a bit and then

they've gone. The actual core operational teams have never actually had to deal with this. I've certainly never had any guidance in how to do it, so that's where we come in now, really is giving people some framework to work within, it's all been very patchy, and unsupported by the organisation. I am sure that is the case in England and Scotland as well." (FC employee, Wales)

These resource constraints naturally colour the view of managers, and this causes a schism between the mind-set needed to manage a large production-oriented forest like Kielder, and that required to manage a Community Forest like Chopwell or Thames Chase. Community Forests are effectively cost-centres, channelling public expenditure and improving the quality of life of local residents, while production forests are (hopefully) profit-centres trading in forest products and tourism. Of course, no forest falls exclusively into either of these categories, but community and peri-urban woods demand a non-commercial orientation to management:

"I mean that generally the community is seen (negatively), it's almost like (the Friends) are a (more of a) thorn in somebody's side, than an asset to the FC and to the woodland,

Interviewer: Could be lack of time resource?

And, because there is no real income – there's a bit of income from groups coming in and the classroom and things, it never sort of makes it onto any of the tables that get flashed up at the whole-of-district meetings. You are lucky if Chopwell is mentioned. The other sites are in terms of recreation, because they can say "we made this much money this year" Chopwell never gets any recognition. Whilst it is allowed to be what it is, ...it's value isn't recognised properly, and it's always ...it gets threatened quite a lot, in that "well, we might put ticket machines in yet, close the road down" there's always talk of "we could put a visitor centre in and make it into a profit centre" Ticket machines wouldn't last five minutes, the locals would have them away in seconds." (FC employee, n England)

This indicates a focus on outputs rather than outcomes. Similarly, in Wales, resource constraints seem to be militating against a more open attitude to engagement with local communities, despite the fact that it is often recognised that such engagement would deliver on core objectives and would save time 'fire-fighting' problems caused by local antipathy to forestry:

"the District is hard pressed in terms of what it has to do, statutory obligations, that there is no room for people to think really, that's our big problem, and ...social agenda isn't really understood by some of the key decision-makers in FC Wales. It is either very confusing and frightening, or else it's really not that important – that's one of the scary conclusions that I have come to. Ten percent of all of the Cyd Coed projects were on the Forest Estate, yet when I think back to the 8 years in Cyd Coed, the problems that we had in terms of delivering, the forest estate was one of the most problematic aspects of delivery, which is odd because Cyd Coed was an FC project, staffed by FC Wales staff, yet the delivery on the forest estate was very problematic.I think that was to do with the low importance placed on the social programme and also

lack of flexibility around governance and access. FC Wales is still very conservative at District level, and I can't see that changing." (FC employee, Wales)

It is arguable (and it is certainly argued by some members of its staff) that engagement with cultural issues, and the delivery of quality of life benefits, *are* part of the core business of the Forestry Commission, especially near centres of population. This is also in line with the published national strategies.

Consultation and Community Engagement

As already noted, the processes by which the Forestry Commission communicates with its stakeholders are central to the identification, articulation and enhancement of the cultural services that it provides. For this reason, a good deal of the discussion with interviewees concerned consultation and community engagement, and how these processes operate in different situations. The meaning of these terms is often coloured by discourses in literature from the social sciences, but for the purposes of this report, the following distinction is used: 'consultation' is a process through which consultees, who are often consulted because of a particular expertise (e.g. butterfly expert) or because they represent a particular community of interest or place (e.g. Parish Council) or both (e.g. County Archaeologist), are given information or plans to comment upon. This may result in the delivery of a written reaction or it may initiate a dialogue. 'Community Engagement' on the other hand is a process of dialogue with an identified community intended to achieve mutual understanding. It may be about the best way to deliver benefits to that community (proactive) or the best way to avoid damage (reactive).

Identity of stakeholders

A big contrast was revealed here between the normal business of a remote commercial forest (examples here were Kielder and Argyll) dominated by timber production and tourism, and peri-urban or community forests (like Thames Chase or Chopwell) dominated by local residents, in terms of the identity of stakeholders and therefore the appropriate level of community engagement.

"...we haven't translated into our grant scheme (there is a schizophrenia here) a huge grant scheme we slung out £4millions, all our seminars are attended by land owners 90% of whom are aristocratic, white middle-class, probably Norman. Most of our grants are easy-going and depend on having access to car-parks, and probably a knowledge of maps. Our cafes probably don't have the right food, there's no public transport, a lot of us feel that that is an almost unbridgeable gap. A single mother in a high-rise in Leeds whether she's British stock or Asian stock, isn't going to want to go to a woodland are they? They are going to want to go round the park or B&Q or something else, or just get out of the flat..." (FC employee, S. England)

The respondent here was speculating on the identity of the stakeholders, and highlighting that current FC grants seem to target a narrow section of potential visitors. In the Faith Woodland investigation (Tabbush, 2008), it was clear that once ethnic

minority populations realised that the woods were there and that they were allowed to access them, that they did want to visit. It is, however more difficult to reach local residents from lower income groups:

“It appears to be much harder for us for some reason, to engage with truly local communities. Because quite often for some reason, social reasons, I guess, they don’t have the same level of education, access to resources, they are maybe not as wealthy, their interests and focus is therefore having to be on surviving, looking after the family, getting work,...” (FC employee, N. Wales)

One of the keys to this is the identification of ‘Gatekeeper groups’ that can act as a focus for community outreach. In the case of the Faith Woodland this role was filled by the Interfaith Council, in the cases of Chopwell and Thames Chase there were active and highly effective Friends Groups.

“there is an established historic population and a very high percentage of people moving to this area, for all sorts of reasons, low crime; natural environment; clean air; good activities for outdoor sports; Mull for example 71% of the population (2,700) are now people that moved there relatively recently, spirals hugely in the summer when the tourists are there. That is certainly part of the dynamic of the area - large numbers of people move to retire here or come here for a lifestyle choice,

Interviewer: Those people would be equally excited by historic local culture, even though they aren’t local themselves?

Possibly more so. We actually often have a higher degree of interaction with people that have moved to the area than people that come from the area (unless they are landowners). Certainly a lot of the groups that we work with have a large number of people who have moved to the area because I guess they are often retired, enthusiastic and time on their hands.” (FC employee, W. Scotland)

Argyll would classify as more of a commercial forest area, with an historic (pre-forestry) population, a forestry population, and a more recent incoming ‘life-style’ population. The most recent influx is likely to demand a high level of interaction for the reasons stated, and it often seems that middle-class, retired, relatively affluent and well educated people tend to lead gatekeeper groups and demands for local ownership, while people from deprived backgrounds might be more difficult (though no less important) to reach. Sometimes groups have been formed of educated and articulate middle-class residents in response to some perceived threat:

“most of the people that I’m dealing with tend not to be what you might technically term as locals. They tend to be people who are - have a high level of competency, professional backgrounds, probably more moved into the area, not highly Welsh speaking - if they are Welsh-speaking it’s because they’ve learned, property in the area, they live near the woodlands, they may have some technical knowledge of forestry, or have somebody in the group who has got a professional bent towards forestry, and I think they have also

been borne out of (perceived) threats to woodlands. The stronger the group, it's on the basis that there has been a huge threat to the woodland, or a threat to their access or a threat to what the woodland looks like, they may consider the design plan to be a threat,community groups are borne out of that." (FC employee, Wales)

This was also the case for the Friends of Chopwell Wood, a group that was originally formed (in 1992) in response to the threat of privatisation.

The type of visitor using the remote Kielder Forest (c. 50k ha) contrasts with those using the much smaller but peri-urban Chopwell Wood (c. 900 ha):

"Interviewer: You are making this contrast between cultural involvement in Chopwell, which is quite high compared with its area, and then Kielder which is very large, has got a relatively low level of cultural activity because the population is forest industry based rather than treating it as recreation/access. Am I getting it right here?

I would put one rider on that, in terms of the proportion of the population that has a value to the forest, Kielder and the North Tyne is much higher than Chopwell. Chopwell might have more in number, but it is because it is in such an urban environment. There 500 people up the North Tyne Valley to hundreds of thousands within 5 miles of Chopwell" (FC employee, n. England)

"More people coming into the woodland here than into the wood at Kielder.....

Interviewer: They would be local people and out-and-out tourists?

Not really out-and-out tourists, we get people coming in out of Newcastle, and Gateshead, and sort of the wider area, as well as the smaller local population.....we have got quite mixed populations around,

Interviewer: So Kielder's would be a different type of visitor?

Kielder hasn't got the same population to draw on as Chopwell, and Hamsterley is almost in between the two, it draws on quite a big area, but the use there is quite seasonal, and it does get a lot of visitors there in the summer – people treat it almost like going to the beach, they park their cars in the car park, and they get out their wind-breaks and pitch up a little sun-tent and sit in the grassy car park for a day." (FC employee, N. England)..... We get people from Newcastle and Gateshead sometimes mountain bikers and walkers that would use Hamsterley or Kielder, if the weathers not so good, or they just have a couple of hours in the evening after work, then they come to Chopwell, because it is not a whole day; we don't tend to get many day-visitors, it is just people coming for a few hours" (FC employee, N. England)

It may be necessary to resolve conflicts between the interests of different groups of stakeholders, especially in situations with small woodlands and large populations:

"there are quite a lot of conflicts between some of the residents and public access. I am quite convinced that some of the people that live here would rather it was just a big private estate. It is a mixture of reasons, there's some people that live here that are from a forestry background, they are quite old, and don't like the ..they've seen the big change in use and don't understand it, don't see the point in it, it's for timber and trees and you know, all these people coming in, messing up the timber crops. There's some people that

seem to live in here because they want to be isolated, from the rest of society, and because Chopwell is quite a popular woodland they haven't really achieved that but they are still hanging on to the hope of it. There are others that live here that enjoy, that it is used by other people." (FC employee, N. England).

The established planning process tends to consult parish councils, rather than analyse and address the type of stakeholder diversity outlined above. The problem that arises from this is that the parish council members may not be representative of the various local communities, and some may even overbalance the proceedings as a result of individual and passionately held beliefs. For the Forestry Commission, a more nuanced stakeholder analysis would be a defence against this type of bias.

Cultural capital

The value that people are able to achieve from forest access is likely to depend on their education and experience, which in the literature review was referred to as 'cultural capital' evidence of this comes from an interviewee at Thames Chase:

"Interviewer: As a result of you being a volunteer, has it changed the way you look at things? The way you see the forest?

I don't think so. No, because I don't know enough about it I suppose. I don't walk a great deal, I have got out of the habit of doing that sort of thing, because when I first volunteered at Bedford Park, that's the Essex wildlife centre, I (injured my leg).....I got out of the habit of it. (Female volunteer, Thames Chase)

At Chopwell, investing in resources to make knowledge of the cultural history of the wood more available, also opened up opportunities for access:

"G: Really you need to get someone that's been here all their life to bring all this information together, and then put it out on general release, and get people involved in the forest in more the history side. (Comment: So an oral history would be a way of increasing the cultural value of the wood)

L: There is a history book (Liz Searle) a lottery heritage project, recently completed, part of that produced this map of heritage sites, (map is called "Heritage Sites in Chopwell Wood").

C: Liz is the one that knows most about the history.

G: Now that I've got time I can actually get it (the history book) and walk round the sites." (Group interview with Friends and volunteers at Chopwell).

Focusing on cultural capital might be a strategic tool for increasing the cultural value supplied by woodland. This could be done by identifying gaps in the array of institutionalised and objectified cultural capital (cultural assets and the things which make these accessible), and seeking to fill them.

Cultural Access

One aspect of (embodied) 'cultural capital' is 'cultural access' – meaning elements within people's culture that encourage them to gain access to woodlands. This was explained during an exchange with a respondent in Wales:

"Interviewer: (I) very much like the idea of information about what people are allowed to do, people regularly express confusion about this....we in the FC often think our woods are fully accessible, but it doesn't look at all that way from outside.

Cultural access is a really interesting thing, and I've tried to float the idea a couple of times ...

Interviewer: What do you understand by it?

Well, I've been to France and Italy, and people are aware that the woods are there, they are aware what they can do and what they can't do, their woods are part of the folklore, they are part of life, and they aren't in South Wales, for very few people they are, perhaps but for most people they are the backdrop to their lives, as opposed to being an integral part of their livesthe whole concept of ownershipyou don't get people saying "they belong to us, the people of Wales" – they say "FC own them" it isn't seen as part of their lives, part of their identity.They don't understand the process which is going on in the woods, on the website we've got things like 'why do you cut down all the trees at once?' It is about trying to give people some sort of access to those management ideas.

In other words, embodied cultural capital includes the values and norms held by people, and these values and norms contribute to a culture of access (cultural access) and to people's attitudes and beliefs about woodlands and their sense of identity.

In the community forest context, encouraging cultural access is seen as core business:

"Interviewer: So I guess all that is encouraging support, encouraging access?

Well yes, obviously an important part of the forest is giving people access to the green environment. If you are FC you will know the FC have an involvement here, they came to this area because of the starting of the Community Forest and we work in close partnership with (them) but of course we work with other

Departments as well making sure that every site that we work in and support has access for all

Interviewer: And you capitalise on the cultural interest to encourage this access....

Oh yes...we encourage wherever we can people to use the forest is as creative way as they possibly can, that goes from wood craft activities right the way through to the poetry activities, so children come to the site as schools or as local clubs and activities are run by our access officer according to their need and that includes the cultural side of their education"

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are firstly to elaborate on the cultural services which have been identified, and to suggest a typology that might be used in considering and planning for them in forestry; secondly to consider how they might be taken into account in planning including consultation and community engagement, and thirdly to make suggestions for further research.

Cultural Services

Forests are particularly rich in this respect, and yet cultural services seem rarely to be taken into account in operational forest planning. Forestry professionals readily recognised that forests produce or harbour cultural goods, but it was not always easy for them to express this as the vocabulary is not completely familiar, and the subject is sometimes not considered to be part of current forestry mainstream.

The idea of 'cultural services' is incorporated in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) (Anon., 2003a) and includes the following elements:

Cultural Services

Nonmaterial benefits obtained from ecosystems

Spiritual and religious	Aesthetic
Recreation and ecotourism	Inspirational
Educational	Sense of place
Cultural heritage	

It may be helpful to distinguish between sources of cultural value, such as local knowledges, archaeological remains, or attractive diversity, and types of cultural benefit received like health or social contact. A typology for use in the UK context is suggested below:

Table 1. Typology of Cultural Values

Typology of cultural values		
Cultural resources:		
Intrinsic to visitors/users	Intrinsic to site	Benefits
Cultural capital* (embodied):	Cultural capital (objectified):	Health and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social capital • Skills • Knowledge • Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological remains • Historic features • Woodland diversity • Wildlife • Signs of management history • Stories • Practices • Artworks 	Social contacts
		Personal pride: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical achievements • Personal knowledge
		Education
		Inspiration
		Spiritual well-being
		Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Local economic activity

*Institutionalised cultural capital – interpretative boards, leaflets, books, visitor centres, staff and so on – makes cultural services accessible to people, and is not included in this table.

Planning for Cultural Services

It would be too simple to suggest that community forests, and peri-urban forests plan for cultural services in a way that the more production orientated forests do not, but the contrast is stark. A major difference identified in this research concerns the identity of stakeholders. In the peri-urban situation, large numbers of people have an interest in small areas of woodland. These large numbers are, however, only a small percentage of the total population within the 'catchment' of the wood. Catchments are defined on the basis of the population distribution, the location of alternative woodland resources and the nature of the transport infrastructure. The interest of these stakeholders is in various types of recreational and cultural use. By contrast, in the more remote forested areas, relatively few local people, who represent a large proportion of the local population, have an interest in the wood, and this interest is more likely to concern their livelihoods, and hence to be related to industrial forestry. They may be joined (especially in the larger Forest areas like Kielder) by large seasonal influxes of day visitors and tourists, with an interest in sporting activities like large scale organised mountain biking or orienteering.

This difference in stakeholder identity results in a contrast in terms of the levels of consultation and community engagement which may be appropriate; in particular, it suggests that 'service provision' is a very different subject for consultation and community engagement compared with 'decision-making'.

Decision-making processes such as the Forest Design Plan process entail a mixture of formal consultation and dialogue with competent authorities, and more informal engagement with publics and interested parties. A similar process will be part of large scale decisions such as those demanding Environmental Impact Assessment, or Public Enquiries. Service provision, on the other hand, involves the everyday activities undertaken by FC community, recreation and education rangers as they lead walks, run events, and education visits in which they engage with local communities and as they encourage new groups to participate in forest activities. Through this process an understanding is gained of how people engage with and enjoy woodlands that can be utilised to change or improve delivery.

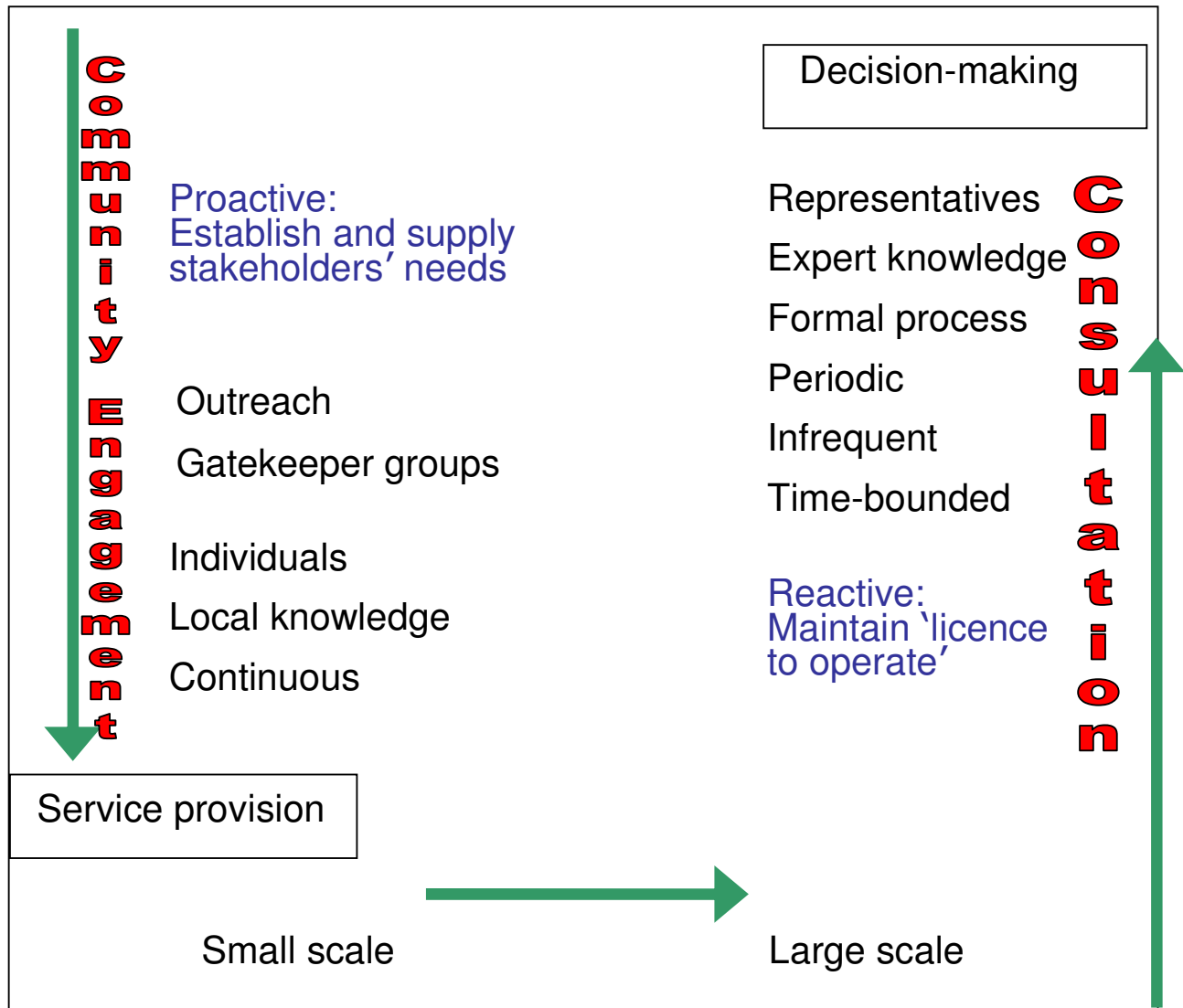
These ideas are summarised schematically in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 2. Forestry Commission Consultation and Community Engagement

Consultation and Community Engagement Activities	
<i>Stakeholder Analysis is a prerequisite for all these activities</i>	
Decision Making	Service Provision
Consulting competent authorities e.g. conservation; heritage agencies; local authorities	Community engagement to determine local needs (e.g. for access, volunteering, health referrals)
Engaging in dialogue with publics and interested parties.	Discussing local issues (e.g. excessive erosion caused by concentrated access, needs for improved infrastructure....)
Periodic e.g. revised every 10 years	Continuous – community engagement about issues as they arise
Enrolling local knowledge; local expertise is needed for effective decision-making	Outreach activities e.g. with local communities or schools
Using techniques ((Hislop, Twery et al., 2004) for participatory decision-making	Use of informal techniques to engage stakeholders
Large-scale big decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Impact Assessment • Impact Assessment 	Large-scale: Dealing with the needs of National organisations e.g. Ramblers, Mountain bikers, Car Rallies....

A difference in stakeholder identity results in a contrast in terms of the levels of consultation and community engagement which may be appropriate (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Schema showing the distinction between decision-making and service provision



The arrows in the figure indicate direction – there are no sharp distinctions between these processes. For instance, large scale negotiations about car rallies may take place with representatives at national level, but they still concern service provision rather than decision making.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings there are potential opportunities to incorporate/take account of cultural values in a more targeted/nuanced way:

1. FC policy should consider ecosystem services, and who has access to them – how are the cultural benefits deriving from the ecosystem services provided by trees, woods and forests distributed amongst different socio-economic groups?
2. Cultural services (see Table 1) are central to the delivery of SFM. Planning for cultural services should be proactive as well as reactive; the FC not only has to sustain its 'licence to operate' it is also concerned with the delivery of cultural services as part of its core business. This is implicit in the Forestry Commission's policy documents, and it needs to be rolled out with staff through normal communication and training at all levels.
3. In its community engagement, the FC should focus more on obtaining an understanding of the culture of its stakeholders, rather than trying to educate them to any particular point of view.
4. It may be helpful for the FC to distinguish between decision-making processes such as the FDP and impact assessments on the one hand, and the processes concerned with service-provision on the other when considering consultation and community engagement methods (see Table 2).
5. The concept of cultural capital (Table 1) provides a helpful way of planning for cultural services. For instance, identifying conserving and enhancing objectified and institutionalised cultural capital is a means to plan for the delivery of cultural services. Cultural access may be enhanced by adding to institutionalised cultural capital e.g. by providing improved literature and guidance or through community outreach programmes.
6. The cultural assets (objectified cultural capital) of a wood can be enhanced in a variety of ways, for instance through the installation of artworks, or by collecting oral histories.
7. Stakeholder analysis should be a pre-requisite for consultation and community engagement. Identification of who the stakeholders are and what type of stake they have in particular processes is a defence against the bias that can potentially occur when highly articulate or opinionated actors make their voices heard at the expense of others.
8. Where possible, 'gatekeeper groups' should be identified and encouraged as an efficient route for dialogue with particular communities.
9. Systems for analysing cultural services in use by other agencies might offer methods that could be adapted for use by the FC. Examples include 'Statements of Significance', 'Landscape Character Assessment' and its derivatives.

Future Research

Research is needed in relation to the three major issues raised by this study: 1. the cultural status of stakeholders 2. cultural assets of trees, woods and forests 3. how cultural values are taken into account in forest planning. Consultation and public engagement are the means by which managers gather information about cultural values and negotiate how these might be managed. Further research is needed to explore ways in which consultation and public engagement might be improved.

Stakeholders

1. Research is needed to find relevant measures of cultural capital in relation to users of woods, so as to develop an understanding of the ways in which cultural values can be enhanced and developed for the benefit of multiple publics. This is an aspect of the (more general) need to understand the spatial distribution and characteristics of visitors, so that managers can better plan for access provision.

Cultural Assets

2. A variety of methods is needed to identify and record cultural assets as part of SFM. Annotated lists might be sufficient for scheduled ancient monuments and other visible cultural remains, but other cultural meanings may only be understood through dialogue with those that hold them, and in the full knowledge that such values are constantly being re-negotiated. Improved methods are needed to identify, and take account of these meanings.

Forest Planning

3. Research is needed to investigate the potential use of planning tools such as 'statements of significance' or 'landscape character assessment', so as to guide forest planning in relation to the maintenance and enhancement of cultural services, the quality of life of local residents and visitors and the encouragement of tourism. This needs to be done in communication or partnership with other competent agencies.
4. The development of skills and methods for public engagement is still at an early stage in the FC. Research is required to identify new methods, clearly distinguishing between the need of *decision-making* on one hand and *service-provision* on the other. Although there are obvious overlaps, the nature of the dialogue clearly differs between these functions, and means need to be identified to ensure that managers have the skills and tools to operate effectively in both these areas.
5. In the field of decision-making, the use of participatory tools that can be used to help stakeholders to make trade-offs between cultural and other criteria should be researched, including multi-criteria analysis tools. The aim here is to combine reductionistic and quantitative methods with holistic and qualitative methods.

6. In the field of service provision, good practice in community engagement, including the identification of appropriate 'gatekeeper groups', needs to be established so that it can be more generally applied.

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