

The Scottish Forestry Strategy

2010-2013 Implementation Plan & 2009-2010 Progress Report

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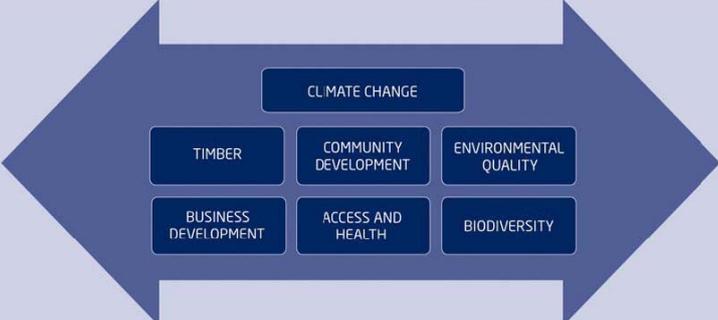
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Introduction

The *Scottish Forestry Strategy* was published in October 2006¹. Implementation of the Strategy is focused on delivering forestry benefits to Scotland against the three main outcomes to help achieve the Government's overarching purpose of sustainable economic growth. The progress report for 2009-2010 is based on these outcomes and their contribution to the Scottish Government's National Outcomes².

Recognising the crosscutting nature of forestry, the Strategy is organised around seven key themes. The 2010-2013 Implementation Plan lays out actions for the coming year for over 70 action partners, and directions for the following two years by theme. Theme reference groups have fed into this process. The five Regional Forestry Forums have defined additional local actions.

The Strategy outcomes and themes are shown in the schematic diagram below:

Our vision	<i>By the second half of this century, people are benefiting widely from Scotland's trees, woodlands and forests, actively engaging with and looking after them for the use and enjoyment of generations to come. The forestry resource has become a central part of our culture, economy and environment.</i>		
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable development – underpinned by sustainable forest management. • Social inclusion - through helping to provide opportunities for all, and helping to build stronger communities. • Forestry for and with people. • Integration with other land uses and businesses. 		
Outcomes	Improved health and well-being of people and their communities.	Competitive and innovative businesses contributing to the growth of the Scottish economy.	High quality, robust and adaptable environment.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist community participation. • Enhance opportunities for health and enjoyment. • Contribute to growth in learning and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a more efficient and competitive timber supply chain. • Facilitate the development of markets for forest products. • Facilitate rural business diversification and development. • Increase the contribution of forestry to tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to tackle climate change. • Contribute positively to soil, water and air quality. • Contribute to landscape quality. • Protect and promote the historic environment and cultural heritage. • Help to protect and enhance biodiversity.
Key themes			

¹ www.forestry.gov.uk/sfs

² see <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms>

Progress report for 2009-2010

Overview

The *Scottish Forestry Strategy* makes a commitment to the publication of implementation plans to guide delivery. This progress report summarises what FCS and the 2009-2010 action partners have delivered during the year against the three Strategy outcomes. More detail on progress is given in each of the theme and regional sections of the attached 2010-2013 Implementation Plan.

Of the 198 actions in the 2009-2010 Implementation Plan, 82% were achieved or are underway. Thirty two have been carried over into the 2010-2013 plan and three have been superseded.

Theme/region	Action achieved/ underway	Carried over into 2010-11	Action superseded
Climate change	13	5	0
Timber	11	6	0
Business development	19	2	1
Community Development	20	3	1
Access and health	20	1	0
Environmental quality	14	5	0
Biodiversity	10	3	0
South Scotland	11	0	1
Central Scotland	16	0	0
Perth and Argyll	11	2	0
Grampian	14	1	0
Highland	4	4	0
total	163	32	3

A set of progress indicators (see page 7) has been developed to help demonstrate what the sector is delivering, and focus effort and resources where it is most needed.

For those indicators updated annually, useful time-series data are now emerging. For example,

- the area of new planting is down – ways of addressing this are discussed in the section on Climate Change (key theme 1);
- installed capacity of wood energy plant is up;
- the number of community groups involved in owning or managing woodland is up;
- the proportion of the population with at least 2 hectares accessible woodland within 500 metres of their home is up;
- the index of woodland bird abundance is up.

Improved health and wellbeing of people and their communities

Improved health and wellbeing of people and their communities can contribute to the following National Outcomes: strong, resilient and supportive communities; improved life chances for children, young people and families at risk; tackling the significant inequalities in Scottish society; high quality public services that are responsive to local people's needs; longer, healthier lives; and young people who are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Urban woodland can make a significant contribution to the quality of life within Scotland's urban communities. The Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) programme continues to fund the improvement of these important elements of urban greenspace, as well as the activities necessary to encourage people to use and enjoy their local woodland.

The Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) is one of 14 national developments specified in the *National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2)*³. It is being led by FCS and SNH. The aim of this far-reaching initiative is to create a strategic network of woodlands and other habitats, active travel routes, green space links, watercourses and waterways. It was launched by the Minister for Environment, Roseanna Cunningham, in September and debated in the Scottish Parliament on 12 November⁴. The first meeting of the Partnership Board was held in March, following the selection of Keith Geddes as Chair. Until then, it was guided by an interim Steering Group, which developed – for consultation - a Prospectus, together with a Vision and Work. The Central Scotland Forest Trust provides the support unit.

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

This outcome can contribute to the National Outcomes for reducing the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production; realising our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people; being better educated, more skilled and more successful; and being renowned for our research and innovation.

Despite the continued weakness of the economy, the timber processing sector held up well during 2009/10, with continued investment in new capacity. There has also been significant capital investment in the biomass sector. The Strategic Timber Transport Fund is now wholly committed to March 2011 and during the coming year FCS will assess the likely future need for strategic timber transport funding.

Woodfuel demand has continued to rise, largely due to demand from larger scale plants. The Scottish Biomass Heat Scheme has provided valuable support to encourage small and medium sized businesses to install biomass boilers. As demand increases, fibre supply becomes more of an issue. The forthcoming Renewable Heat Incentive will provide an additional stimulus to the woodfuel heat market.

Forest tourism is becoming an increasingly well understood and valued part of the tourism industry. In addition to the continued attraction of forest recreation facilities, the Forest Heritage Scotland initiative (part of Homecoming 2009) proved to be very successful.

³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/07/02105627/0>

⁴ <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-09/sor1112-02.htm#Col21112>

Focus on skills and training continues, with FES using the modern apprenticeship framework to good effect and through use of the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) to address skills shortages through Forest Machine Operator training.

High quality, robust and adaptable environment

A high quality, robust and adaptable environment can contribute to National Outcomes relating to well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; living in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; and a built and natural environment that is protected and enhanced for future generations.

The development of a robust evidence base to guide forestry's role in tackling climate change moved on apace with the publication of the Read Report on *Combating Climate Change: A Role for UK Forests*⁵. Potential implications of climate change for Scotland's woods and forest were addressed in the Scottish Government's *Climate Change Delivery Plan* and *Climate Change Adaptation Framework*. The *Climate Change Delivery Plan*⁶ recognises the importance of the woodfuel resource in helping to meet renewable heat targets; it also set targets for woodland creation of 10,000-15,000 hectares per year, with the higher level being associated with the overall target of reducing green house gas emissions in 2020 by 42% compared with 1990 levels.

Soils have moved centre-stage and their fundamental economic and environmental importance was reflected in the publication of the *Scottish Soil Framework*. FCS's engagement with the associated Soil Focus Groups will help increase understanding and awareness of forestry's role in the sustainable management of this vital resource.

However, threats from pests and diseases remain firmly on the radar: Red band needle blight continues to cause significant mortality of Lodgepole pine; there is heightened concern about *Phytophthora ramorum* and *P. kernoviae* following serious outbreaks in south west England on Japanese larch; a breeding population of the potentially damaging Pine-tree Lappet (*Dendrolimus pinii*) was confirmed in the Inverness area; and the Great Spruce Bark Beetle (*Dendroctonus micans*) was discovered in Galloway.

The native woodlands survey of Scotland (NWSS) continued to make good progress with almost half the area surveyed and the first reports being published.

Interest in planting native woods is now increasing in response to enhanced SRDP Rural Development Contracts grant support. A woodland grazing toolkit and a new grant were developed to help those interested in using livestock grazing for conservation management.

Cross cutting developments

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires Scottish Ministers to lay a Land Use Strategy before the Scottish Parliament by 31 March 2011. This strategy will set out objectives, proposals and policies for sustainable land use, showing how they contribute to emissions reduction targets and climate change adaptation objectives as well as sustainable development. Along with

⁵ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7y4gn9>

⁶ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/EmissionsReductions>

other partners, FCS is closely engaged in developing this strategy, which represents a major opportunity to integrate different land use interests and challenges.

The Rural Development Contracts - Rural Priorities element of the SRDP is the main delivery mechanism for woodland creation and is administered in a partnership between the Scottish Government, FCS and SNH. Over the last year significant changes have been introduced within Rural Priorities as a result of stakeholder engagement and the recommendations of the Cook Report. These include increases in payments rates for woodland creation and improvements in the application process. There were three funding rounds for Rural Priorities in 2009 and most of the significant improvements were introduced between the August and November rounds. At more than 3,000 hectares, applications for woodland creation increased significantly in the November funding round. To increase the impetus for creating new woodlands, the financial threshold for the on-going application process was raised to £750,000 per case in February, for new woodland proposals within Rural Priorities. Proposals for the management of existing woodlands benefit from the ongoing approval up to a maximum case value of £250,000.

Reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will have important implications for forestry as the SRDP is a major element of the CAP and because of the impact of agricultural support on land availability. FCS has engaged with the Pack Review, set up by the Cabinet Secretary to make recommendations regarding the future shape of CAP in Scotland.

FCS has published *The National Forest Estate: Strategic Plan 2009-13*, setting out proposals for further implementation of the *Scottish Forestry Strategy* on the national forest estate.

Looking ahead, the United Nations has proclaimed 2011 as the International Year of Forests and Scotland will play its part in using this opportunity to increase public awareness of the key role of forests and sustainable forest management in building a greener, more equitable and sustainable future.

Progress indicators

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

Wherever feasible existing data sets were used, but some aspects of the Strategy required the development of new indicators. Of 62 indicators reported for the SFS strategy, reliable data have proved not to be available for three other proposed indicators; one is still to be finalised; and one is being refined in the light of data monitoring procedures associated with the new SRDP Rural Development Contract system. Details on the definition, interpretation and data source for each indicator are published separately⁷.

⁷ [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/sfsindicators.pdf/\\$FILE/sfsindicators.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/sfsindicators.pdf/$FILE/sfsindicators.pdf)

Climate change

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Area of new planting	FCS	2005/06 2006/07 2007/08 2008/09	3996 ha 6594 ha 4186 ha 3440 ha	1 year
Annual net carbon sequestration by new woodlands	FC	2006 2007 2008 2009	0.36 MtCO ₂ 0.40 MtCO ₂ 0.42 MtCO ₂ 0.43 Mt CO ₂	1 year
Installed capacity of wood energy plant (in megawatt thermal and electrical)	FCS	2006 2007 2008 2009	58 MW ^t 0 MW ^e 67 MW ^t 44 MW ^e 64 MW ^t 44 MW ^e 120 MW ^t 64 MW ^e (180 MW ^t 64 MW ^e including recycled material)	1 year
Number of non-domestic, wood fuelled energy systems installed	FCS	2006 2007 2008 2009	49 91 154 170	1 year
Area of short rotation coppice grant aided	FCS	2005/06 2006/07 2007/08 2008/09	34 ha 162 ha 487 ha 10 ha	1 year
Index of roundwood road miles	FR	2006 (provisional)	51 miles/t	5 years

Timber

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Actual wood production	FC	2005 2006 2007 2008	6.6 Mm ³ obs 6.7 Mm ³ obs 7.2 Mm ³ obs 6.5 Mm ³ obs	1 year
Forecast wood availability in the private sector	FC	2007-11	3.7 Mm ³ obs	5 years
Forecast wood availability from the national forest estate	FC	2007-11	3.2 Mm ³ obs	5 years
Timber's contribution to Scottish gross value-added	FC	2008	£460M (0.5%)	4 years
Sawmill log consumption		2005 2006 2007 2008	2.3 Mm ³ 2.4 Mm ³ 2.6 Mm ³ 2.4 Mm ³	1 year
Sawmill sawnwood output	FC	2005 2006 2007 2008	1.2 Mm ³ 1.3 Mm ³ 1.5 Mm ³ 1.3 Mm ³	1 year
Scottish wood's value share of the UK market	FC	2005 2006 2007 2008	4.2% 4.0% 5.0% 4.7%	1 year
Timber use in construction relative to other materials		Reliable data not available		
Area of new coniferous woodland	FCS	2005/06 2006/07	1011 ha 2000 ha	1 year

		2007/08 2008/09	744 ha 1168 ha	
Area of new broadleaved woodland where timber production is a significant management objective	FCS	2006 2007 2008 2009	84 ha 311 ha 272 ha 223 ha	1 year
Sales of improved nursery stock		2007 2008 2009	22.3M plants 22.0M plants 25.0M plants	1 year
Volume of certified timber from Scottish forests	FC	2005 2006 2007 2008	5.5 Mm ³ obs 5.5 Mm ³ obs 6.1 Mm ³ obs 5.3 Mm ³ obs	1 year

Business development

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Forestry's contribution to Scottish gross value-added	FC	2008	£669M	4 years
Employment supported by the forestry related sector	FC	2008	31,100 FTE	4 years
Uptake of Rural Development Contracts	FCS	2008 2009	to be refined	1 year
Proportion of statutory development plans recognising woodland benefits	FCS	2007	59%	5 year
Numbers of people enrolling or registering for forestry related short courses, qualifications and Modern Apprenticeship programmes	Lantra	2007	1,542	3 years
Numbers of people completing forestry related short courses, qualifications and Modern Apprenticeship programmes	Lantra	2007	1,070	3 years
Forestry's contribution to Scottish tourism gross value-added	FCS	2008	£209M	4 years

Community development

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Number of schools involved in woodland based learning activities	FCS	2007 2008 2009	569 461 375	1 year
Number of community groups involved in owning or managing woodland	CWA	2002 2007	51 138	3 years
Number of schools providing vocational courses that include forestry related skills	Lantra	2006/7 2007/8 2008/9 2009/10	4 13 38 46	1 year
Proportion of adults and/or family members who attended an organised learning activity or event linked with Scottish woodlands in the previous 12 months.	FC	2005 2007 2009	10% 15% 7%	2 years
Proportion of adults who have heard or read about Scottish woodlands in the previous 12 months.	FC	2005 2007 2009	26% 58% 44%	2 years
Number of land parcels sold or leased under the National Forest Land Scheme.	FCS	2006/7 2007/8 2008/9 2009/10	17 3 2 4	1 year
Area of land parcels sold or leased under the National Forest Land Scheme.	FCS	2006/7 2007/8 2008/9 2009/10	877 ha 7 ha 2 ha 134 ha	1 year

Independent satisfaction rating of community partnerships on the national forest estate. (Excludes non-response data; 2006 result adjusted accordingly)	CWA	2006 2009	82% 72%	3 years
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Access and health

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Proportion of the population with accessible woodland greater than 2 hectares within 500 metres of their home	WTS	2006 2009	23% 28%	3 years
Proportion of the population with accessible woodland greater than 20 hectares within 4 kilometres of their home	WTS	2006 2009	68% 83%	3 years
Proportion of adults (16 years +) who visited woodland in previous 12 months	FC	2005 2007 2009	50% 72% 57%	2 years
Number of visits to national forests	FCS	2007	8.7M	5 years
Number and length of Core Paths in woodlands	FCS	to be established in 2012		5 years
Proportion of visitors satisfied with woodland recreation provision	FC	2007	58%	4 years
Proportion of adults who used woodland, forest or tree covered park for exercise at least twice per week in the last four weeks	Scottish Health Survey	2009	10%	1 year
Number of 'volunteer days' associated with woodland activity	FCS	2007	47,444	5 years

Environmental quality

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Length/area of baseline rivers/lochs in forested catchments where ecological quality is of good or high status	SEPA	2008 2009	719 km rivers 16 km ² lochs 867 km rivers 15 km ² lochs	1 year
Length/area of baseline rivers/lochs affected by acidification where forestry is a significant exacerbating factor	SEPA		Reliable data not available	1 year
Number of forestry operations or activities leading to direct pollution of the water environment	SEPA		Reliable data not available	1 year
Proportion of woodlands covered by approved forest plans in areas designated for their landscapes	FCS	2006	57%	5 years
Proportion of woodland area managed under low impact silvicultural systems	FCS	2006 2007 2008	4.3% 5.2% 5.8%	1 year
Number of current management plans for scheduled monuments in forests on the National Forest Estate	FCS	2007 2008 2009	321 327 331	1 year
Number of monuments in forests protected under a current forest management plan or agreement	FCS	2007 2008 2009	13,679 14,026 15,286 (59% of all monuments in all woodlands)	1 year

Biodiversity

Indicator	Data source	Last assessed	Value	Reporting interval
Area of native woodland	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	392K ha 398K ha 399K ha 400K ha	1 year
Proportion of woodland SSSIs in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	SNH	1999-2005 2007 2008 2009	57% 61% 70% 70%	1 year from 2007
Progress against Habitat Action Plan targets for native woodland condition	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	3.3K ha 8.4K ha 10.7K ha 11.4K ha	1 year
Progress against Habitat Action Plan targets for native woodland restoration	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	0.4K ha 1.2K ha 2.1K ha 2.4K ha	1 year
Progress against Habitat Action Plan targets for native woodland expansion	FCS	2005/6 2006/7 2007/8 2008/9	4.3K ha 4.6K ha 7.0K ha 8.1K ha	1 year
Proportion of woodland related UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats identified as stable or increasing/ recovering or in favourable condition	SNH	2005 2008	74% 75%	3 years
Area of PAWS with a commitment to restoration under long-term plans	FCS	2007 2008 2009	34.5K ha 35.5K ha 35.5K ha	1 year
Area of woodland with active, approved deer management plans	FCS	2007 2008 2009	665K ha 732K ha 735K ha	1 year
Loss of ancient, semi-natural woodland to development		to be established from 2011		
Woodland Bird Index	BTO	2006 2007 2008	124 133 164	1 year
Woodland structure: mean deadwood volume	FR	1995-1999	4.4m ³ /ha	6 years from 2007
Woodland structure and composition: mean understorey shrub layer cover	FR	1995-1999	17%	6 years from 2007
Woodland structure and composition: mean no. tree and shrub species within stands	FR	1995-1999	2.2	6 years from 2007
Woodland structure and composition: old growth as a proportion of Scotland's woodland cover	FR	1995-1999	4.8%	6 years from 2007

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - KEY THEMES

Key theme 1: Climate change

Progress and priorities

The focus this year has been on delivering the FCS *Climate Change Action Plan's* early actions and developing forestry's preparedness for the changes ahead.

Awareness of forestry's role in helping to tackle climate change was enhanced significantly by the publication of the Read Report referred to above, and this will be consolidated once Forest Research's knowledge review of the carbon and greenhouse gas implications of forestry is completed. A model for comparing the greenhouse gas balance of different forestry options was also completed and is now being developed as a decision support tool. A rapidly emerging, generic issue is the need to develop a greater understanding of soil carbon dynamics and its impact on net greenhouse gas emissions.

The new *UK Climate Change Projections* (UKCP09) were published in June but their current lack of spatial simulation of windiness or potential evapotranspiration has created some difficulties in using the data to assess impacts on forests. Forest Research is seeking ways to overcome this so that a review of the 2008 synopsis on the impacts of climate change on forestry in Scotland can be completed in 2010/11.

Scotland's *Climate Change Adaptation Framework*⁸ includes summaries of adaptation measures in key sectors, including forestry. The need for such preparedness, including the need to provide resilient ecosystem services, was emphasised in responses to the consultation draft of the *UK Forestry Standard* (UKFS) *Forests and UKFS Forests and Climate Change*. Forest Research's assessment of evidence supporting the role of continuous cover systems highlighted opportunities to increase climate change resilience, a need underlined by continuing concerns about pests and diseases such as *Phytophthora ramorum*, *P. kernoviae* and Red band needle blight.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 gave Scottish Ministers powers to modify the functions of the Forestry Commissioners, where necessary or expedient in relation to climate change. The intention is to use these powers to allow the Commission to promote wind and hydro-power on the national forest estate, potentially through joint ventures as well as leases. All developments on the national forest estate will be subject to planning/consent procedures, where necessary including Environmental Impact Assessment.

While support measures for woodland creation under the SRDP were enhanced significantly during the year, alternative mechanisms will also be required if Scotland's ambitious woodland expansion ambitions are to be realised. Potential opportunities include removing barriers to well governed, forest-related carbon markets and exploring the potential for FCS to lease land from farmers as an alternative to land purchase.

Net woodland expansion will also be aided by reducing the loss of existing woodland. As forestry authority, FCS always presses for windfarm design that minimises woodland removal. Where woodland has to be removed, FCS expects compensatory planting, in accordance with the *Scottish Government's*

⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/adaptation/AdaptaitonFramework>

A draft *Code of Good Practice for Forest Carbon Projects*, which included proposals for associated quality assurance procedures, was also issued for consultation during the year. This Code will provide assurance to underpin transactions relating to forest-based carbon projects, so that they are sustainable, well designed and managed, and deliver the carbon benefits they claim.

The Regional Biomass Advice Network continues to raise awareness of woodfuel and is facilitating its mobilisation through the Scottish Biomass Heat Scheme. A research programme on energy forestry is also underway through a network of demonstration sites on the national forest estate. On a wider front, FCS is participating in the development of EU sustainability criteria for solid biomass and is helping to develop the UK Government's Renewable Heat Incentive. Future priorities are to improve estimates of woodfuel resources and to continue monitoring supply, usage and demand.

For this plan priorities are to develop the evidence base for forestry's wide role in tackling climate change; publish the *Code of Good Practice for Forest Carbon Projects*; develop understanding of factors affecting the resilience of 'future forests' to the anticipated effects of climate change; and consolidate the measures required to achieve the forestry sector's demanding carbon saving targets.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Increasing awareness of the forestry sector's contribution

- Based on UKCP09 scenarios, review guidance on the potential impacts of climate change on forestry in Scotland (FCS).
- Continue to raise awareness of the key roles of forestry in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and help embed them within the developing Land Use Strategy (FCS).
- Through the statutory Scottish Government *Report on Proposals and Policies*, identify forestry sector contributions to delivering Scotland's emissions reduction targets (FCS).
- Publish a carbon balance sheet tool for forest managers (FCS).
- Improve understanding of the contribution of roundwood haulage to the carbon footprint of the forestry and timber industries, including a simplified methodology for assessing roundwood timber miles (TTF).
- Help ensure the UK LULUCF carbon accounting and reporting rules adequately reflect the temporal contributions forests make to climate change mitigation (FC).

Adapting to climate change

- Publish the *UKFS Forests and Climate Change Guidelines* (FC).
- Develop interim guidance on 'future forests in a changing climate' (FCS).

- Develop guidance on the strategic and practical management of pest and disease threats in Scottish forests (FCS).
- Assess progress with the expansion and restoration of vulnerable woodland types (FCS).
- Review the capacity of research and field trials to evaluate the potential of alternative productive tree species and origins/provenances in Scotland's future climate and make recommendations accordingly (FCS).

Mitigating climate change

- Maintain progress with establishing and monitoring the energy forestry demonstration sites and aim to acquire a further site in the west of Scotland (FCS, FES).
- Implement forestry-related recommendations in the Renewable Heat Action Plan and the Renewable Energy Action Plan (FCS).
- Establish a business unit with responsibility for promoting development opportunities for wind and hydro power on the national forest estate (FCS, Forest Renewables, FES).
- Building on the Read Report, assess what further work is required to develop the full potential of timber products in low carbon construction (FCS).
- Seek to ensure that the contribution of trees to climate change mitigation is fully recognised during the CAP reform process (FCS, FC, SG).

Increasing carbon sequestration and retention

- Continue to explore new opportunities and mechanisms to achieve the required level and types of woodland creation (FCS).
- With a view to removing barriers to forest-related carbon markets, launch a *Code of Good Practice for Forest Carbon Projects* and associated quality assurance procedures (FC).
- Publish industry-wide guidance on minimising carbon losses in forest based civil engineering (FC).
- Enhance understanding of the greenhouse gas implications of forestry on peat soils in Scotland (FCS).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Increasing awareness of the forestry sector's contribution

- Review the FCS Climate Change Action Plan.
- With Regional Forestry Forums, review climate change actions at regional level.
- Assess trends in public awareness of forestry's role in helping to combat climate change.

Adapting to climate change

- Determine priority actions for the expansion and restoration of vulnerable woodland types.
- Assess progress with Forest Habitat Network development, including appropriate management, and woodland connectivity.
- Review fire preparedness and resilience, including research requirements.
- Support further research on, and promote the role of, trees and woodlands for urban climate control.
- Review the synergies and trade-offs between forestry-related adaptation and mitigation functions.

Mitigating climate change

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

Increasing carbon sequestration and retention

- Review progress on woodland expansion and, if necessary, further adjust delivery mechanisms to facilitate the creation of the desired level and types of woodland creation
- Monitor and review the development of short rotation coppice and short rotation forestry in Scotland.
- Promote, monitor and review the development of low impact silvicultural systems in Scotland.

Key theme 2: Timber

Progress and priorities

Despite the recession, trading has been better than expected - partly through displacement of imported timber due to the weak pound. Scotland's 1.3 million hectares of woodland and forest produced some 6.5 million cubic metres of softwood round timber in 2008. The harvest is forecast to exceed 8.9 million cubic metres by 2017. Currently over 70% is processed in Scotland. Supporting 13,200 jobs and generating £460 million in gross added value, the timber industry provides an important contribution to the Scottish economy and the delivery of the Scottish Government strategic objectives.

The Timber Development Programme (TDP) was launched in 2007⁹ and aims to contribute to the sustainable development of Scotland's economy by enabling the timber and processing sector to find the highest value and most appropriate end market for Scotland's timber. It has continued to deliver important information on the quality of Sitka spruce and other commercial softwoods. An industry working group was brought together to determine more accurate data from privately owned forests into the next production forecast. Outputs of recent research will enable an estimate of quality, as well as quantity, to be included in the next production forecast.

The second phase of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme commenced in April 2008 with a budget of £5 million per annum until March 2011 and revised guidance. Supported projects will facilitate the sustainable transport of over 12.6 million tonnes of timber over the next 10 years in rural Scotland benefiting local communities and the environment¹⁰.

A range of events and initiatives has been supported to encourage greater understanding and to explore areas that will encourage more use of timber. These include seminars at Scotland's Housing Expo on the outputs from the Strategic Integrated Research in Timber project and on the potential of cross laminated timber products. FCS also hosted a seminar on Growing Quality Broadleaves for Hardwood Timber and facilitated a meeting to explore the potential for improving availability of appropriate seed to achieve quality broad-leaved stands.

Woodfuel demand has continued to rise. In the financial year 2008-2009, demand reached 472,620 oven dried tonnes and is forecast to increase by 190,000 oven dried tonnes in 2009-2010. In addition to Caledonian Paper's CHP plant in Irvine, this year has also seen the commissioning of two further pellet mills: Balcas at Invergordon and Puffin Pellets in Aberdeenshire. A total of five pellet plants are forecast to be operating in 2009-10 with an estimated wood requirement of 130,000 oven dried tonnes. However, fibre supply is becoming an issue with potential demand from proposed biomass electricity generating plants in the UK significantly exceeding supply. Further studies to improve the accuracy of forecast volumes published by the Woodfuel Task Force are ongoing.

Building on the Read Report, work has started on scoping the further research required to identify the contribution that timber and timber products can make as low carbon construction material. This will form an increasingly significant part of the work programme in the coming years.

⁹ Annual Report published at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7BMMPR>

¹⁰ Update report published at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/sttf>

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Promoting predictable and stable timber supplies

- Improve the quality and accuracy of the private sector element of the next national production forecast (PSPFWG).
- Develop and implement a methodology for forecasting log quality in the production forecast (FR).
- Commission, and disseminate outputs of, a survey to determine the biomass resource available from arboricultural arisings in Scotland (FCS).
- Disseminate the outputs from the supply and demand update report produced for the forest industries by John Clegg Consulting Ltd (ConFor).
- Review progress on the Wood Fuel Taskforce Report and update assessment of likely supply taking account of further supply studies (FCS).
- Update woodfuel demand and usage figures to inform Scottish Government of contribution of biomass towards the 11% renewable heat target (FCS).

Encouraging more use of timber

- Support research into innovative uses of wood for high-end value markets (FC, FCS, SE).
- Produce and publish a guide to utilising timber cladding (CTE, HC, FCS, SE, SG, Industry, SGBSD).
- Produce a publication explaining the timber properties of Sitka spruce (CTE, FCS, SE).
- Review aims and objectives of the Timber Development Programme and produce a revised programme for 2011-2014 (TDP Steering Group).

Increasing timber supply chain efficiency

- Organise and disseminate outputs of a conference addressing key issues in timber transport (TTF).
- Produce a summary of the outputs of the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (FCS and TTF).
- In conjunction with the Timber Transport Forum, consider the requirements for future funding for key strategic timber transport projects in Scotland. (FCS, TTF).
- Support a Timber Transport Project Officer post to lead on timber transport development work (TTF, FCS, SE, ConFor).

Developing the hardwood and premium softwood sector

- Develop guidance on managing small woodlands for growing quality timber (FR).

- Organise and support events to improve understanding of best practice in growing and marketing quality hardwoods (ASHS, FR, FCS).
- Establish demonstration plots on managing hardwoods for quality timber production (FES).
- Develop and publish a niche marketing strategy to improve the awareness of the availability of niche market timber on the national forest estate (FES).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Promoting predictable and stable timber supplies

- Produce a production forecast highlighting quality as well as quantity for conifer production.
- Produce improved inventory data, to improve production forecast for broadleaves and biomass from hardwood stands.
- Work with others to review comparative carbon capture and retention under different silvicultural systems.

Encouraging more use of timber

- Continue to work with others to produce comprehensive data on the carbon value of timber products in a low carbon economy.
- Explore specific opportunities for increased use of home grown timber and timber products.
- Continue to support research into innovative uses of wood for high-end value markets.
- Ensure research outputs are disseminated timeously and to the appropriate audience.
- Support initiatives to raise awareness of the properties of timber from Scottish forests.

Increasing timber supply chain efficiency

- In conjunction with others, develop a strategy for efficient and effective timber transport involving non-road network elements from remote areas of Scotland.
- Identify and support opportunities to enhance skills in the timber supply chain.
- Evaluate logistics optimisation systems in forestry and seek to extend the use within Scotland of any successful models.

Developing the hardwood and premium softwood sector

- Undertake local initiatives to engage owners of under-managed farm woods and those in areas most suitable for expansion of productive woodlands.

- Ensure grant incentives promote best silvicultural practice for growing quality broadleaves.
- Continue to work with industry to improve the supply relationships between growers and softwood and hardwood timber processors.

Key theme 3: Business development

Progress and priorities

The Forest Industries Advisory Board has an increasingly important role in guiding the industries' strategic direction.

There have been significant developments in bringing forward increased capacity and consolidation in the sawmilling sector.

The Scottish Biomass Heat Scheme has proved popular with small-medium sized businesses with £2.4 million committed over 30 projects. The Renewable Heat Incentive, forthcoming in 2011, will provide a further stimulus to the local woodfuel heat market.

2009 saw a successful conference on non-timber forest products and the launch of the Scottish Wild Harvest Association.

FCS has announced plans¹¹ to take forward the opportunities for developing the wind and hydro-power potential of the national forest estate and is in the process of identifying potential development partners. FCS has also entered into an agreement with *Partnership for Renewables* (a subsidiary of the Carbon Trust) with respect to opportunities in the Scottish Borders and the Scottish Lowlands Forest District.

The Minister for Environment, Roseanna Cunningham, officially opened Forest Holiday's new £2.1 million cabin site at Loch Long, Ardgartan in October 2009; this represents the latest phase of Forest Holidays' £8.5 million investment programme in Scotland.

The mountain bike centres on the national forest estate continue to be very popular. Enabling works have been completed at Glentress Peel, in Peeblesshire, to allow construction work on a new centre to take place in the coming year. Scotland's first mountain bike strategy covering all aspects of the sport from economics to health was launched in February 2010.

FCS's Forest Heritage Scotland initiative, part of the Year of Homecoming 2009 was delivered in partnership with the RCAHMS. This wide-ranging multi-media project showcased number of archaeological and historical sites on the national forest estate, with a view to encouraging forest-related tourism.

FCS produced a Skills and Careers Action Plan and worked with Lantra in furthering skills promotion, with an emphasis on apprenticeships. Lantra are currently reviewing the Trees and Timber Scottish Modern Apprenticeship and developing a 'one stop shop' training website and on-line competency framework. FCS and FIAB have organised two workshops to consider the wider skills needs of the industry with a view to taking forward work in the coming year. FCS employs 30 apprentices through the modern apprenticeship scheme on the national forest estate. UKFPA was successful in obtaining funding through the SRDP to deliver Forest Machine Operator training for 12 trainees at the Barony College.

¹¹ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-6b2jgg>

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Realising economic potential

- Promote SRDP Rural Development Contract business development grants to the forestry sector through a series of regional workshops (SFIC, FCS).
- Co-ordinate a biomass marketing programme through the Regional Biomass Advice Network project, focussed on key sectors for biomass uptake, to improve accessibility, consistency and reliability of information about the sector and its supply streams (FCS).
- Contribute to the work of the Forest Industries Advisory Board to promote innovation, collaboration and competitiveness in sector development (FCS, ConFor, SE, HIE).
- Host a joint conference with ConFor on forestry in the low carbon economy (FCS, ConFor).
- Ensure high levels of awareness of the opportunities for woodfuel through the forthcoming Renewable Heat Incentive (FCS).
- Take forward an assessment of the likely impact of the Renewable Heat Incentive and other incentives on fibre supply and price (ConFor, FCS).

Contributing to rural development

- Publish an Energy Forestry Handbook and Practice Guide (FCS).
- Promote the potential of Short Rotation Forestry to deliver commercial opportunities and increased woodfuel supply to land managers particularly farmers; and energy companies (FCS).
- Publish guidance on short rotation forestry to support the *UK Forestry Standard*, including guidance on landscape and biodiversity issues (FCS).
- Through the Regional Biomass Advice Network project co-ordinate biomass marketing programme to improve accessibility, consistency and reliability of information about the sector and its supply streams and to identify key sectors (FCS).
- Support the development of woodland crofts providing advice and guidance to interested community organisations (FCS).

Tourism

- Continue the development of knowledge exchange and regional business development packs for forest tourism (Perthshire and Argyll) (FCS, SE, VS).
- Evaluate FCS's Forest Heritage Scotland initiative (part of Homecoming 2009) (FES).
- Carry out a feasibility study into the further economic development opportunities at Leanachan and Glentress forests and consider next steps (FES).

Skills

- With the forest industry, skills sector and Scottish Government identify what needs to be done (and who will lead) to deliver a workforce for the 21st century given the known constraints and opportunities (FCS).
- Assess the role for modern apprenticeships in the private sector and disseminate the experience of FES (FES, FCS).
- Review the experience of the Machine Operator Short Skills Course and how machine operator training can be taken forward (UKFPA, FCS).
- Engage with higher and further education providers to help ensure that the forestry content of courses as relevant as possible to modern forestry (FCS).
- Deliver a pilot career event with FEI and other partners, for young women (FEI, Edinburgh Napier University, FCS).
- Run four regional career workshops for career advisors and FEI Cluster groups (FEI, FCS, SDS).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Realising economic potential

- Continue to build on the opportunities for forestry in sustainable development through both low carbon construction and sustainable use of woodfuel.
- Further develop our understanding of how the impacts of climate change will affect the economic potential of the forest industries.

Contributing to rural development

- Review the impact of the Regional Biomass Advice Network EU project and identify further work required to stimulate the woodfuel market.
- Review the impact of the Renewable Heat Incentive in promoting local woodfuel supply.

Tourism

- Working with others, consider the opportunities for further work around knowledge exchange in the forest tourism sector.
- Ensure forests contribute fully to the quality and breadth of Scotland's growing eco-tourism sector.

Skills

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

Key theme 4: Community development

Progress and priorities

In order to strengthen the evidence base for the WIAT programme, a review of the role of urban woodland in contributing to economic development has been completed. There has also been a survey of WIAT woodland owners and managers, which has identified key issues, such as training and skills development support. This work will form a useful precursor to development of phase three of WIAT (WIAT III), from 2011/2012 onwards. In addition, a revised monitoring and evaluation framework will be piloted on a number of case study sites to feed into the future programme.

To help local authorities and other organisations optimise the full public benefits from their woodlands in and around towns, FCS has developed and delivered an innovative two-day course in urban woodland design¹². With an emphasis on how design can contribute towards the development of woodland proposals that optimise the experience for people, the course demonstrates techniques for engaging local communities in the design process and helping to resolve anti-social behaviour. The course is aimed at local authorities and other organisations with responsibility for woodlands intended for active use by local communities.

Recognising the importance of mainstreaming diversity and equality, FCS produced a Diversity & Equality Action Plan, convened a Diversity Reference Group and undertook a programme of staff training. A Diversity Engagement Officer was recruited for Central Conservancy and began work on an Engagement Strategy.

The FCS education strategy *Woods for Learning* was substantially updated and revised to set out the direction and development of education related work for 2010 - 2013, dovetailing with such strategic Scottish Government initiatives as *Curriculum for Excellence*, *The Early Years Framework* and *Skills for Scotland*. The Minister for Environment, Roseanna Cunningham, launched this strategy at Easterhouse, Glasgow, along with a report on Forest Kindergartens. *Woods for Learning* and its Action Plan provide a cornerstone for FCS to develop lifelong learning programmes, especially through linkages with recreation, health and education professionals.

FCS produced a new framework *Working with communities: our commitment*. This is being actively promoted to ensure that local communities are aware of the range of potential opportunities available for them to get involved in forestry. The National Forest Land Scheme continues to provide opportunities for communities to acquire land to meet their local development aspirations. During the year, Scottish Ministers introduced an amendment to the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Bill to allow the Commission to extend the National Forest Land Scheme to include the leasing of woodlands to community bodies.

A Woodland Croft project officer is working with interested groups to establish woodland crofts.

FEI outputs included a *Careers in Forestry Toolkit*¹³ and a national networking event that attracted well over 100 attendees. An *Outdoor Learning web resource* for teachers was developed in partnership with Learning Teaching Scotland. Several information leaflets were produced showcasing FCS work

¹² course materials available at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/uwdcmaterials>

¹³ published on the Tree Trunk website <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/HCOU-4X2JUP>

with Forest School; these included material on the health benefits for young people of physical activity, woodland mountain biking as part of core physical education, and natural play in school grounds.

During the coming year, a key priority in central Scotland will be development of the Central Scotland Green Network, where it will be important to build an effective partnership between the wide range of delivery bodies. Another priority will be to extend the National Forest Land Scheme to include leasing.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

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

- Develop and launch a national network of key WIAT sites (FCS).
- Publish a progress report on the first 5 years of WIAT (FCS).
- Explore the potential role of WIAT in supporting the delivery of the Scottish Government climate change and economic regeneration priorities (FCS).

Enhance forestry's engagement with communities

- Continue to support the development of the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN), its inclusion as a key theme within relevant development plans, and the delivery of the CSGN work plan (FCS, SNH, CSGN Support Unit).
- Continue to promote the menu of opportunities for communities to get involved with activities on the national forest estate (FES).
- Ensure that the wind and hydro power of the national forest estate is promoted in ways that secure community benefits (FCS, Forest Renewables, FES).
- Respond to the recommendations in the review of community forestry support mechanisms (FCS).
- Identify and disseminate key lessons on community engagement in WIAT woods to support the Scottish Government Community Empowerment Action Plan (FCS, FES).
- Support the development and training of the Community, Recreation and Tourism leads in each Forest District (FES).
- Continue to disseminate guidance on forestry to the planning sector (FCS, SGDBE).
- Support local authorities in the development of new forestry and woodland strategies linked to development plans (FCS).
- Contribute to the review and development of single outcome agreements to ensure that forestry and woodland priorities are reflected in them (FCS).

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

- Once legal cover has been established, incorporate the leasing of national forest estate woodlands to communities into the National Forest Land Scheme (FCS).

Develop forestry's role in education and lifelong learning

- Support Woods for Learning through CPD provision and resources for teachers and others (FCS).
- Explore potential opportunities for parents/carers to work with nurseries and schools to help support forest kindergarten and Forest School (FCS, FEI).
- Deliver 2 FEI networking events (FCS, FEI).
- Promote Woods for Learning messages to key target audiences, including education and health professionals (FCS).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

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

- Deliver WIAT targets and activities in line with Government priorities.
- Publish and launch the programme document for the third phase of WIAT (2011-2014).
- Host, with partners, the 2011 European Forum on Urban Forestry Conference.

Enhance forestry's engagement with communities

- Continue to support the development of the Central Scotland Green Network and embed support for CSGN priorities within FCS and other Government policies and programmes.
- Continue to provide a menu of opportunities for local communities to benefit from their woodland.

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

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

Develop forestry's role in education and lifelong learning

- Continue to promote forestry through FEI and implementation of *Woods for Learning* Action Plan.

Key theme 5: Access and health

Progress and priorities

The FCS *Woods for Health* strategy was substantially updated and revised to set out the direction and development of our woodland-related health work for 2009-2011, complementing the Scottish Government's implementation plan *Good Places, Better Health*. The Minister for Environment, Roseanna Cunningham, launched this strategy at the Royal Highland Show. FCS is taking forward the associated Action Plan in liaison with stakeholders, including the Green Exercise Partnership – a task force comprising key FCS, SNH and NHS Health Scotland staff. In August FCS gave a presentation on *Woods for Health* and the work of the Green Exercise Partnership at an annual review meeting of NHS Health Scotland, attended by the Minister for Public Health and Sport, Shona Robinson, and the Director of NHS Scotland, Dr Kevin Woods. The Green Exercise Partnership has produced publicity material to promote key messages for health and the outdoors.

Staff have been proactive in presenting *Woods for Health* messages at several other NHS-related conferences, including the Physical Activity Health Alliance conference, the Association of Community Health Partnership Annual Conference and the Health Promoting Health Service conference.

Under a 'health promoting hospitals' initiative, Ninewells in Dundee, New Craig's in Inverness and Lawson Memorial in Golspie have been selected for greening of the NHS Estate, showcasing the use of hospital grounds for recuperative health benefits to patients and preventative benefits for staff and visitors. FCS has led stakeholder groups to produce plans and proposals that will start to be delivered next year.

FCS played a key role in ensuring the development of an exemplar natural play area for active outdoor learning at Glasgow Merrylee Primary School and this is now being promoted and taken up by other schools in Scotland.

Branching Out continues as an innovative development for adults who use mental health services within Greater Glasgow and Clyde. For each client, the service consists of approximately three hours of activities per week in a woodland setting over a 12 week period. Activities include health walks and tai chi, conservation work, bushcraft and environmental art. During the year, 'Branching Out' won the UK Public Health Association, Humanity and Environment Award.

A *Better Woodland Walk toolkit* was developed for use on the national forest estate and piloted with FCS woodland managers. Six long-term urban woodland case study sites have been identified on the national forest estate to act a focus for the development of our approach to monitoring and evaluation of woodland's contribution to people's health and well-being. In addition, several short promotional DVDs were produced in the year, highlighting the benefits of woodlands in term of community, education and health.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

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

- Implement the *Woods for Health* action plan with an increased focus on delivering health equalities and promoting positive mental health & wellbeing (FCS).

- Promote woods for health messages at key target audiences including health, and education professionals (FCS).
- Extend evaluation of social forestry initiatives in healthcare settings including woodland in hospital grounds (FCS, NHS, SNH).
- Support the Active Nation a games legacy for Scotland, public engagement programme (FCS, NHS, SNH).
- Develop, implement and monitor a 'forest for health' partnership program (FES).

Make access to woodlands easier for all sectors of society

- Complete Forest for People: Access, recreation and tourism on the national forest estate implementation plan (FES).
- Use the F4P and WIAT opportunities in SRDP to increase woodland access opportunities (FCS).
- Present *Woods for Health* messages at national and regional health conferences and a series of sharing good practice seminars (FCS, NHS, SNH).
- Complete active travel to school by green corridors study with Sustrans Scotland and disseminate findings (FCS, Sustrans).
- Deliver accessibility survey and geo-tagged phototrails, which detail accessible routes for people with a range of disabilities in Central Scotland and publish information on the FCS website (FCS, Fieldfare Trust).
- Road test the 'better woodland walks' toolkit to assess the woodland walking experience in woodland in and around towns (FCS, FES).
- Extend the core path database coverage with local authorities (FES).
- Follow up the health and safety audit of the management of recreation facilities on the national forest estate and implement recommendations for improvement (FES).

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

- Prioritise key health actions in delivery of Forest District Strategic Plans (FCS, FES).
- Connect with and empower health boards to adopt the *Branching Out* service for patient's using mental health services (FCS, NHS).
- Publish health case studies (FCS).
- Disseminate findings from the natural play study in Merrylee primary school to education and health professionals (FCS, GCC).
- Work with Healthy Working Lives award scheme to increase the number of woodland health walks available in workplaces (FCS, HWLAS).
- Extend the national program of woodland health walks with Paths to Health (FCS, Paths to Health).

- Support volunteering activity in woodlands (FES).

Provide a greater range of ways for people to enjoy woodlands

- Extend research into the preferences of equality and diversity groups in relation to accessing woodland services (FCS, SERG).
- Produce an equality and diversity strategic framework (FCS).

An outline programme for 2011-13

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

- Continue to focus on promoting health equalities and increasing the number of adults and children making regular visits to woodland and the outdoors.
- Increase the number of Health Board's in Scotland engaged in partnership work with FCS.
- Develop best practice examples for green healthcare and green prescription.
- Deliver national seminars on 'Developing NHS greenspace' and 'promoting green prescription' in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage.
- Disseminate findings from hospital greenspace study.
- Extend national program of woodland health walks.

Make access to woodlands easier for all sectors of society

- Engage more first time visitors from equality and diversity groups.
- Develop a database of woodland trails, which are accessible for people with a range of disabilities.
- Increase the number of health walks being delivered on the national forest estate.
- Increase volunteering activity in woodlands.
- Develop the FCS website to promote recreation opportunities in woodland.

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

- Publish reports on interim progress of the *Woods for Health* Action Plan.
- Encourage GP referral schemes to offer green exercise choices in outdoor settings for clients and service users.
- Develop NHS greenspace health and wellbeing projects in partnership with Health Board's and Community Health Partnerships.

- Promote walking on the national forest estate for all sectors of society.

Provide a greater range of ways for people to enjoy woodlands

- Extend accessibility surveys and phototrail work across Forest Districts.
- Support local authorities on the designation of core paths
- Support the development of natural play areas in woodland.
- Support the Active Nation 2014 campaign including physical activity and sport participation events in outdoor settings.

Key theme 6: Environmental quality

Progress and priorities

The new draft *UK Forestry Standard* (UKFS) and associated suite of UKFS Guidelines were all subject to full public consultation on the FC web-site during the year.

There was also separate consultation on proposed revisions to the *Forests and Water Guidelines*. The contribution that forestry can make to help achieve the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive have been articulated as positive actions in the two River Basin Management Plans now published by SEPA. FCS is now focusing effort on helping SEPA to deliver the Plans' forestry related actions. FCS is also closely involved with the implementation of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009, particularly in relation to the role of woodlands in natural flood management. Future preparedness was further consolidated by FCS's publication of an Interim Scottish Windblow Contingency Plan.

FCS has engaged with the newly formed Soils Focus Group to assist with the implementation of the Scottish Soils Framework. Scottish Government has led the development of a research strategy on natural techniques to help lower flood risk and to support the implementation of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

FES has developed a project to provide a risk based hazard assessment of the probable nature and extent of landslides on the national forest estate. This work will focus on those landslides that - if and when they occur - could potentially cause major disruption to infrastructure and services, including key forestry operations and timber haulage.

Building on the FCS Policy Statement *Scotland's Woodlands and the Historic Environment* three complementary pieces of guidance have been delivered this year. These are *Historic Environment Information & Advice for Forest and Woodland Managers in Scotland*; *Exploring the Historic Environment in Scotland's Woodlands and Forests* - a Practice Guide to encourage managers to investigate, identify and record archaeological sites and historic features; and *Management of ancient wood pasture* - intended to help applicants to the SRDP deliver the Management of Ancient Wood Pasture Rural Priority.

FES and Historic Scotland have also revised *The Management of Scheduled Monuments on the National Forest Estate: A memorandum of understanding between Forestry Commission Scotland and Historic Scotland*. This sets out the policy and operational framework within which the Monument Management Plan programme is operated. It also clarifies categories of conservation work and creates a national monument management template for FCS use.

Priorities for this implementation plan period include promotion of the new *UK Forestry Standard* (and associated suite of UKFS Guidelines); the development of associated guidance that is robust to anticipated effects of climate change; courses; and the provision and promotion of guidance on the use and benefits of the Historic Land-use Assessment.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

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

- Publish and promote the new edition of the *UK Forestry Standard* (FC).
- Publish the new *UKFS Forests and Water Guidelines* and *UKFS Forests and Soils Guidelines*, and promote through relevant guidance and training (FC).
- Publish outputs from the Scottish Government's natural flood management research and help develop catchments trials (SGEQD, FCS).
- Develop a prioritised work programme to ensure the effective delivery of forestry measures to support the implementation of the final River Basin Management Plans (FCS, SEPA).
- Review evidence and report on the contribution of trees and green space to improving urban air quality (FCS, FR)
- Deliver a series of training events for FCS staff to support SEARS inspections on compliance with the Controlled Activities Regulations General Binding Rules (FCS, SEPA).

Contribute to Scotland's diverse and attractive landscapes

- Publish and promote the new *UKFS Forests and the Landscape Guidelines*, including the development and delivery of relevant practical guidance, education materials and training courses (FC).
- Develop guidance that promotes the delivery of biologically diverse, landscape appropriate and visually attractive forest and woodland landscapes, able to adapt to anticipated changes from climate change (FCS, SNH, HS).
- Develop, deliver and promote guidance on the conservation and management of trees and woodlands in designed landscapes (FCS).
- Further develop research of the potential impacts on Scottish landscapes of climate change. Communicate the findings to a range of stakeholders to help influence policy and practice in adaptation and mitigation responses (SNH).
- Use the SNH national overview of Scotland's programme of landscape character assessment to communicate regional landscape diversity and inform policy, guidance and funding mechanisms (SNH).
- Develop a framework for monitoring landscape change (SNH, FCS, HS).
- Develop and promote the implementation of forestry related actions in support of the proposed Landscape Charter being prepared by SNH (FCS).

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

- Publish and promote the new *UKFS Forests and the Historic Environment Guidelines*, including the development and delivery of relevant practical guidance, education materials and training courses (FC).

- Promote the Historic Land-use Assessment project within woodland strategies and programmes, and contribute towards the development of appropriate guidance that assists land managers in their understanding and use of the HLA data-set (HS, RCAHMS).
- Develop and deliver training courses and guidance that promotes the identification and stewardship of the historic environment in woodlands for SRDP applicants and FCS case officers (HS).
- Continue the review of available sources of information and further data needs for identifying and recording non-inventory historic gardens and designed landscapes (ALGAO, HS, RCAHMS, SNH).
- Promote the continued development of The Ancient Tree Hunt and its integration with other land data sets (WTS).
- Standardise heritage data available to the national forest estate into a Historic Environment Inventory and fully integrate into management systems (FES).
- Develop mechanisms that ensure the continual updating of the national forest estate Historic Environment Inventory and the regular exchange of data between FCS, RCAHMS and Local Authority Archaeology Services (FES).
- Develop a template FCS Forest District Historic Environment Plan that provides the detail required to plan, manage, monitor and report on each District's historic environment outputs, and pilot test in one Forest District (FES).
- Develop a protocol for information exchange on historic environment interests on all woodland sites being considered for disposal under the repositioning programme on the national forest estate (FES, HS)

An outline programme for 2011-2013

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

- Support the implementation of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.
- Develop partnership catchment demonstration trials to support Scottish Government policy on natural techniques to help lower flood risk.
- Report on the initial research findings from the Forestry Monitored Priority Catchment trial.
- Develop guidance on the contribution of trees and green space to improving urban air quality.
- Monitor and report progress on the implementation of the forestry measures in the River Basin Management Plans.

Contribute to Scotland's diverse and attractive landscapes

- Contribute towards the development of landscape strategies and management plans for protected and sensitive landscapes.

- Deliver a 100% increase in the area of privately owned woodlands covered by an approved Forest Plan.
- Implement a framework for monitoring landscape change, and use the knowledge gained to inform policy, guidance and funding mechanisms.

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

- Develop and deliver accredited historic environment training for woodland managers.
- Develop guidance that promotes the stewardship of all scheduled monuments in woodlands under an agreed management plan.
- Develop individual FCS Forest District Historic Environment Plans that provide the detail required to plan, manage, monitor and report on the district's historic environment outputs.
- Develop the collection of relevant historic environment information for the national forest estate for the FES quinquennial conservation management report¹⁴.
- Develop a programme of research into the history of Scotland's woodland culture.

¹⁴ required by Scottish Historic Environment Policy Chapter 5 'The Conservation of the Historic Environment by Government Bodies in Scotland', 2009

Key theme 7: Biodiversity

Progress and priorities

FCS are working collaboratively with SNH, DCS and SGRPID to encourage owners of woodland designated sites to bring them into management to improve their condition. Of 105 privately owned sites with priority for management action, eight had new schemes approved under SRDP Rural Development Contract grants during the year, and another 26 sites have schemes under development. This is substantial progress in what are often complex circumstances. On the national forest estate, the proportion of designated features that are in favourable or recovering condition has reached 94% as a result of work undertaken this year.

Uptake of grants for managing native woodlands more generally was higher than in 2008/09, with 15,000 hectares approved so far for SRDP Rural Development Contract grants to support sustainable forest management.

Delivery of the species programmes for six key species continued this year. Partnership working with Butterfly Conservation Scotland and SNH focussed on promoting grants and advising siteland managers how to conserve pearl-bordered fritillary and chequered skipper butterflies. FCS published advice, which was prepared by Butterfly Conservation Scotland, on suitable management and sources of grant support.

A seminar held by FCS, Plantlife, FR and SNH promoted the FCS juniper conservation programme to FCS staff and encouraged seed collections to secure a diverse supply of juniper plants for planting. Collections were made on national forest estate sites throughout Scotland.

Consultation, in summer 2009, on red squirrel strongholds resulted in a broad endorsement of the proposals for strongholds in 18 woodland sites and the Island of Arran, totalling over 80,000 hectares of forest across the country. FCS has published the consultation response. FCS published guidance on what how SRDP Rural Development Contract grants can support habitat management for red squirrels.

New native woodlands planting in 2009/10 was similar to 2008/09 but interest is now increasing in response to enhanced rates of grant support, and nearly 4,700ha of new native woods have now been approved under SRDP Rural Development Contracts. FCS has published guidance on developing native woodland networks and SNH published generic guidance on ecological networks. The Central Scotland Green Network provides exciting opportunities for developing landscape scale habitat networks.

Woodlands and forestry was included in a range of events planned for the International Year of Biodiversity to promote the need for biodiversity conservation. FEI held a workshop for practitioners to test teaching materials and techniques and published these as learning resources on the FCS website.

The Native Woodlands Survey of Scotland has now achieved 50% of its field survey area target, and in December published the first two of 32 local authority area reports summarising results. The reports are linked to publication of the data on web browsers, and guidance notes to help users to interpret the information. Training courses were also held for users.

A woodland grazing toolkit and a new grant were developed by FCS, FR and SNH to help those interested in using livestock grazing for conservation management.

During the coming period increased priority will be given to enhancing delivery of native woodland targets for expansion, condition and restoration through the SRDP; developing our understanding of and policy responses to the effects of climate change on biodiversity; integrating species management objectives into broader woodland management in a practical and sustainable manner; and continuing to develop a strategic approach to control and prevention of problems from *Rhododendron ponticum* and other non-native species.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Help reverse biodiversity decline by targeted action

- Bring at least 3,000 hectares of designated woodland features and 3,000ha of other native woodlands into management towards favourable condition (FCS).
- Bring at least 1,000 hectares of non-native PAWS (plantation on ancient woodland site) sites into restoration towards native woodlands (FCS).
- Publish advice on managing woodlands using the ecosystem approach to help conserve UKBAP (UK Biodiversity Action Plan) priority species found in Scottish woodlands (SNH, FCS, WEG, FR).
- Publish guidance for improving habitat quality in red squirrel strongholds (FCS).
- Publish a plan for restoration of open habitat from forest edges in the Flow Country to improve designated Natura sites (FCS, SNH, RSPB).

Help reverse biodiversity decline by broader actions

- Create at least 4,500 hectares of new or converted native woodland to help meet Habitat Action Plan targets and develop habitat networks (FCS).
- Enhance collaborative and integrated deer management in woodlands and adjacent open hill range, by promoting the uptake and further development of SRDP Rural Development Contract grants (FCS, SNH, SGRPID).
- Promote a strategic approach to *Rhododendron ponticum* control in Argyll, and implement control on the national forest estate (FCS).

Increase awareness of woodland biodiversity

- Work in partnership to promote woodland biodiversity awareness as part of International Year of Biodiversity 2010 (FCS, SNH, WEG).
- Deliver two woodland biodiversity awareness days for teachers and others (FEI).

Improve knowledge for better decision-making

- Publish research and guidance on native woodlands and climate change mitigation/adaptation (FCS, FR).

- Publish best practice guidance on diversifying planted forests for biodiversity (FCS).
- Publish and promote the new *UK Forestry Standard* and *UKFS Forests and Biodiversity Guidelines* (FC).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Help reverse biodiversity decline by targeted action

- Each year bring at least 3,000 hectares of designated woodland features and 3,000 hectares of other native woodlands into management towards favourable condition.
- Each year bring at least 1,000 hectares of non-native PAWS sites into restoration towards native woodlands.
- Promote use of woodland priority species advice in SRDP Rural Development Contract forest plans and on the national forest estate.
- Complete programmes of work for black grouse and capercaillie as set out in FCS species action notes.
- Set up a series of juniper 'orchards' to supply cuttings, based on seed collections across the ranges of Scottish seed zones.
- Agree site boundaries and management statements with woodland owners of red squirrel stronghold sites.
- Assess the feasibility of using digitised spatial data to monitor losses of woodlands of high conservation value to development.

Help reverse biodiversity decline by broader actions

- Create at least 4,500 hectares per annum of new or converted native woodland to help meet Habitat Action Plan targets and develop habitat networks.
- Develop one or more major landscape restoration demonstration projects, integrating with projects such as River Basin Management Plans and Ecosystem Approach Framework Plans.
- Increase awareness of woodland biodiversity
- Publish biodiversity-related guidance for planning and managing urban/post-industrial woods in green networks.
- Publish advice to increase awareness of woodland ecosystem services and their links to biodiversity.
- Include woodlands and woodland biodiversity in Local Biodiversity Action Plan awareness messages.

Improve knowledge for better decision-making

- Develop upgraded HARPPS¹⁵ decision support tool to help woodland managers manage for species.
- Publish research and initial guidance on converting plantations to native woodland and forest landscape restoration indicators.
- Complete the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland fieldwork and all local authority area reports.
- Complete sampling for the National Forest Inventory in Scotland and estimate revised values of indicators of woodland structure and composition.
- Develop systems for recording biodiversity-related spatial information for SRDP Rural Development Contract schemes in woodlands.
- Publish web-based guidance on woodland biodiversity for use by Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

¹⁵ Decision support tool and Information system for managing Habitats and Rare Priority and Protected Species

Implementation Plan - regions

South Scotland

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

Progress and priorities

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

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

What needs to be done in 2010 - 2011

Climate change

- Carbon storage on the national forest estate in South Scotland: provide effective demonstration/leadership through pilot projects and demonstration of how land managers can increase carbon store/decrease carbon loss (FES).

Timber

- Promote forest expansion with appropriate and relevant species, particularly in relation to productive forestry of all scales, where it helps to support a sustainable local forest products industry (FCS).

Business development

- Support the development of the proposed Galloway Biosphere as an opportunity for a multi-purpose landscape scale project which provides tourism/business development opportunities (FCS).

Community development

- Co-ordinate a South Scotland region heritage trees campaign to encourage people and communities to think about trees and their place in the community and the environment (BFT, SHT, EAW).

Access and health

- Encourage co-operation between neighbouring land managers and FES in the provision of links into adjoining access networks to provide "seamless access" for all users (FCS, FES).
- Working in partnership with others, continue to realise the economic potential of the NFE for mountain-biking and forest-related tourism (FES).

Environmental quality

- Continue to develop the "critical load analyses" approach as applied to acidified catchments, as well as the application of forest management which reduces/arrests downstream acidification, together with continued monitoring work in Galloway (FES, FCS).

Biodiversity

- Make explicit link to Local Biodiversity Action Plans and reporting through BARS (Biodiversity Assessment and Reporting System): prioritisation through Scottish Biodiversity Strategy work on priority habitats and species of particular significance in South Scotland – FES adopting demonstrably good practices for priority habitats in its care (FES).

An Outline Programme for 2011-2013

Climate change

- Disseminate and promote the work of the Scottish Borders Woodland partnership "Construction and sustainable development using local timber project" in Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway and specifically the use of timber in construction/insulation/massive timber.
- Promote the value of woodland to the agricultural community in helping manage carbon input/output of business, potentially through whole farm plans.

Timber

- Promote the development of the quality timber resource both hardwood and softwood in the South of Scotland and encourage woodland expansion which supports this.
- Promote through demonstration and pilot projects, a holistic approach on farm and forestry potential. Land use/business plans to integrate woodland expansion with agriculture (and also potentially tourism/bio-diversity).

Business development

- Progress the creation of a forest industry 'centre of excellence' based in the South of Scotland.
- Prepare a targeted action plan to address the shortage of labour resource in the trees and timber industries in South Scotland.

Community development

- Explore with local authorities the role that forestry land might play in achieving wider policy objectives, particularly for rural housing and the removal of long term vacant and/or derelict land.
- Develop educational packages for schools, disadvantaged groups and lifelong learning programmes promoting the greater use of woodlands as outdoor learning centres. Encourage pupils to consider forestry as a career choice.

Access and health

- Implement and promote access for all for recreation and tourism purposes. Special attention also to be given to access which encourages and provides health and social benefits in co-operation with other relevant bodies.
- Work with health professionals to identify needs and try to meet those needs.

Environmental quality

- Complete, for all South Scotland Local authorities the expanded list of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, promulgate to all stakeholders and managers of both private and public forest areas, preparing and disseminating management guidance to suit.
- Explore opportunities for demonstration of forestry's potential, through new planting and appropriate management practices to improve the integrity of SAC designated rivers in South Scotland (Bladnoch and Tweed).

Biodiversity

- Promote multi-purpose landscape scale projects for Biodiversity.
- Promote the expansion of the ashwoods and wet woodland habitat networks in the South of Scotland.

Central Scotland

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

Progress and priorities

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

To help tackle the effects of climate change, FCS successfully developed and launched a regional biomass advice centre and, to assist with business development, we identified two exemplar sites to demonstrate the role of forestry in urban regeneration and place making. The Conservancy has also finalised and published a Communications Strategy for Central Scotland. A Forest Kindergarten feasibility study was completed and an Officer was appointed in March 2009 to take this forward. In co-operation with CSFT, the Conservancy has completed regional guidance for land acquisition in Central Scotland. FCS also continued work with Scottish Government to identify Projects that would contribute to the legacy of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. In collaboration with partners, FCS published and disseminated information on Integrated Habitat Networks (woodlands, wetlands and grasslands) to planners and wider stakeholders throughout Glasgow and the Clyde Valley.

During 2009-10, progress against actions included:

- Regional Biomass Advice Network (RBAN) launched and taken forward by Central Scotland Biomass Development Officer.
- Woodland Trust Scotland launched MOREwoods Scheme.
- The Lanarkshire Wood Energy Project was launched by CSFT and work is underway.
- CSFT appointed dedicated staff resource to lead on woodland creation in the Central Scotland Forest.
- FCS recruited a new Forest Kindergarten Officer to implement and promote the Forest Kindergarten programme in West Central Scotland. Forest Kindergarten was launched by the Minister for Environment, Roseanna Cunningham, on 7 December 2009 at Easterhouse, Glasgow.
- FCS appointed an Engagement Officer to explore how Central Scotland's woodlands can better benefit minority groups.

- Two projects were incorporated within the Commonwealth Games 2014 Legacy Plan published by Scottish Government on 1 Sep 09 - Commonwealth Community Forests and Commonwealth Arboretum.
- £43,000 was secured from NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde for Phase 2 of the Branching Out patient referral programme.
- The Leader of Glasgow City Council launched the Natural Play pilot in Merrylee Primary school in Glasgow.

What needs to be done in 2010 - 2011

Climate change

- Continued support for the development of a mature biomass energy industry through the provision of advice and assistance to primary producers, supply chain businesses and energy end-users throughout Central Scotland (FCS).
- Support the development of the Central Scotland Green Network Partnership (FCS, SNH and other partners).
- Direct resources to promoting woodland creation and the SRDP in the Central Scotland Forest (CSFT).
- Increase the number of woodfuel boilers installed within the Region (FCS).
- Secure the Green Network concept within the South East Scotland Strategic Development Plans (FCS).
- Update the GCV Forest & Woodland Framework as part of the development of the GCV SDP Main Issues Report (GCVSDPA).

Timber and business

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

Community development

- Launch the Central Scotland Diversity Engagement Strategy (FCS).
- Roll out Forest Kindergarten activity and associated teacher training, building on pilot schemes identified in West Central Scotland (FCS).
- Extend the Glasgow Forest Schools Project (FCS).
- Support the development of VISITwoods within Scotland (FCS).

Access and health

- Launch the Commonwealth Arboretum Project (FCS).

- Launch the Commonwealth Community Forest programme (FCS).
- Secure long-term funding for the Branching Out patient referral programme (FCS).
- Encourage greater participation in the WIAT and F4P Challenge Funds (FCS).
- Publish a Case Study based upon the natural play demonstration site in Merrylee Primary school in Glasgow (FCS).
- Launch a cycling development project, aiming to encourage pupils, parents and staff to make active travel choices, including travelling from and to school using green corridors (FCS).

Environmental quality

- Use woodlands to contribute to achieving good ecological and chemical status in Central Scotland water bodies through proactive engagement with owners (FCS).
- Promote riparian woodland expansion (FCS).

Biodiversity

- Work with GCV GNP on the promotion of the GCV Integrated Habitat Network (FCS, GCVGNP).
- Collaborate on the development of the Clyde and Avon Valleys Landscape HLF Partnership Stage 1 bid (FCS and partners).

An Outline Programme for 2011-2013

Climate change

- Continue to support woodland creation as identified in the various forestry strategies and frameworks, including Central Scotland Green Network.

Timber and business

- Maintain the impetus on promoting the increased use of timber in construction, particularly in urban regeneration project, and growing quality hardwoods.

Community development

- Continue implementation of Central Scotland Diversity Engagement Strategy.

- Support forest-related education initiatives that contribute to national outcomes.

Access & health

- Play an active role in delivery of Central Scotland Green Network.

Biodiversity

- Continued promotion of Integrated Habitat Networks.

Perth and Argyll **(Argyll, Tayside and part of Forth SEARS regions)**

Progress and priorities

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

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

Regional priorities for 2010-2013 focus on climate change mitigation through woodland expansion and wood energy, Woods in and Around Towns, agricultural diversification into forestry-related activities, woodland-based tourism and biodiversity.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Climate change

- Promote woodland creation through targeted actions in locations identified (such as riparian woodlands) in Indicative Forestry Strategies and Local Woodland & Forestry Frameworks (FCS, LLTNPA and LPA's).
- Launch the Argyll & Bute Woodland & Forestry Strategy and the revision of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Local Woodland & Forestry Framework. (A&BC, LLTNPA, FCS).
- Complete the Local Woodland & Forestry Frameworks for Perth & Kinross, and Angus (P&KC, AC, FCS).

Timber

- Target opportunities and applications for further support under the third round of the STTS for actions on timber transport (S&TTTG, LPA's, TACTRANS, private forestry sector, and FCS).
- Set-up effective Biomass Networks in Argyll and the east of the Conservancy via the Biomass Information Officers seeking to optimise the use of biomass as a source of heat energy (FCS, LPA's, Forest Industry Cluster).

- Identify improvements to the Long-Term Forest Plan process to accommodate potential demand for Short Rotation Forestry (FCS, FES, FR, private sector).
- Conduct a Conservancy-wide analysis of recent trends in hardwood thinning and identify mechanisms for promoting added value to the increasing area of hardwoods in the Conservancy (FCS, FR).
- Assess the area and range of quality durable softwoods, principally Douglas fir and European larch, in P&A Conservancy and identify ways of both increasing the area and improving the quality of the timber resource derived from these niche but valuable timber sources (FCS, FR).

Business development

- Undertake an assessment of the potential for forest tourism in Argyll and start implementing key agreed actions (FCS, VisitScotland, A&BC, HIE).
- Promote good practice and good examples of business support for forestry businesses under the SRDP at a specific event (FCS, FIAB, ConFor).
- Undertake an assessment of the economic contribution of the Perthshire Big Tree Country project to help guide future actions on Phase II of this project (FCS, PKCT, Scottish Enterprise, PKC, VisitScotland).
- Work with those responsible for Rural Skills training in Argyll to develop a programme of land-based training opportunities to provide a future supply of key staff to the forestry sector in Argyll (FCS, Lantra, A&BC).

Community development

- Work with Falkland Estate to develop a centre for expertise in community involvement and management of woodlands (FCS, Falkland, CWA).
- Review the Stirling & Clacks Woodland and Greenspace partnership with a view to continuing for a further 3 years with particular emphasis on supporting the Central Scotland Green Network initiative.

Access and health

- Develop the grounds of Ninewells Hospital as (FCS, LPA's).
- Join Fife Coast & Countryside Trust to collaboratively promote forests as an access resource.
- Support the LLTNPA and local forest managers to better manage visitors on east Loch Lomond-side.

Environmental quality

Investigate the barriers posed by forest road culverts to migratory fish in Argyll and identify how these might be addressed (FCS, Argyll Fisheries Trust, SEPA).

Biodiversity

- Seek additional support via the SRDP for targeted woodland habitat enhancement of woods and forests on the Argyll Islands (FCS, SNH).
- Implement a significant programme of actions on reducing the threat for rhododendrons in Argyll & Bute and the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National park (FCS, A&BC, LLTNPA, SNH).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Climate change

- Continue to support woodland creation as identified in the various forestry strategies and frameworks including specific actions such as riparian woodland creation.

Timber

- Maintain the impetus on growing quality hardwoods (with associated economic benefits) in identified locations, monitor progress and provide additional support and advice as required.

Business development

- Identify and support further opportunities for adding value to timber and non timber forest products, with particular emphasis on small to medium biomass installations.
- Optimise the contribution of woodlands and forestry to the tourism sector.

Community development

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

Access & health

- Implement an Action Plan to increase the health contribution of the region's woods.

- Monitor the effects of changes to the Forestry Commission's land holding on the provision of forest access and recreation facilities.

Biodiversity

- Identify new opportunities for landscape-scale woodland restoration building on current projects in the Argyll Forest Park, Bute, the Ochils and Perthshire Big Tree Country.
- Identify opportunities for woodland creation and management following the Forest Habitat Network concept, especially in areas where key forest-dependent species are vulnerable.
- Extend the Argyll Islands Native Woodland Partnership to cover all the Argyll Islands.
- Promote the outcomes of the sustainable woodland grazing pilot project and use of the supporting management toolkit.

Grampian **(Grampian and Moray SEARS region)**

Progress and priorities

Grampian is a diverse region consisting of 155,000 hectares of woodlands complimented by large productive agricultural areas. Large native pinewoods support a wide range of biodiversity with significant species such as Capercaillie and red squirrel. The commercial forests contribute to a significant processing and nursery industry. Renewable energy developments including biomass and wind will become increasingly important in the coming years.

SRDP Rural Development Contracts have supported a variety of sustainable forestry operations from the Caledonian Pinewoods of Deeside to the farming areas on the Buchan plain. To help us better understand the benefits and challenges of appropriate woodland expansion on agricultural land a study will be completed and published in the early part of 2010.

The role of home grown timber in sustainable construction as a replacement for high embodied energy products such as steel and concrete is becoming better understood. To inform the knowledge base a study will be published with the aim of its findings being formally adopted into local planning guidance during 2010.

Encouraging woodland expansion will be a key focus for the coming year along with strengthening our involvement in urban woodlands in preparation for the introduction of WIAT III.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Climate change

- Promote the benefits of biomass to double the installed capacity of boilers in the region (2008 baseline = 10MW end 2010 target = 20MW) and reduce carbon emissions (AC, SE, AREG).
- Approve 1,000 hectares of woodland expansion through SRDP Rural Development Contracts (SGRIPD, FCS).
- Work with renewable energy developers to ensure sustainable forestry practices are adopted (FES, AC, ACC, MC).

Timber

- Use private and public sector production forecast data to help update the agreed route maps for timber haulage (GTTG).
- Encourage the adoption of guidelines on the use of timber in sustainable construction to support the planning process in each council area (ACC, AC, MC).

Community development

- Promote woodland education in Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City (NEFEI).

- Develop a strong partnership with Aberdeen City Council for delivery of the WIAT III demonstration site on Donside (ACC).
- Promote the uptake of Forestry for People grants (FCS).
- Provide community service order placements carrying out woodland maintenance activities in WIAT funded woodlands (ACC).
- Share knowledge and awareness of woodland related policy and best practice among council development control officers (FCS).

Access and health

- Work with NHS Grampian to promote the health benefits of walking in woodlands, focusing on the most deprived wards identified in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (FCS, NHS).

Environmental quality

- Ensure woodlands contribute to a good quality freshwater environment (SEPA).
- Scoping opportunities for research into the positive effects of woodland on watercourses (FCS).
- Promotion of riparian woodland expansion (CNPA, DDSFB).
- Produce guidance for the management of designed landscapes (GHS, AC).

Biodiversity

- Conserve and protect the north east red squirrel population (NELBAP).
- Promulgate the benefits of management plans for designated sites in order to progress towards favourable condition (FES, SNH).
- Review and prioritise actions for the forestry related Habitat Action Plans. (NELBAP).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Climate change

- Increase forest area, highlight its role in climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Continue to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on forestry.

Timber

- Promote greater use of local timber in substitution for more energy intensive materials.

Business development

- Extol the benefits of producing and using woodfuel to reduce carbon emissions and operating expenditure.

- Support projects for workforce development that address local shortages of skilled labour.

Community development

- Promote outdoor learning and its ability to deliver the Scottish curriculum for excellence.
- Develop opportunities for community development focusing on communities with multiple deprivations.

Access and health

- Promote wider use of woodlands for recreation and formal activities focusing on SIMD areas.

Environmental quality

- Ensure woodlands contribute to achieving a good quality freshwater environment.
- Promote the role of woodlands in natural flood management.

Biodiversity

- Through partnership working progress towards favourable condition on all designated woodland sites.
- Support the planning process through promoting best practice among development control officers regarding trees, woods and forests.

Highland and Islands
(Highland, Western Isles and Northern Isles SEARS regions)

Progress and priorities

There are 350,925 hectares of woodland in the Conservancy. Timber Production is forecast at 1,180,924 cubic metres a year with production from private woodlands forecast to increase by 14 % over the next 10 years. This timber supports a large processing industry and rapidly expanding biomass industry, with Balcas set to produce 100,000 tonnes of pellets a year. Bringing timber to market from remote woodlands remains a challenge for transport infrastructure. In accessible areas, it remains vital to create new woodland for timber production.

The Conservancy contains more than 50% of Scotland's fragmented native woodland and many sites of high environmental quality, including almost 60% of Scotland's Natura network. Much work has been done to secure and expand the remnant native woodlands with over 35,000 hectares planted in the last 10 years and red squirrel conservation has benefited from active engagement. The Highland and Islands contains most of the 'Crofting Counties' and has led community woodland development with many large community owned and managed woodlands established and new ones coming forward under the National Forest Land Scheme. Woodlands also play a critical role in supporting the expanding outdoor activity industry and generally underpin an important tourism sector.

Much progress has been made on implementing the 2009/10 priorities with the establishment of a renewable heat advice centre; the Biomass Development Officer has supported several biomass installations and supply businesses.

In addition, over 2,000 hectares of new woodland has received approval through SRDP Rural Development Contracts and 3 National Forest Land Scheme applications have been approved.

What needs to be done in 2010-2011

Climate Change

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- Deliver 2,000 hectares of woodland expansion through the SRDP and 500 hectares by FES on recently acquired land at Sibster, with an increase in the proportion of productive conifer planted (FCS, FES, ConFor, SGRPID).
- Increase the number of woodfuel boilers installed in the region and identify where woodfuel supply needs strengthening (FCS, HB).

Timber

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- Gather and interpret timber production data for Highland (FCS, HIFIC) and through seminars and workshops actively promote the use of home grown timber (FCS).
- Implement the work of the steep ground working group on the NFE and seek to disseminate to the private sector (FCS).

Community development

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- Deliver, manage and develop the National Forest Land Scheme, supporting community applications within the Conservancy as new policy on leasing emerges (FCS, HIE).
- Introduce enhanced incentives to support woodland expansion in the Northern and Western Isles (FCS, CES, OIC, SIC).

Access and health

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- Take forward the greening of a second hospital site and develop case studies with providers of woodland activity and health practitioners (FCS, NHS).

Environmental quality

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- Expand riparian woodland in the Cairngorms National Park focusing on the Spey Catchment (CNPA, SDSFB, FCS).

Biodiversity

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- In support of the Caithness & Sutherland Peatland Strategy, work with owners to develop forest plans which incorporate action for the appropriate restoration of peatland (FCS, SNH).
- Appoint a Rhododendron Control officer and accelerate the clearance of *Rhododendron ponticum* from priority habitats (FCS, SNH).

An outline programme for 2011-2013

Climate change

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- Provide co-ordinated advice and support to businesses and communities seeking to utilise biomass.
- Explore the developing plant health issues and their potential impact on timber supplies.

Timber

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- Work with the HTTG to improve access to timber and reduce the impacts of timber transport on Highland roads.
- Identify and promote priority sites to establish woodlands for timber production and biomass.

Business Development

- Support forest tourism through joint promotion and marketing of East Sutherland Woodlands project.

Community development

- Support development of woodland crofts in suitable locations.
- Promote the uptake of F4P and WIAT grants.

Access and health

- Support the health adviser to deliver practical health and well being projects in collaboration with a range of partners.

Environmental quality

- Through proactive engagement with owners, use woodlands to contribute to achieving good ecological and chemical status in Highlands's water bodies, progress PAWS restoration and montane scrub recovery.
- Develop previously established new native woodlands through habitat enhancement.

Biodiversity

- Clear *Rhododendron ponticum* and other non-native invasive species from key habitats, fix red squirrel strongholds, promote restoration projects for priority species and expand native woodlands.

Annex 1: Listing of action leaders

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

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