

August 2012

Dear All

We have now received the Final Report from the Independent Panel on Forestry, including the ambitious statement that '*We recommend the expansion of woodland cover from 10% to 15% by 2060*'. It does seem that the report was well received across the industry. The Woodland Carbon Task Force will be playing its role in helping to inform the government's response, due to be published in January.

The Task Force met on the 3 August at York and the minutes will soon appear on the web area. Two more meetings are scheduled for this year and will be hosted by the Woodland Trust and the Country Landowners Association.

The Forestry Commission will be at the APF show and not only will you be able to get sound advice on woodland creation, the Carbon Code and biosecurity, but you can also test the new ESC 3 model if this news edition has not already tempted you! Hope to see you there.

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Independent Panel on Forestry

On 4 July 2012 the Independent Panel on Forestry published its Final Report which is available to download here:

[Independent Panel on Forestry – Final Report](#) (PDF, 9.5MB)

The report calls for England's woods and forests to be re-valued for all the benefits they provide. These include areas for recreation, clean air, clean water, and habitats for wildlife. They also lock up carbon, provide shade and can help reduce flooding. Wood is the raw material for timber frame buildings, furniture, flooring, fuel, and of course paper. The report calls for a revival of a woodland culture that appreciates how important trees are for people, for nature and the economy.

The report also makes clear that the Panel believes the public forest estate is a national asset, which should remain in public ownership, which the Secretary of State has already confirmed. The Panel recommends an evolution of the Forestry Commission.

The new organisations should have greater financial freedoms and investment to generate even greater benefits for people, nature and the economy.

Committee on Climate Change's fourth progress report

The report (www.theccc.org.uk) was published on 29th June. In 2011 the UK's emissions fell by 7% largely as a result of the mild winter, reductions in income and increases in fuel prices. The UK should meet its first three carbon budgets but a four-fold step increase in the pace in reducing emissions was needed. The report noted that the Panel was to advise on an appropriate level for woodland creation. It also mentions that grasslands would be a larger carbon sink than forests by 2020 if current planting rates continue. The Woodland Potential Calculator was mentioned as part of developing a woodland creation programme by 2014. The report also urged that the Renewable Heat Incentive was confirmed and extended to the residential sector by summer 2013, that the Renewable Obligation banding was announced, and that Government set out an approach for large scale biomass.

Mandatory greenhouse gas reporting

Government announced that greenhouse gas reporting would become mandatory for FTSE listed companies from 2013. Government will consider extending this to all large businesses in 2015. The Regulation will be consulted on and require that only gross emissions will be reported. Use of Defra's Greenhouse Gas Reporting guidelines (which provide additional guidance on reporting the carbon benefits of woodland creation) is encouraged.

Country Land and Business Association's (CLA) CALM calculator

A revised version of the CLA's CALM (Carbon Accounting for Land Managers) carbon calculator was released at the annual Game Fair at Belvoir Castle on 22/23 July. The revisions were funded by Forestry Commission England to incorporate the impact of woodland creation on farm level carbon budgets. The calculator also includes impact on farm carbon budgets of bringing woodland into management.

Conifer Forecasts Published

Following on from the publication of the standing coniferous volume figures in April, the National Forest Inventory team have now published forecasts of coniferous increment and softwood availability. Over the 25 year period for forecast the Public Forest Estate (PFE) in England is forecast to produce on average 3.7 million m³ each year. The potential production of softwood timber from private sector woods over the period is on average, 2.5 million m³ each year. Actual levels of harvest will depend on choices by woodland owners. The trend through the period of the forecast is a slight decline in production from the PFE, and an increase in private sector availability, with an overall slight increase. Reports on coniferous carbon and biomass forecasts will follow. Hardwood results are expected in 2013. Follow the link below to see the '2011 Forecast Reports' <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8rbp8t>.

Which tree species to plant for a changing environment Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) seminars 24th and 25th of July 2012 at Westonbirt

Urban day 42 people from a wide range of disciplines within the arboriculture world attended this day. There was a lot of enthusiasm for managing street trees collectively, rather than individually, looking for long-term solutions that allow trees to adapt to the location in which they are planted. The very wide range of species probably suitable to a future climate and as yet not used was explored together with the conundrum of how to select a tree which the nurseries do not currently grow. Feedback on the day highlighted a need for more seminars to be held on a regional basis, with invitations going to the landscape architect community.

Forestry day 46 people from across the forest industry attended. The indoor session in the morning demonstrated the new Ecological Site Classification (ESC3) electronic tree selection support tool, alongside the web support materials. We raised awareness of our tree resource pages and the new UK Forestry Standard and climate change guidelines, more needs to be done. The rest of the day was spent in the national collection of trees and stimulated a lot of discussion about the emerging species. The need to prime the nursery industry and sawmillers was discussed, and John Weir shared information from discussions with the Confor nursery producers group.

Senior ICF representatives thanked the Forestry Commission on each day and encouraged all those present to follow and disseminate the advice.

Tree species seminars at Westonbirt for woodland officers 18th and 19th September: We will be running similar seminars for our Forestry Commission woodland officers followed up by more detailed training on the use of ESC3.

Ecological Site Classification (ESC3) <http://www.eforestry.gov.uk/forestdss/>

Forest Research has made ESC 3 available to all on their Internet site. This enables you to enter basic site information such as soils and it will tell you the suitability of tree species for that site. Crucially, it has been updated to reflect climate change scenarios to 2050 and 2080. It is an important element of enabling us to give better advice to landowners about what trees to plant when creating or restocking woods to make them resilient to climate change

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