

## February 2012

Dear All

Thanks to all of you who came back to me about the last issue. You will see that we have a new minister, and that we continue to support work areas closely aligned to sustainable woodland creation such as tree seed and the raising of forest transplants.

We hope you find the news nuggets interesting and welcome feedback

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*Here are some highlights from the work in the last few months.*

**Forest Investment appraisal model** - CJC Consulting have developed an updated version of a new model to carry out investment appraisals of woodland creation projects. The model combines timber yield models with the latest carbon models (including soil carbon), showing the extent to which carbon revenues can add to the returns from timber. We will test the model during March.

**The Woodland Carbon Code.** The WCC has been featured in a global study of the voluntary carbon market, released this week by the Ecosystem Marketplace based in Washington D.C. The Code is one of 13 case studies selected from countries in Europe, Asia, the Americas and Australia. The report further raises the profile of the Code, and also helps us to view the Code in the context of wider developments in the global carbon market. The report can be downloaded from the [Ecosystem marketplace website](#); the Woodland Carbon Code is on p25.

### **Woodland Carbon Task Force developing the 12/13 programme**

Forestry Commission staff working to deliver the aspirations of the Woodland Carbon Task Force met on 14 February to agree the work programmes and milestones for 2012/13. Four key workstreams are proposed:

- **Private investment linked to carbon standards and grant:**  
It is proposed that the financial mechanisms and carbon assurances work streams are much more closely aligned. Other

financial incentives available from the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Environment Agency should also be entwined.

- **Identify key landowners with whom to engage:** The report on land ownership and potential woodland creation opportunities from the University of Exeter is close to being published. The report will identify some ownerships sympathetic to woodland creation in the short term.
- **Developing a movement for woodland creation:** The strategic Woodland Uplift Tool is now ready to be tested in regions/areas. Its use should stimulate discussions on the aspirations of various stakeholders and hopefully create a consensus on how much woodland creation should happen at a landscape character area scale. We will be working with the Communications team to provide a communications platform to facilitate woodland creation.
- **Knowledge exchange:** co-design of delivery tools with the people who will use them, especially Woodland Officers and other land management advisers.
- **Meeting dates:** invitations are being set out to the Woodland Carbon Task Force members (ConFor, Woodland Trust, Country Land and Business Association, Natural England, Environment Agency, Defra, Department of Energy and climate Change, and Forestry Commission) for quarterly meetings during 2012/13 to finalise and then drive forward this programme.

**Confor Nursery Producers Group** . John attended this group's spring meeting in Edinburgh on 23 February to discuss the current thinking about species diversity and the use of more southerly origin, part of adapting forestry to climate change. The group agreed that further work is required to better enable these aims, such as changing the requirements of the grant scheme, more explicit guidance and advice from us based on the UK Forestry Standard, investment by nurseries (which is challenging due to the risk that there will not be a market for the product), and advocacy. The group welcomed a stronger focus on the use of improved quality stock. Good quality seed performs better within the nursery and produces stronger transplants, and often seed from local sources had poor germination and poor early form. John was asked to write an article for the association's magazine.

**Seed Stand Management and Seed Security.** A meeting of interested parties will be held on 26 April to start a discussion across industry on issues of seed stand management and security with Future Forests Trust (formerly known as British Irish Hardwood Improvement Programme). This action has a synergy with work taking place on the public forest estate of England and Wales, to identify and secure stands for seed collection from the emerging species in climate change adaptation. Confor in discussion with the Forestry Commission, have agreed to a wider discussion on seed resources and how, within a global market, we not only ensure security of resource but also face up to increasing bio security issues. The UK Forestry Commission is the lead on the Forest Reproductive Material regulations.

**Woodfuel.** A new suite of [web pages](#) providing details on the management of woodlands for the production on fuel and other materials has been established by the Biomass Energy Centre. The pages provide an overview on a diverse range of subjects including woodland health, managing small areas and volumes, fuel processing, buying and selling wood. The information includes indicative prices for a range of wood products. The content is likely to evolve over the coming months and any suggestions on how it may be improved are welcomed (especially if you are able to provide the text!). These pages build on a Business and Markets '[quick links](#)' note that provides links to specialised sources on information on a range of subjects including the timber trade, listings of contractors, fuel supply companies. The information is designed to assist Forestry Commission staff and woodland owners find the information required to start bringing neglected woodlands back into management.

**Renewable Heat Incentive.** The Forestry Commission team in the South East received some initial data from Ofgem showing take up of the Renewable Heat Incentive. This shows that (as at the beginning of February):

- 800 accounts set up
- 180 applications received
- Of which 85% are biomass (153)
- Only 3 biomass approved to date (i.e. a backlog may be developing!)

If this initial trend is followed over the next few months it suggests that significant increases in demand for woodfuel are likely.

Contact 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012  
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