

Methodology Review: UK Wood Imports & Exports

Introduction

The methodology and outputs relevant to a particular topic are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

A more formal process was introduced in 2012, with one topic to be covered each year. The topics to be covered are: wood production, imports and exports, woodland area, timber prices, environment and climate change, recreation, and FC administrative data. One topic is reviewed every year on a rotating basis. In 2013, UK wood imports and exports were reviewed, and the findings are summarised here.

This review complements the 2012 review of UK wood production:
[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/mrukwpod.pdf/\\$FILE/mrukwpod.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/mrukwpod.pdf/$FILE/mrukwpod.pdf).

There is a parallel process for survey reviews.

More in-depth reviews, to address specific issues, are undertaken on an ad hoc basis.

Statistics on UK imports and exports of wood and wood products (based on overseas trade statistics published by HM Revenue & Customs) are compiled by the Forestry Commission (in association with the Forest Service in Northern Ireland).

Data are released twice a year. *UK Wood Production and Trade: provisional figures* is released in May alongside the *Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire: provisional figures* submitted to Eurostat. Final figures are released in *Forestry Statistics* in September and in the *Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire: final data*. Estimates for the current year and forecasts for the coming year are submitted at the same time to UNECE as part of the *Timber Forecast Questionnaire*.

Further information on UK wood imports and exports is provided in the UK Wood Production and Trade quality report at:
[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ukwptqrpt.pdf/\\$FILE/ukwptqrpt.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ukwptqrpt.pdf/$FILE/ukwptqrpt.pdf)

Methodology

The review was conducted using the Quality, Methods and Harmonisation Tool (QMHT), a self-assessment questionnaire developed by the Office for National Statistics and the Government Statistical Service:

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/quality/harmonisation/index.html

The questionnaire covers the entire statistical output production process and helps identify potential issues and suggest improvements. The following areas were examined in this review:

- Establishing user requirements (QMHT Section 3)
- Use of administrative data or data sourced from other organisations (QMHT Section 4)
- Design of survey data collection (QMHT Section 6)
- Regular analysis in the production of statistical outputs (QMHT Section 10)
- Regular or repeated statistics (time series) (QMHT Section 12)
- Confidentiality (QMHT Section 14)
- Dissemination (QMHT Section 15)

The Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics (EGTTS) was also consulted as part of the review process, at the December 2013 meeting and in follow-up correspondence. More information on the EGTTS can be found at:

www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infd-5rabj3 .

The review also considered feedback from the 2013 User Engagement Survey (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7zejnv).

Areas for action

No major issues arose in this review, but the following area for improvement was identified:

Analysis of statistical outputs (QMHT Section 10):

1. Documentation on the data analysis methods used in the production of the output should be published.

Action plan

We plan to address this area for action as follows:

Point 1 will be addressed for the next publication of *UK Wood Production and Trade* in May 2014.

Sheila Ward / Jeremy Darot
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March 2014