

# Methodology Review: UK Wood Production

## Introduction

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

From 2012, a more formal process has been introduced, 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 will be reviewed every year on a rotating basis. In 2012, UK wood production was reviewed, and the findings are summarised here.

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 wood production comprise a series of annual surveys and data requests on the UK timber industry. Data are compiled by the Forestry Commission (in association with the Forest Service in Northern Ireland) on:

- removals of roundwood from UK woodlands;
- deliveries of roundwood to wood processors and others; and
- production of wood products.

Data are released twice a year. *UK Wood Production and Trade: provisional figures* is released in May, final figures are released in *Forestry Statistics* in September.

Further information on wood production 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)

Imports and exports will be the subject of a separate methodology review

Separate quality reports, covering the private sector softwood removals survey, sawmill survey, survey of round fencing manufacturers and survey of pellet and briquette production in more detail are also available on the FC statistics quality web page: [www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7zhk85](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-7zhk85)

## 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](http://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)
- 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)

Other areas will be covered in the quality reviews for the individual surveys used in the compilation of UK wood production statistics. An annual programme of quality reviews of surveys has also been introduced from 2012, with a report from the first survey to be covered (the Sawmill Survey) available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6TZKZG](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6TZKZG). Quality reviews for the surveys of the timber industry will address the following areas, which are also relevant to this review:

- Design of survey data collection (QMHT Section 6)
- Editing and imputation (QMHT Section 8)

The Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics (EGTTS) was also consulted as part of the review process, at the November 2012 meeting and in follow-up correspondence. More information on the EGTTS can be found at:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infid-5rabj3](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infid-5rabj3) .

## Areas for action

No major issues arose in this review, but the following areas for improvement were identified:

### **Use of administrative data** (QMHT Section 4):

1. The implications of the creation of *Natural Resources Wales (NRW)* for the availability of administrative data formerly held by FC Wales from 1 April 2013 should be carefully considered.
2. Information on trade associations' data should be added to the Statement of Administrative Sources.

### **Analysis of statistical outputs** (QMHT Section 10):

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

### **Dissemination** (QMHT Section 15):

4. The addition of graphs to the statistical release UK Wood Production and Trade, where they can add value, should be considered.

## Action plan

We plan to address these areas for action as follows:

Point 1 is being actively managed and data arrangements are being discussed with FC Wales.

Point 2, 3 and 4 will be addressed for the next publication of *UK Wood Production and Trade* in May 2013.

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