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**Evaluation of the South  
West Forest and Forest  
Futures Projects**

**Joint Report on South West  
Forest and Forest Futures  
*Final Report***

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A report prepared by

**PACEC** 

on behalf of  
the Forestry Commission and the Countryside  
Agency

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## 1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Forestry Commission in England has supported, together with others (for full list of funders see Appendix A), two leading rural development initiatives: the South West Forest (SWF) in Devon and Cornwall and Forest Futures in Cumbria. In March 2005, the Forestry Commission and the Countryside Agency commissioned PACEC to conduct an external evaluation of the two projects with a view to providing an evaluation of the projects themselves and to inform regional and national policy development.

1.1.2 This document represents the Joint Report on SWF and FF and sets out the key findings of each, a summary of their most notable outputs and impacts and a review of the evaluation framework which was used to guide the evaluation process. **Individual reports on each of these projects have been produced and these provide full detail of the specific evaluation information for both projects.**

## 1.2 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

1.2.1 The overall aim of the evaluation was to review and evaluate the performance of the South West Forest and Forest Futures projects. The specific objectives of the evaluation were:

- To assess the performance of the projects against the agreed aims, objectives and outcomes set out in their respective business plans
- To identify and assess other unintended or wider rural development outcomes that have emerged over the lifetime of the projects
- To evaluate from an economic perspective the full range of financial, social and environmental effects, including wider halo effects (**each of these 3 objectives are discussed in Chapters 2 and 3**)
- To ensure a consistent approach to the evaluation of both projects that will enable comparison of their outcomes and effectiveness across the main fields of delivery (**presented in Chapter 4**) and
- To provide advice on the appropriateness, ease of use and further development of the framework for evaluating other rural development projects (**discussed in Chapter 5**)

## 1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Based on the requirements of the evaluation, a detailed and varied methodology was agreed with the Steering Group, which is made up of members from the Forestry Commission, the Countryside Agency and the Project Directors from SWF and FF. The key elements of this were:

- Desk study of all relevant documentation relating to the SWF and FF programmes of activity
- Interviews with stakeholders, managers and key partners
- Beneficiary interviews
- Wider interviews

- Case studies of specific beneficiaries
- Economic analysis

1.3.2 The evaluation has focused on the period of SWF and FF activities from 2002 to 2005 to allow a comparison between the projects.

1.3.3 Each of the next two chapters of the report details key outputs from each stage of the methodology – either primary research findings (such as survey data) or further analysis of those data derived from the primary research (such as economic analysis and environmental analysis). These subsequently contribute to the overall assessment of each project against the overall objectives of the evaluation (**detailed above in Section 1.2.1**). This overall assessment for each project is presented at the end of each of the following two chapters.

## 2 SWF Evaluation Summary

### 2.1 Vision and Objectives of SWF

2.1.1 The SWF Development Plan 2001 provides details of the Vision for the SWF project:

*'To revitalise the rural economy and environment of the area for the benefit of local people, by focusing on rural land based policies and activities. It aims to use new woodland planting, management and utilisation as a catalyst, alongside other activities, for regeneration in the rural land-based sectors and communities, to secure integrated social, economic and environmental benefits.'*

2.1.2 The 2001 SWF Development Plan analysed the issues and opportunities of the SWF area and generated a number of 'building blocks' required to stimulate rural regeneration and to meet the SWF Vision. Each building block had an objective, a clear set of aims, actions and targets/outputs. **These are reviewed further in Section 2.8.2 below.**

2.1.3 SWF undertook a wide range of activities and engaged 10 different types of beneficiary groups in order to achieve this vision. A variety of planting activity took place including planting commercial farm woodlands, mixed woodlands and copses, community woodlands, orchards and domestic planting. In addition to planting, SWF provided advice, education, training, tourism development and collaboration opportunities. The overall project delivery cost was £1,011,362 and the total of grants (woodland management and creation) provided was £3.068m. Of the project delivery costs, 28% was associated with the running of the advisory programme, 25% was utilised for the training programme, 27.5% was spent on running the community and education programme and 19% was allocated to the management of the annual woodfair.

### 2.2 Immediate Impact: Beneficiary Survey

2.2.1 This section summarises the key findings from the survey undertaken with 247 SWF beneficiaries.

- Over half of SWF beneficiaries reported a considerable impact on them and their businesses from the programme of initiatives and the vast majority met their aims through participation in the activities
- One third of beneficiaries believed their involvement had resulted in a quality of life or lifestyle improvement. Given the longer-term nature of this type of indicator, this is a notable outcome from SWF
- There is evidence of positive business performance effects for approximately one quarter of respondents
- Half of the SWF beneficiaries felt more confident about the future as a consequence of their involvement and many planned new or follow-up activities
- SWF has made a positive impact on the environment, from the perspective of the vast majority of beneficiaries

- Most beneficiaries believe that SWF has been very successful and should continue
- There is clear evidence of additionality in the programme and approximately half of the respondents are very unlikely to have done anything similar in the absence of SWF. Most were unaware of any alternative support available
- Most beneficiaries found that their horizons had been broadened from this experience

## 2.3 Medium and Long-Term Impacts: Wider Survey

2.3.1 This section summarises the key findings from the wider survey undertaken with 12 SWF indirect beneficiaries (i.e. people who were not recipients of SWF services but may have been exposed to its activities in other ways).

- Most respondents thought that the SWF work had benefited the region
- Most believed that partnerships had arisen as a result of their work
- A majority believed that the SWF had been responsible for a positive impact on the visibility and image of the area. They were also very positive about the impact of the SWF activity on the environment in the local area
- Most believed that SWF had had a positive impact on businesses in the area
- Respondents felt that people who live in the region were positively affected, in terms of their skills and knowledge
- Evidence of additionality is present – respondents thought that improvements in visibility and image of the area and quality of the woodlands would not have happened without SWF. Respondents did not think beneficiaries would have been able to access alternative support. It was particularly thought that the positive impact (e.g. improved knowledge and skills, positive impact on businesses) on people in the area would not have happened

## 2.4 Case Studies

2.4.1 Case studies were used to as a method to collect more in-depth qualitative data on the activities of SWF. They provided some insight into some of the impacts that are more difficult to quantify, such as social and community effects and environmental impacts. In total, 6 case studies were undertaken.

- Case studies for SWF indicate that a wide range of impacts have been felt by beneficiaries. These include impacts on businesses, as well as individuals and families
- SWF has supported the development and continuity of businesses, ensuring the retention of some employment and creation of new employment
- There has been an impact on family structures and family life as a consequence of the SWF support. The initiatives enabled people to stay on their land in situations where this would not otherwise have been possible. This has had the knock on effect of keeping cross-generation families intact. This, of course, had a further effect on the community in the region
- Case studies provide further evidence of the soft impacts of the SWF initiatives. Beneficiaries were now more confident to move their businesses forward and were optimistic about the future

- Environmental impacts and effects are in evidence from the work that has been done by SWF. Case study evidence shows that these effects would not have happened without SWF

## 2.5 Environmental Analysis

2.5.1 Environmental analysis was undertaken utilising data from the primary research above, as well as information provided by SWF.

- *Landscape and Visual Amenity*: It was considered, from case study evidence, that planting was sympathetic to the local landscape character and had aimed to enhance it. Given the generally low residential population density (21 people per km<sup>2</sup>) in relation to the planting sites, the impact on visual amenity was considered to be low. Nevertheless, in the medium and longer term there will be an impact on the landscape and visual amenities that should be of value to tourists and for recreational purposes. This will need to be evaluated in the future to assess the extent of these impacts.
- *Biodiversity and Habitat Creation*: No specialist examination of schemes was undertaken as part of this work, although a number of surveys were consulted. These surveys indicated that the schemes (2) they examined had positive impacts on a range of national to locally important Biodiversity Action Plan species. New SWF woodland creation schemes scored highly across, on average, two out of the three biodiversity criteria in grant applications
- *Other Environmental Impacts*: Whilst it was not possible to evaluate all of the wider environmental impacts, it was calculated that 13,988 tonnes of carbon were sequestered (based on approximately 1295.2 ha of new woodland created from 2002-2005) in SWF woodland during the study period. Carbon rights to approximately 200ha of new planting had been purchased by Future Forest and Treemiles and was of benefit to the owners providing a one-off payment of approximately £400/500 per ha
- SWF has made a positive impact on the environment, from the perspective of the vast majority of beneficiaries. A majority of wider survey respondents believed that there had been a positive impact on the visibility and image of the area, due to SWF. They were also very positive about the effect on land management and the environment in the local area. Case study evidence shows that these effects would not have happened without SWF
- More broadleaf had been planted than conifer and the rate of conifer planting has slowed in the SWF project. The average size of new planting schemes was 13ha and they were well distributed across the SWF area

## 2.6 Economic Analysis

2.6.1 Economic analysis was undertaken using an input-output model which was built upon key information from the primary research and information from SWF.

- 131 (Full Time Equivalent) local jobs (net of deadweight but not displacement since no displacement effects were seen during the evaluation) have been supported ('jobs supported' includes both jobs 'created' and 'safeguarded') through the SWF project. In the UK as a whole, we estimate that 197 jobs have been supported. **The cost per job supported is presented below in Chapter 4.**

## 2.7 Effectiveness and Value for Money

2.7.1 As assessment of effectiveness and value for money was carried out. This reviewed overall progress against objectives at the SWF, together with the return on investment and value for money of the outputs.

- SWF has made good progress towards achieving its objectives
- SWF has been effective in achieving significant results and its outputs represent a good return on investment and good value for money. From the perspective of the funders of this project which produced a wide range of non-market impacts and supported 197 UK jobs, this has been a good investment. Within the project itself, the impressive range of impacts and outputs have been achieved at a (gross) project cost of £1,011362 with grants provided of £3.068m.
- Delivery of the project has been good and beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners all consider that SWF has been delivered effectively

## 2.8 Conclusions: Assessment of Performance Against Aims of the Evaluation

2.8.1 These are developed in relation to each of the key aims of the evaluation, as detailed above in Section 1.2.1.

***Evaluation Aim 1: To assess the performance of the projects against the agreed aims, objectives and outcomes set out in their respective business plans***

### ***Aims and Objectives***

2.8.2 SWF has made good progress against its stated aims and objectives which are described as 'Building Blocks' in the SWF 2001 Development Plan. A summary of progress in each Building Block is below. A full set of targets and outputs (based upon data from the SWF Project Director) against the aims are presented in the individual SWF evaluation report.

### ***Building Block 1***

2.8.3 **Agricultural restructuring and woodland potential.** *Objective:* to help diversify the predominantly agricultural land-uses in the South West Forest area through woodland planting and management, in ways that support environmental and social structures and create sustained economic viability.

2.8.4 There were 9 aims identified in Building Block 1 which were all intended to meet this objective in different ways. Almost all targets and outputs were completely or partially met.



### *Building Block 2*

2.8.5 **Development of the forestry industry.** *Objective:* to promote and encourage all aspects of the forestry industry within the South West Forest as an integral part of the rural economy

2.8.6 There were 11 aims identified in Building Block 2 which were all intended to meet this objective in different ways. In 8 out of 11 aims, almost all targets and outputs associated with those aims were completely or partially met. In 2 cases, no progress was made and in one case, the area had been explored but not taken further.

### *Building Block 3*

2.8.7 **Training and business development.** *Objective:* to encourage the growth and expansion of the forestry industry in all aspects through demand-led training and business support for those in the industry and those seeking to diversify into it.

2.8.8 There were 9 aims identified in Building Block 3 which were all intended to meet this objective in different ways. In 5 out of 9 cases, all targets or outputs were met while in 3 cases no progress had been made. One further area had been explored but not taken further.

### *Building Block 4*

2.8.9 **Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.** *Objective:* To increase the environmental capital of the South West Forest area and the full range of environmental benefits provided through woodland enhancement and management.

2.8.10 There were 9 aims identified in Building Block 4 which were all intended to meet this objective in different ways. In all cases, good progress was made and in some cases this work was ongoing.

### *Building Block 5*

2.8.11 **Recreation and tourism promotion.** *Objective:* to help promote appropriate opportunities for woodland-based tourism, recreation and leisure activities in ways which respect and invest in the natural assets of the area and provide income, both directly and indirectly, that stay within the local community

2.8.12 There were 8 aims identified in Building Block 5 which were all intended to meet this objective in different ways. In 5 out of 8 cases, targets were met and the work was completed as planned. In 3 cases, no progress was made.

### *Building Block 6*

2.8.13 **Community networks, education and sustainable development.** *Objective:* to work with the wisdom of local people in developing approaches that foster community

identity and networks, and demonstrate the relevance of woodlands to the sustainable future of the area (2001 SWF Development Plan)

- 2.8.14 There were 7 aims identified in Building Block 6 which were all intended to meet this objective in different ways. In 4 cases, the targets and outputs were achieved, as planned. In 2 cases no progress was made and in one case, partial progress was made.

### *Building Blocks – Overall*

- 2.8.15 Good progress has been made in all of the Building Blocks. In cases where little progress has been made against aims, this is in the vast majority of cases, due to unsuccessful funding bids for that area of work. In a number of cases the situation evolved differently to how it was initially envisaged and the specific work area changed accordingly.

### *Programmes of Activity*

- 2.8.16 Cutting across the six building blocks and associated objectives were four main programmes of activity:
- Advisory programme
  - Training programme
  - Community and education programme
  - Annual woodfair
- 2.8.17 All outputs, outcomes and expenditure are mapped by SWF against these four programmes of activity. The expenditure within SWF was spread across these four programmes relatively evenly.

### *Outputs*

- 2.8.18 The advisory programme has involved a total of 4130 hours of advisory time over the evaluation period which would be valued at £165,200 at commercial rates. The training programme has resulted in the inclusion of 998 beneficiaries in either training or best practise activities. The Community and Education programme includes a wide range of activities and has benefited almost 4000 school children, 150 health walkers and 143 members of their collaborative groups. The annual woodfair benefited over 5000 participants in 2005.

### *Outcomes*

- 2.8.19 The outcomes arising from these activities are summarised below. These outcomes are based upon evidence gathered during the primary research and from documentation provided by SWF.

### *Advisory Programme*

- 1,295ha of new planting, 70% of which was broadleaved planting

- Community and social impacts – people enabled to stay on land
- Employment – 197 UK jobs and 131 local jobs supported

#### *Training and Best Practice*

- Development of knowledge and skill base of 998 local people
- Dissemination of best practice to other regions of the UK
- Social impacts – increased optimism and broadened horizons of participants

#### *Community and Education*

- Stimulated interest in environmental matters among a large number of young people
- Provided useful educational context for school teachers
- Improved access for 150 people to healthy walking activities and in the long term, improved health and wellbeing of participants
- Access to new social network for walkers
- Opportunity to access new ideas by 143 collaborators

#### *Woodfair*

- Access to large market by 130 exhibitors/demonstrators
- Benefit of access to new ideas by 5000 attendees at woodfair
- Major social event in region offering opportunity to network and develop community interaction

#### ***Evaluation Aim 2: To identify and assess other unintended or wider rural development outcomes that have emerged over the lifetime of the projects***

2.8.20 In terms of wider rural development outcomes, the most notable areas within which to assess the effect of SWF have been the jobs supported (which includes jobs created and protected together with knock-on employment) and the community effects.

#### ***Employment***

2.8.21 In the UK as a whole, we estimate that **197** jobs have been supported by SWF, of which 130 arise in Devon, 43 in Cornwall and 23 in the rest of the SW area. Within the SWF local area itself, we estimate that **131** jobs have been supported, with 88 in Devon, 29 in Cornwall and 14 in the rest of the SW area.

#### ***Community Effects***

2.8.22 There has been an impact on family structures and family life as a consequence of the SWF activity. The initiatives have enabled people to stay on their land in situations where this would not otherwise have been possible. This had a knock on effect of keeping cross-generational families intact. This, of course, has had a further effect on the community and environment in the region. While the extent of this and the monetary value associated with it are difficult to measure, case study evidence clearly shows that this is taking place.

***Evaluation Aim 3: To evaluate from an economic perspective the full range of financial, social and environmental effects, including wider halo effects***

***Financial***

- 2.8.23 131 local jobs (net of deadweight but not displacement, since displacement effects were not observed during the evaluation) have been supported through the SWF project.
- 2.8.24 The project has generated notable economic effects. There is evidence of positive business performance effects for approximately one quarter of respondents to the beneficiary survey. Most of the participants in the wider survey believed that SWF had had a positive impact on businesses in the area.
- 2.8.25 Case study evidence suggested that SWF has enabled the development and continuity of businesses, ensuring the retention of some employment and creation of new employment.

***Social***

- 2.8.26 In terms of social effects, quality of life and/or lifestyle improvement is taking place among SWF beneficiaries. One third of beneficiaries believed their involvement had resulted in a quality of life or lifestyle improvement. Given the longer-term nature of this type of indicator, this is a notable outcome from SWF.
- 2.8.27 There were further positive results in terms of the improvement of outlook and attitude among people benefiting from the SWF activities. Half of the SWF beneficiaries felt more confident about the future as a consequence of their involvement and many planned new or follow-up activities. Most beneficiaries found that their horizons had been broadened from this experience.

***Environmental***

- 2.8.28 The environmental impact of the SWF was reviewed in relation to Landscape and Visual Amenity (potential and actual), Biodiversity and Habitat Creation, and wider Environmental Services.
- 2.8.29 *Landscape and Visual Amenity:* Although it is believed that planting was sympathetic to the local landscape character, given the generally low residential population density (21 people per km<sup>2</sup>) in relation to the planting sites, the impact on visual amenity was considered to be low. Nevertheless, in the medium and longer term there will be an impact on the landscape and visual amenities that should be of value to tourists and for recreational purposes. This will need to be evaluated in the future to assess the extent of these impacts.
- 2.8.30 *Biodiversity and Habitat Creation:* Review of two biodiversity surveys indicated that SWF has had positive impacts on a range of national to locally important Biodiversity

Action Plan species. New SWF woodland creation schemes scored highly across, on average, two out of the three biodiversity criteria in grant applications.

- 2.8.31 *Other Environmental Impacts:* Whilst it was not possible to evaluate all of the wider environmental impacts, it was calculated that 13,988 tonnes of carbon were sequestered in SWF woodland during the study period (based on approximately 1295.2 ha of new woodland created from 2002-5. Carbon rights to approximately 200ha of new planting had been purchased by Future Forest and Treemiles and was of benefit to the owners providing a one-off payment of approximately £400/500 per ha.
- 2.8.32 More broadleaf has been planted than conifer and the rate of conifer planting has slowed during the SWF project timescale. The proportion of conifer planting has reduced from approximately 50% in 2000 to under 10% in 2005. The average size of new planting schemes was 13ha and they were well distributed across the SWF area. The nature of the planting has been varied due to the different types of activities undertaken by the SWF, including farm woodlands, community woodlands and domestic plantings. Most of the expenditure (approximately 97%) has been on new woodland creation rather than existing woodland management or improvement.
- 2.8.33 SWF has made a positive impact on the environment, from the perspective of the vast majority of beneficiaries. A majority of wider survey respondents believed that there had been a positive impact on the visibility and image of the area, due to SWF. They were also very positive about the effects on land management and the environment in the local area. Case study evidence also shows that these effects would not have happened without SWF.

## 2.9 Overall Observations

- 2.9.1 SWF has made good progress against its objectives and has had wide ranging outcomes.
- 2.9.2 Looking across these outcomes from the SWF project including employment, community, financial, social and environmental, the investment in the 2002-2005 phase of the project represents excellent value for money. The overall gross cost of the total outcomes by the SWF over the period of evaluation was £1,011,362 and the contribution of the Forestry Commission represented approximately 15% of this. Looking across the programmes of activity, the advisory programme utilised 28.1% of this gross figure, the training programme utilised 25.1% of this, the community and education programme utilised 27.5% of this and the annual woodfair utilised 19.3% of this figure. The outputs and outcomes from these programmes of activity have been in line with expectations as detailed above in **paragraphs 2.8.18 and 2.8.19**.
- 2.9.3 Rural development activity has been achieved, most notably through support for employment and assisting with rural community development. Through each of its programmes of activity, rural development has seen a positive impact most notably through the supporting of employment, training of large numbers of people living in

the area, assisting with community development and contributing to the social and economic aspects of the area through the annual woodfair.

- 2.9.4 There is clear evidence of additionality in the programme. This project has filled a gap that would not otherwise have been filled.

### 3 FF Evaluation Summary

#### 3.1 Objectives of Forest Futures

3.1.1 The Forest Futures (FF) programme is administered by Cumbria Woodlands, an organisation which aims to secure the maintenance and enhancement of Cumbria's woodlands. Cumbria Woodlands, formerly 'Cumbria Broadleaves', was set up in 1991 and was designed to facilitate the implementation of the Cumbria Woodland Forum's 'Woodland Vision' through a wide range of objectives and outputs. Cumbria Woodlands was regarded as being ideally placed to serve as the FF programme's key delivery mechanism. Cumbria Woodlands took on this delivery role for FF following the programme's launch in July 2002.

3.1.2 Cumbria Woodlands, through which FF is delivered, has three core integrated aims which provide the foundation for its operational objectives, activities and outputs:

- 1 Rural Economic Development and Regeneration
- 2 Environmental Enhancement
- 3 Public Support and Benefit

3.1.3 The 2001 FF Framework Business Plan analysed the issues and opportunities of the FF area and generated a number of objectives required to stimulate rural regeneration and to meet the FF Vision. Each objective had a clear set of aims, actions and targets/outputs. **These are reviewed further in Section 3.8.2 below.**

3.1.4 The FF programme was delivered through three channels of activity: Woodland Management, Woodland Creation and Business Development Support. FF was aimed at land owners and woodland owners and at businesses utilising wood (or a by-product) in delivering its product or service. As a result, FF engaged with 3 main different types of beneficiary groups in order to achieve its vision (these were land/woodland owners, consultants/contractors and recipients of business support/advice).

3.1.5 The overall project delivery cost was £415,558, the total of woodland management and creation grants provided was £865,147 and the total business development grants provided was £227,570. Of the project delivery costs, 49% was associated with the woodland expansion and management programme while 25% was utilised for the business development programme. The remaining 26% of project costs were spent on the other 5 objectives which were training, recreation/tourism projects, business collaboration, market development for wood and understanding and education.

#### 3.2 Immediate Impact: Beneficiary Survey

3.2.1 This section summarises the key findings from the survey undertaken with 241 FF beneficiaries.

- FF beneficiaries are primarily located in Cumbria and the main beneficiaries are farmers/landowners; recipients of business support and woodland consultants/contractors
- FF rated highly in terms of accessibility and quality of service. The majority gave the programme a high rating of ease of accessibility and a good or excellent rating of quality of service. Almost two-thirds of respondents had their aims fully or mostly met by FF, with a third reporting a high impact on their business, with diversification and regeneration being the most popular choices
- Beneficiaries of all three strands of FF support were represented. Half received grants relating to woodland management and just under half received grants for woodland creation. Just over half received grants in the form of business support
- Three quarters had not sought support from another source prior to receiving help from FF and over half used only FF support

### 3.3 Medium and Long-Term Impact: Wider Survey

3.3.1 This section summarises the key findings from the wider survey undertaken with 25 FF indirect beneficiaries (i.e. people who were not recipients of FF services but may have been exposed to its activities in other ways). This was a small sample and these findings should therefore be reviewed with this in mind.

- Most of the respondents to the wider survey (excluding those who didn't know) believed that the quality of their interaction with the schemes was good or very good
- Half of respondents considered the quality of the work done by FF to be high or very high and over half of wider respondents believed that the project had made a high or very high impact
- The vast majority of respondents believed that the work of FF had benefited the region in an environmental or economic way. Half considered that the work of FF had made an impact on the visibility and image of the area. They were also very positive about the impact on land management and the local environment
- In terms of helping to develop partnerships, over half did not know whether this had been an outcome from the project. A majority of respondents believed that FF had positively impacted on businesses in the area
- A similar number believed that there had been an impact on the people living in the area in terms of skills and knowledge, ability to derive more enjoyment from local amenities and improved land management
- A majority of respondents believed that the improvements in terms of visibility and image of the area would not have happened without FF. In terms of improvement to the quality of the woodland, a majority also thought that this would not have happened without FF
- Wider respondents believed that improvement to the programme should be in terms of expanding the scope and resources of the programme

### 3.4 Long-Term Impact: Case Studies

3.4.1 Case studies were used to as a method to collect more qualitative data on the activities of FF. They provided some insight into some of the impacts that are more



difficult to quantify, such as social and community effects and environmental impacts. In total, 6 case studies were undertaken.

- The case studies for FF indicate that, through the three branches of funding (woodland creation; woodland management and business support), a wide range of beneficiaries can be reached. FF has impacted directly on businesses, farmers, land agents and families and indirectly on suppliers, visitors and local communities, including schools
- FF's business support branch has enabled the start-up, expansion and diversification of businesses, ensuring the retention of some employment and creation of new employment and apprenticeships. Businesses have benefited not only from direct grant aid, but also from FF's liaison with other funding bodies to access aid. Furthermore, FF's funding of general business advice and the construction of a business plan will benefit businesses in the longer term
- Planting, management funding and advice has, in some cases, enabled the whole or part diversification of farm businesses and saved land from being used in a less environmentally-friendly way. These woodland areas have recreational and tourism value. In addition, woodland awareness has been boosted by enabling non-income earning initiatives to take place, which could not have been set up without the help of FF
- There has been an impact on family structures and family life as a consequence of the FF support
- The case study beneficiaries demonstrate that FF funding can work well in combination with help from other funding bodies

## 3.5 Environmental Analysis

3.5.1 Environmental analysis was undertaken utilising data from the primary research above, as well as information provided by FF.

- *Landscape and Visual Amenity:* It was considered, from case study evidence, that planting was sympathetic to the local landscape character and had aimed to enhance it. Given the generally moderately low residential population density (42 people per km<sup>2</sup>) in relation to the planting sites, the impact on visual amenity was considered to be low. Nevertheless, in the medium and longer term there will be an impact on the landscape and visual amenities that should be of value to tourists and for recreational purposes. This will need to be evaluated in the future to assess the extent of these impacts.
- *Biodiversity and Habitat Creation:* New FF woodland creation schemes scored highly across biodiversity criteria in grant applications with almost 70% achieving maximum points for potential contribution to Cumbria Woodlands Habitat Action Plans (HAP) targets. Half of the applications for woodland management grants contributed to the renovation of managed woodlands and contributed to the protection of Ancient Woodland and HAP/Species Action Plans (SAP) targets
- *Other Environmental Impacts:* Whilst it was not possible to evaluate some of the wider environmental impacts, it was calculated that 3,033 tonnes of carbon were sequestered in woodland during the study period
- FF has made a positive impact on the environment, from the perspective of the vast majority of beneficiaries in the beneficiary survey. A majority of wider survey respondents also believed that there had been a positive impact on the visibility and image of the area, due to FF. They were also very positive about the effect on land management and the environment in the local area

- Environmental impacts and effects are in evidence within the case studies. Case study evidence shows that these effects would not have happened without FF
- More broadleaf had been planted than conifer and the rate of planting had increased in recent times, potentially reflecting that the FF project was established and gaining momentum. The average size of new planting schemes was 15.5ha and they were well distributed across the FF area

## 3.6 Economic Analysis

**3.6.1** Economic analysis was undertaken using an input-output model which was built upon key information from the primary research and information from FF.

- 100 local jobs (net of deadweight but not displacement, since displacement effects were not observed during the evaluation) have been supported through the FF project, of which 65 are thought to be sustainable. In the UK as a whole, we estimate that 145 jobs have been supported, of which 95 are classified as sustainable<sup>1</sup>. **The cost per job supported is presented below in Chapter 4**

## 3.7 Effectiveness and Value for Money

**3.7.1** An assessment of effectiveness and value for money was carried out. This reviewed overall progress against objectives at the FF, together with the return on investment and value for money of the outputs. The overall gross cost of the total outcomes by FF over the period of evaluation was £415,558 and the contribution of the Forestry Commission represented approximately 36% of this. Looking across the business plan objectives through which FF deliver their outputs, we can see that Objective 1 (woodland expansion and management) utilised 49% of this gross figure while Objective 2 (the business development programme) used 25%. The remaining 26% of the gross costs were spread across the other 5 objectives (training, recreation/tourism, business collaboration, market development for wood and understanding and education). The outputs and outcomes from these programmes of activity have been in line with expectations as detailed below.

## 3.8 Conclusions: Assessment of Performance Against Aims of the Evaluation

**3.8.1** These are developed in relation to each of the key aims of the evaluation, as detailed above in Section 1.2.1.

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainability was calculated utilising grant income and turnover figures for Business Support beneficiaries. This category of beneficiary does not exist in SWF and therefore, data is not available on employment sustainability for SWF.

***Evaluation Aim 1: To assess the performance of the projects against the agreed aims, objectives and outcomes set out in their respective business plans***

***Aims and Objectives***

3.8.2 FF has made good progress against its stated aims and objectives. The majority of expenditure (almost 75%) in the project was made against the first 2 objective areas which overlap most with the three key activity areas of woodland management, woodland creation and business development. A summary of progress in each objective area is below.

***Objective 1: Facilitating woodland development and management through provision of advisory visits and reports***

3.8.3 In total, 74 reports were generated on new planting enquiries and 88 reports were generated on woodland management enquiries. Assuming a site visit and report generation to require 8 hours work, at commercial rates (approximately £40 per hour), the value of these reports is £52,000.

3.8.4 A further 209 enquiries did not receive both a visit and report (but in most cases one or the other). Assuming a conservative value on these at £100 each, these may be valued at £21,000.

***Objective 2: Facilitating the Business Development Programme***

3.8.5 In total, 279 enquires have been managed to date (November 2005) of which 144 received business planning advice and/or technical advice and/or a grant.

***Objective 3: Skills Training***

3.8.6 In total 453 training days were delivered and 8 training events were undertaken. An additional 21 other courses were undertaken providing 102 training places.

3.8.7 The value of the training courses run and other training events amounts to approximately £40,000 (based on the valuation of the Project Director).

***Objective 4: Demonstration projects***

3.8.8 This was a small element in the FF activities. Information was not provided on this area.

***Objective 5: Collaboration between owners and producers***

3.8.9 This was a small element in the FF activities. Information was not provided on this area.

*Objective 6: Development of local markets*

- 3.8.10 This was a small element in the FF activities. Four case studies were developed (with a contract value of £5,000).

*Objective 7: Foster greater public understanding of Cumbria's woodlands*

- 3.8.11 In total, 4 newsletters were published at a total cost of £3000 and 2 other published reports cost approximately £2,500. A 'Site to See' leaflet was published at a cost of £1,000.
- 3.8.12 The Cumbrian Beanpole Festival was organised at a cost of £12,000.

*Objectives overall*

- 3.8.13 Good progress has been made in the first 2 objective areas, which overlap most with the key activities of FF.

*Programme of Activity*

- 3.8.14 Cutting across these 7 objective areas were 3 main areas of activity as discussed above in **paragraph 3.1.4**:
- Woodland management
  - Woodland creation
  - Business support and development

*Outputs*

- 3.8.15 The woodland management and creation advisory programme has involved a total of 1296 hours of advisory time (for the production of 162 reports) over the evaluation period which would be valued at £51,840 at commercial rates. The business development programme has assisted with 279 enquiries of which 144 received business planning advice, technical advice or assistance with a grant, which would be valued at £46,080.

*Outcomes*

- 3.8.16 The outcomes arising from these activities are summarised below:

*Woodland Management*

- 1,008.17ha of existing woodland developed (with associated grants of £526,925)
- Average work for woodland consultants of approximately 17 hours per week (based on 16% of beneficiary survey respondents) – this relates to both woodland management and woodland creation

**Woodland Creation**

- 404.4ha of new planting of which 87% was broadleaved (with associated grants of £338,222)

**Business Development**

- 79% of beneficiaries advanced their already-existing businesses
- 10% of beneficiaries started a new business
- 144 business received advice and/or a grant (with associated grants of £227,570)<sup>2</sup>

**Overall**

- 145 UK jobs and 100 local jobs supported (retained and created)
- Of these, 145 UK jobs, 46 were direct jobs arising from the Business Support Programme (a proportion of the indirect, induced and knock-on jobs have also arisen from the Business Support activities).

**Evaluation Aim 2 To identify and assess other unintended or wider rural development outcomes that have emerged over the lifetime of the projects**

- 3.8.17 In terms of wider rural development outcomes, the most notable areas within which to assess the effect of FF have been the jobs supported (which includes jobs created and protected together with knock-on employment) and the community effects.

**Employment**

- 3.8.18 In the UK as a whole, we estimate that 145 jobs have been supported.
- 3.8.19 Woodland consultant and contractors (16% of beneficiaries) cited increased work opportunities and improvement in contact networks. They undertook on average 17.24 hours per week FF work. All said FF had an impact on their income and half said income had grown rapidly.
- 3.8.20 19% of beneficiary respondents saw an increase in employment, with a mean increase of 1.6 employees.

**Community Effects**

- 3.8.21 Case study data shows that there has been an impact on family structures and family life as a consequence of the FF support. The initiatives have provided beneficiaries with additional work opportunities, thereby safeguarding livelihoods and ensuring that families remain intact. This, of course, has a further effect on the community and environment in the region.

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<sup>2</sup> Grant figures provided by FF

***Evaluation Aim 3: To evaluate from an economic perspective the full range of financial, social and environmental effects, including wider halo effects***

***Financial***

- 3.8.22 100 local jobs (net of deadweight but not displacement) have been supported through the FF project.
- 3.8.23 Evidence from the beneficiary survey, wider survey and case studies indicate that there was a notable impact on businesses in the area. Business Support beneficiaries cited major impact with economic improvement, increased business security and efficiency. Most were able to advance their business and a small number started a business as a result of FF help. Supporting this result, almost three quarters of wider survey respondents believed that FF had positively impacted on businesses in the area. Most of these thought that local businesses would not have been able to access such support from any alternative source. Furthermore, case study evidence shows that FF's business support branch has enabled the start-up, expansion and diversification of businesses, ensuring the retention of some employment and creation of new employment and apprenticeships.
- 3.8.24 Following from this, as a result of the FF support people felt more positive about running their businesses
- 3.8.25 Looking at wider impacts, over one third) of beneficiary respondents saw an increase in local timber usage as result of FF and the mean increase in local timber usage was over 50%.

***Social***

- 3.8.26 In terms of social impacts, improved confidence and quality of life improvement is taking place. Approximately half of beneficiary respondents said there had been an impact on their confidence for the future and one quarter saw an improvement in their quality of life.
- 3.8.27 Over half of beneficiary respondents said that their horizons had been broadened by FF.
- 3.8.28 There was also an impact in terms of how people interacted with the area - most of the wider survey respondents believed that there had been an impact on the people living in the area in terms of skills and knowledge, ability to derive more enjoyment from local amenities and improved land.

***Environmental***

- 3.8.29 The environmental impact of the FF project was reviewed in relation to Landscape and Visual Amenity (potential and actual), Biodiversity and Habitat Creation, and wider Environmental Services.

- 3.8.30 FF has made a positive impact on the environment, from the perspective of the vast majority of beneficiaries. A majority of wider survey respondents believed that there had been a positive impact on the visibility and image of the area, due to FF. They were also very positive about the effect on land management and the environment in the local area.
- 3.8.31 Environmental impacts and effects are in evidence from the work that has been done by FF. Case study evidence shows that these effects would not have happened without FF.
- 3.8.32 More broadleaf had been planted than conifer and the rate of planting had increased in recent times, potentially reflecting that the FF project was established and gaining momentum. The average size of new planting schemes was 15.5ha and they were well distributed across the FF area.
- 3.8.33 Landscape and Visual Amenity: Planting was sympathetic to the local landscape character and had aimed to enhance it. Given the generally moderately low residential population density (42 people per km<sup>2</sup>) in relation to the planting sites, the impact on visual amenity was considered to be low. There was a greater potential impact on the amenity of tourists given the area's significance as a tourist destination, as discussed above in **paragraph 3.5.1**.
- 3.8.34 Biodiversity and Habitat Creation: New FF woodland creation schemes scored highly across biodiversity criteria in grant applications with almost 70% achieving maximum points for potential contribution to Cumbria Woodlands HAP targets. Half of the applications for woodland management grants contributed to the renovation of managed woodlands and contributed to the protection of Ancient Woodland and HAP/SAP targets.
- 3.8.35 Other Environmental Impacts: Whilst it was not possible to evaluate some of the wider environmental impacts, it was calculated that 3,033 tonnes of carbon were sequestered in FF woodland during the study period.

## 3.9 Overall Observations

- 3.9.1 FF has made good progress against most of its objectives and has clear measurable outcomes.
- 3.9.2 Looking across these outcomes from the FF project including employment, community, financial, social and environmental, the investment in the 2002-2005 phase of the project represents excellent value for money. The overall gross cost of the total outcomes by the FF over the period of evaluation was £415,554 and the contribution of the Forestry Commission represented approximately 36% of this (other funders of the project are listed in Appendix A). The main activities of FF - woodland expansion and management and the business development programme - utilised 49% and 25% respectively of this gross figure. The outputs and outcomes from these objectives have been in line with expectations as detailed above.

- 3.9.3 As a vehicle for rural development, this project represents a solid example of what can be achieved in terms of employment and assisting with rural community development. Through each of its programmes of activity, rural development has seen a positive impact most notably through the supporting of employment, environmental impacts and community support.
- 3.9.4 There is evidence of additionality in the programme. This project has filled a gap that would not otherwise have been filled.



## 4 Summary: South West Forest and Forest Futures Projects

	<i>South West Forest</i>	<i>Forest Futures</i>
<b>Project Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural restructuring and woodland potential</li> <li>• Development of the forestry industry</li> <li>• Training and business development</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of the natural environment</li> <li>• Recreation and tourism promotion</li> <li>• Community networks, education and sustainable development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland expansion and management programme</li> <li>• Facilitation and delivery of the Business Development Programme</li> <li>• Facilitation of a rejuvenated woodland culture</li> <li>• Work with partners to create new flagship projects that demonstrate the potential for woodland</li> <li>• Facilitation of opportunities for collaboration between small-scale woodland owners and producers</li> <li>• Help with the development and promotion of markets for local wood and wood-related products and woodfuel</li> <li>• Fostering of greater public understanding and appreciation of the role of Cumbria's woodlands and woodland-related products and businesses</li> </ul>
<b>Total <u>Gross</u> Project Cost (cumulative 2002-2005)</b>	£1,011,362	£415,558
<b>Average <u>Gross</u> Project Cost per annum</b>	£337,120	£138,519

<b>Total Core Funding Provided by FC (cumulative 2002-2005)</b>	<i>£150,000</i>	<i>£150,000</i>
<b>Total Woodland Management and Improvement Grants 2002-2005</b>	<i>£194,000</i>	<i>£526,925</i>
<b>Total Woodland Creation Grants (and no. of Ha) 2002-2005</b>	<i>£2.874m (1295.2 ha)</i>	<i>£338,222 (404.4 ha)</i>
<b>Total Business Support Grants (and no. of applicants/businesses advised) 2002-2005</b>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>£227,570 (144 businesses)</i>
<b>Reports Generated on Woodland Management and Improvement</b>	<i>269 (144 + 125 monitoring reports)</i>	<i>88</i>
<b>Reports Generated on Woodland Creation</b>	<i>352 (227 + 125 monitoring reports)</i>	<i>74</i>
<b>Business Development Assistance Provided</b>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>144</i>
<b>Total Hours Involved in Reports and Assistance</b>	<i>4,130</i>	<i>2,448</i>
<b>Commercial Value of Advice Provided (assuming £40 ph)</b>	<i>£165,200</i>	<i>£97,920</i>
<b>Community Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided useful educational context for school teachers</li> <li>• Improved access for 150 people to healthy walking activities and in the long term,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on communities through development of community woodlands</li> <li>• Impact on family structures and family life – provided additional work opportunities,</li> </ul>

	<p>improved health and wellbeing of participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to new social network for walkers</li> <li>• Opportunity to access new ideas by 135 collaborators through the SWF Collaboration Groups</li> <li>• Impact on communities through development of community woodlands</li> <li>• Delivery of the Tree for All Programme (together with the Woodland Trust) involving several hundred school children in tree-planting activity, thereby stimulating interest in environmental matters among a large number of young people</li> <li>• Impacts on 995 trainees through participation in wide range of training programmes</li> <li>• Impact on family structures and family life – enabled people to remain on their land (less than 5% of beneficiaries)</li> </ul>	<p>thereby safeguarding livelihoods (less than 5% of beneficiaries)</p>
<p><b>Financial Effects</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment impacts (above)</li> <li>• Positive business performance effects (25% of beneficiary survey respondents saw this)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment impacts (above)</li> <li>• Major economic improvement (increased business security and efficiency) for Business Support beneficiaries. (79% were able to advance their business and a further 10% started a business as a result of FF help)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Social Effects</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of life/lifestyle improvement (33% of beneficiary survey respondents saw this)</li> <li>• Improved outlook and attitude among beneficiaries (50% felt more confident about the future)</li> <li>• Positive social impact on the region as a result of the annual Woodfair with over 5000 attendees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of life/lifestyle improvement (26% of beneficiaries survey respondents saw this)</li> <li>• Improved outlook and attitude among beneficiaries (53% felt more confident about the future)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental Effects</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low impact on visual amenities</li> <li>• New SWF woodland creation schemes scored highly across, on average, two out of three, biodiversity criteria in grant applications</li> <li>• Approximately 13,988 tonnes of carbon sequestered (based on approximately 1295.2 ha of new woodland created from 2002-2005)</li> <li>• Carbon rights of approx. 200 ha of the SWF planting purchased by Future Forest and Treemiles</li> <li>• Positive impact on the visibility and image of the area (most beneficiaries saw this)</li> <li>• More broadleaf than conifer planting (in an almost 2:1 ratio) and conifer planting slowing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low impact on visual amenities</li> <li>• New FF woodland creation schemes scored highly across biodiversity criteria in grant applications with almost 70% achieving maximum points for potential contribution to Cumbria Woodlands HAP targets</li> <li>• Half of the applications for woodland management grants contributed to the renovation of managed woodlands and contributed to the protection of Ancient Woodland and HAP/SAP targets</li> <li>• Approximately 3,033 tonnes of carbon sequestered in woodland created during the 2002-2005 period</li> </ul>

<b>Total Employment Impact</b>	131 <b>local</b> jobs (net of deadweight but not displacement, as no displacement seen)  197 jobs supported in the <b>UK</b>	100 <b>local</b> jobs (net of deadweight but not displacement, as no displacement seen)  145 jobs supported in the <b>UK</b>
<b>Employment Impact of Business Development Support Programme</b>	Not applicable	Of the 145 UK jobs supported, 46 of these were direct employment arising from the Business development support (in addition, a proportion of the indirect, induced and knock-on jobs were a result of Business development support)
<b>Sustainable Total Employment Impact</b> <i>(‘sustainable’ defined as the job likely to be still in place in the absence of grant support)</i>	Figure not available <sup>3</sup>	65 sustainable <b>local</b> jobs  95 sustainable jobs supported in the <b>UK</b>
<b>Beneficiary Groups Included in Employment Impacts Metric</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 346 Farmers/landowners</li> <li>• 135 Collaborations partners</li> </ul> <i>(assuming associated with 60% of project and grant costs)<sup>4</sup></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88 Farmers/landowners</li> <li>• 127 Business support recipients</li> <li>• 26 Woodland consultants and contractors</li> </ul>
<b>Beneficiary Groups NOT Included in Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 995 Trainees</li> <li>• 15 Trainers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> The calculation of sustainability required insight into revenues of beneficiaries compared to grant income. This was available for FF through Business Development support beneficiaries. However, since no such group exists for SWF, it was not possible to estimate this.

<sup>4</sup> This is a conservative estimate of the proportion of costs associated with the employment impacts. Since employment impacts were not the ultimate goal of either SWF or FF, it is not unexpected that a large proportion of project expenditure would be spent working towards achieving project objectives that do not produce employment impacts. Since, in the case of SWF, most beneficiaries were not included in the calculation of jobs supported figures (since by their nature, this was not possible), in order to accurately estimate the cost associated with those jobs that were supported, we have approximated the overall cost to the SWF project.

<b>Impacts Metric</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 Woodland consultants/contractors</li> <li>• 5300 Woodfair beneficiaries</li> <li>• 50 Participants in local activities</li> <li>• 11 Community project beneficiaries</li> <li>• 20 Teachers</li> <li>• 59 Health walkers</li> </ul> <p><i>(assuming associated with 40% of project and grant costs)</i></p>	
<b>Gross Cost Per UK Job Supported (i.e. retained or created) (based on gross project costs, <u>EXCLUDING</u> all grants)</b>	<p>£3,080 per job supported</p> <p><i>(based on 60% of gross project costs, <u>EXCLUDING</u> all grants)</i></p>	<p>£2866 per job</p> <p><i>(based on 100% of gross project costs, <u>EXCLUDING</u> all grants) supported</i></p>
<b>Gross Cost Per UK Job Supported (i.e. retained or created) (based on gross project costs, <u>INCLUDING</u> all grants)</b>	<p>£12,424 per job supported</p> <p><i>(based on 60% of gross project costs, <u>INCLUDING</u> all grants)</i></p>	<p>£10,401 per job supported</p> <p><i>(based on 100% of gross project costs, <u>INCLUDING</u> all grants)</i></p>

## 5 Evaluation Framework

5.1.1 This chapter reviews the evaluation framework utilised in the course of this evaluation and provides commentary, where appropriate, on how this was adapted as the evaluation progressed, in line with the reality of the projects and the data available. Furthermore, consideration is given to the needs of future evaluations and how factors that became apparent during the present research may be incorporated into future evaluation frameworks.

5.1.2 The context for the evaluation methodology was set by a paper by Prof. Bill Slee which set out a number of specific questions that a comprehensive evaluation would need to address. These questions, together with the evaluation framework detailed below guided the evaluation process. These were as follows:

- What if any evidence is available about the pre-project situation (baseline against which to evaluate) in relation to all outcomes that are flagged as relevant to the project?
- What were the processes by which the project was designed and outputs were delivered and how effectively were they implemented?
- What economic effects has the project generated?
- What evidence if any is there of displacement effects of the project?
- Have any other projects taken place in the project area or nearby which might have generated some of the outputs/outcomes sought by the project?
- What changes have taken place in the values of non-market goods and bads?
- What changes have occurred at community level as a result of the project?
- What has been the impact of the project on household livelihoods?
- What, if any, have been the wider knock on effects of the project?
- Has the project impacted positively on sustainable development indicators?

5.1.3 All of these questions were addressed within the evaluation process. The questions provided a useful understanding of what the evaluation of the two projects needed to include, as well as some of the key issues that needed to be considered specifically in a forestry environment. It was particularly helpful to have clear direction to seek information from the evaluation process about the non-market impacts. This provided a context for the qualitative impacts that arose from both SWF and FF. It also ensured that aspects of the projects that did not have an obvious and/or universally agreed monetary value associated with them (such as impacts on the landscape, biodiversity and carbon sequestration) were still accounted for and measured.

5.1.4 The evaluation framework (shown below) developed by PACEC was customised for the two projects (SWF and FF) and the specific measures to assess effectiveness were further developed and linked back to the outputs/outcomes anticipated for the two projects. Reflecting guidance, the framework also linked to policy aims, inputs and expenditure (to help assess efficiency), key measures (economic, social and environmental) and policy adjustments.

### Figure 5.1 Evaluation Framework for SWF and FF

- a Policy aims of SWF and FF and outputs and outcomes
- b Inputs: expenditure, leverage and other resources
- c The baseline position  
The economic, social, and environmental circumstances
- d The delivery and activities: the number of projects delivered, methods and involvement, and stages reached
- e Economic Effects. For example,
  - Direct, indirect, induced jobs in forestry and related activities (e.g. tourism and the supply chain)
  - Intermediate: skills in woodland creation and management, enterprise skills, community involvement, networking and showcasing, tourism, the environment, animal management,
  - Business performance: firms created, firm survival, sales, jobs, local recruitment, profits, etc.

Displacement and crowding out of other initiatives: other businesses, households and projects
- f The wider effects in terms of non-market goods not paid for, i.e. positive and negative externalities, such as improvements in leisure opportunities, appreciation of the natural environment and health or on the negative side over-activity in the forests, environmental damage
- g The development of social capital (the informal norms promoting cooperation between people) and positive attitudes to community participation and education, leisure etc
- h Household benefits and distribution effects on the economic and social wellbeing in the area
- i Benefits to other projects. Leverage in other funds and resources to other projects. This may strengthen the synergy effect
- j Environmental Effects: Long term sustainability and improvements in the quality of life and on some of the following indicators

5.1.5 Some of the measures above are quantifiable, e.g. the number of firms and jobs generated) while others are qualitative (e.g. social capital). This approach was an effective way of approaching the evaluation of these projects and can provide a good starting point for further evaluation work of other rural development projects. The key challenges faced when using this approach are reviewed below.

## 5.2 Key Issues

5.2.1 In the course of undertaking this evaluation, a number of specific issues emerged which impacted on the evaluators ability to implement the evaluation framework. These are detailed below:

5.2.2 **The problem posed by external factors in both projects:** A myriad of externalities exist, for example, unpaid-for benefits of forest access by users would be a positive externality and by contrast unpaid for damage to the forest and its biodiversity as a



result of forest projects and/or users would constitute a negative externality. This clearly raises problems in the measurement of such external effects.

- 5.2.3 **Recommendations:** *Any specific research done on these external factors should be identified, reviewed and utilised as a benchmark for future evaluations.*
- 5.2.4 **Lack of core data:** It has been problematic to access centralised, up-to date data on woodland improvement and new planting grants.
- 5.2.5 **Recommendations:** *Appropriate measures to centrally record amounts and use of spending within projects need to be put in place. These records need to be comparable between areas to ensure consistency of analysis.*
- 5.2.6 **Diversity of beneficiaries:** It quickly became clear that the beneficiary groups in SWF were very varied. In total 10 different beneficiary groups were identified. This made the survey process (design, implementation and analysis) more complicated than originally envisaged. Furthermore, not all of these beneficiary groups benefited in a similar way - many did not experience any economic impact but felt significant quality of life improvements (e.g. health walkers in SWF).
- 5.2.7 **Recommendations:** *It was important that all beneficiaries were included in the evaluation although they experienced different types of impacts (e.g. financial, social, community, business growth, personal development etc). It is essential for users of the evaluation report to understand that not all beneficiaries will (for example) see an economic impact and that they should expect to see a range of impacts and outcomes (rather than just a uniform type of impact across all beneficiaries).*
- 5.2.8 **Qualitative impacts:** Many of the most significant impacts on people living in these areas have been qualitative (e.g. quality of life, more optimistic about their business, environmental improvements) and are well described by beneficiaries. Because it is more difficult to apply a measure to these impacts, some observers may underestimate these impacts.
- 5.2.9 **Recommendations:** *As above, expectations should be set clearly (and if possible from the outset of an evaluation such as this) that impacts will be both qualitative and quantitative in nature.*

## Appendix A

### A1 Project Funders for SWF and FF

A1.1 In the case of SWF, main funders for the project have been:

- Objective 1
- Vocational Training Scheme
- Rural Enterprise Scheme
- The Forestry Commission
- Countryside Agency
- Devon County Council
- Cornwall County Council
- North Devon DC
- Torridge DC
- West Devon BC
- Landfill Tax - via SWEET (UK) Ltd
- Woodland Trust - Tree 4 All Programme
- Forest Education Initiative Partnership Fund

A1.2 In the case of FF, main funders for the project have been

- The Forestry Commission
- Rural Regeneration Cumbria
- Cumbria County Council
- English Nature