

UKWAS

United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard



Third Edition (version 3.0)
www.ukwas.org.uk

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard is an independent certification standard for verifying sustainable woodland management in the United Kingdom.

www.ukwas.org.uk

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The UK Woodland Assurance Standard is available in two easy-to-use versions available on www.ukwas.org.uk.

- There is an on-line version designed for use when working on screen allowing users to navigate simply and quickly between the different sections of the certification standard. It includes a word search facility to help users quickly to find relevant sections of the certification standard.

- There is a document version in pdf format which is designed for use as a portable paper document that can be downloaded and printed by the user.

Users requiring a plain text document version in MS Word format for use in preparing bespoke certification documentation can request a copy from the UKWAS Support Unit.

Document history

Version 3.0: approved by Steering Group, 21st June 2011

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Designed by Firefly, Edinburgh
www.firefly-uk.com

Images on cover and page 49: courtesy of Forestry Commission



Foreword



The launch of this third edition of the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) marks another milestone in the development of forestry certification in the UK.

The first edition in 1999 heralded a sea-change in our sector's approach to demonstrating its environmental and social credentials alongside its contribution to the national economy. The UKWAS standard is now central to the UK programmes of both the leading global certification schemes – the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). The latest figures show that 50% of the UK's woodland area and an estimated 85% of harvested timber is certified through one or both of these schemes. Indeed it is a unique feature of the UK forestry sector that woodlands can be dual certified to a single national standard so providing enterprises with the maximum possible flexibility to meet their customers' needs. There can be little doubt that the UKWAS has contributed to raising the standard of woodland management across the United Kingdom.

This new edition has been developed by a multi-stakeholder steering group and is evolutionary rather than revolutionary in its approach. Its development has been informed by a three-year review process including international benchmarking and three rounds of stakeholder consultation. Full account has been taken of the new UK Forestry Standard's requirements and those of FSC and PEFC.

Many changes involve minor updating to embrace new technical or scientific knowledge such as the latest guidance on deadwood management. In addition, the Steering Group has looked to embrace new and complex issues facing woodland managers such as the need for our woodlands to be resilient to climate change and the consequent impact on our weather and the incidence of pests and disease.

The opportunity has also been taken to clarify the standard wherever possible with particular focus on defining the woodland management unit, identifying woodlands of high conservation value and elaborating better the requirements restricting the conversion of woodland to non-forested land. The section on pesticides, biological control agents and fertilizers has also been revised so that it now conforms to both FSC and PEFC requirements whilst re-emphasising its clear focus on avoiding and minimising usage.

As a consequence of a further review of small and low intensity managed (SLIM) woodland issues and the results of international benchmarking, the 'small woodland' upper threshold has been raised from 100 hectares to 500 hectares; this should deliver benefits to smaller owners in terms of ensuring that certification scheme auditing requirements are not unduly onerous.

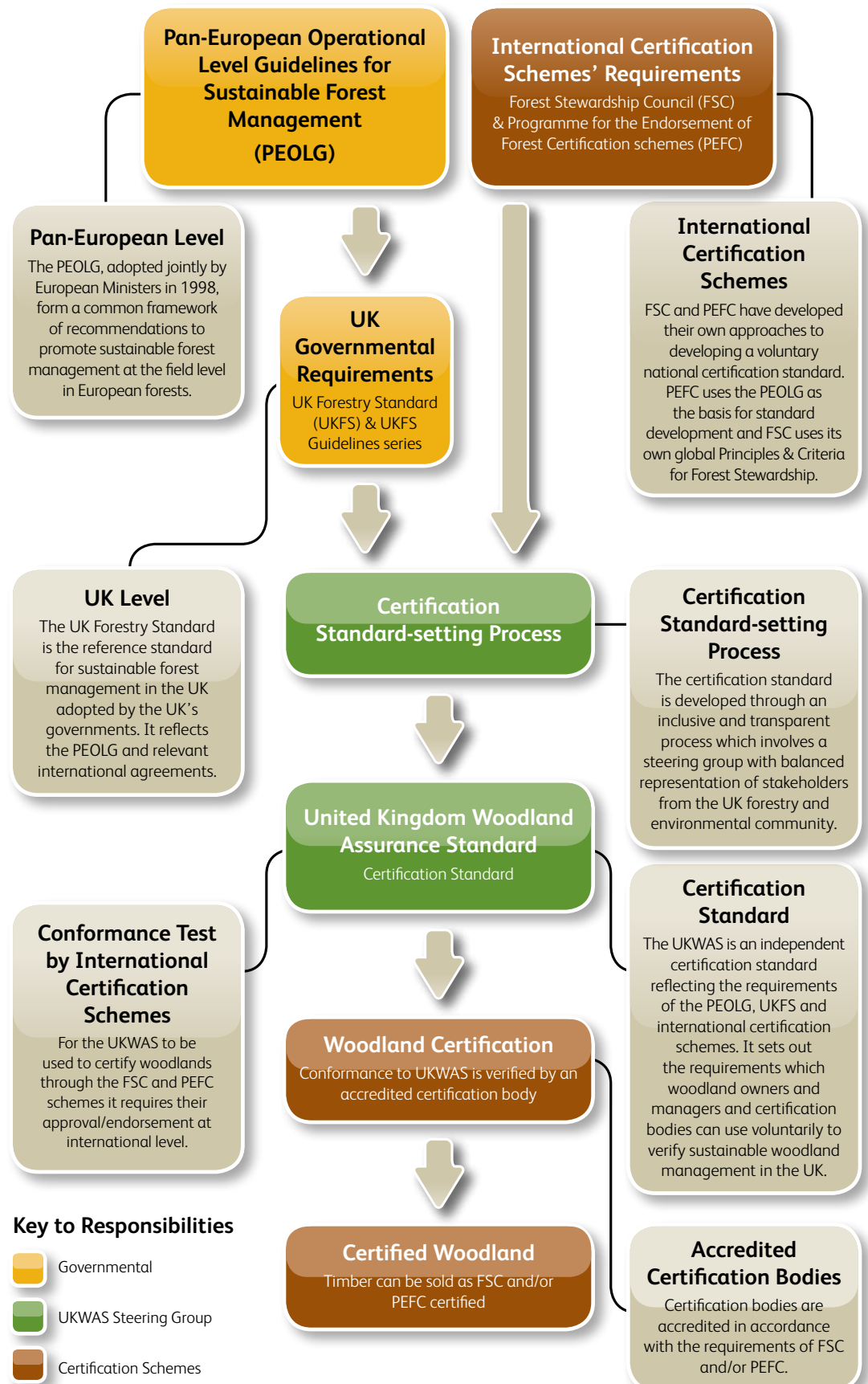
I am confident that this third edition will prove to be a robust and essential tool enabling UK producers to demonstrate their good credentials to stakeholders and customers.

Peter Wilson FICFor CEnv
Executive Chairman

Woodland Certification in the UK

The Introduction section of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard explains the background to the development of the certification standard.

This diagram illustrates how the UK Woodland Assurance Standard draws from both governmental requirements and those of the two leading global forest certification schemes to produce a certification standard that conforms to UK regulatory requirements and provides the tool necessary for woodlands to be independently verified as meeting the requirements of both these certification schemes. The responsibility for different aspects is also indicated.



Introduction

1. Background and purpose

The international timber products market frequently demands assurance about the quality and environmental and social impacts of woodland management. One way to provide this assurance is through independent verification against a published certification standard which defines appropriate and effective management. In forestry, this process is known as sustainable forest management certification or simply forest, or woodland, certification.

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) is an independent certification standard which sets out the requirements which woodland owners and managers and certification bodies can use to certify woodland management in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK). The certification standard is developed through an inclusive and transparent process which has involved a balanced representation of stakeholders from the UK forestry and environmental community.

Primarily, the certification standard is designed to reflect the requirements set out in the governmental UK Forestry Standard and thereby the General Guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers at Helsinki in 1993, the Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines (PEOLG) subsequently adopted at Lisbon in 1998 and other relevant international agreements.

In response to the demand from the UK forestry and forest products sector, the certification standard is also designed to reflect the requirements of the two leading global forest certification schemes – the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). Products certified through these schemes are in much demand in the UK and global timber market as they provide a widely recognised way to inform customers that timber products come from responsibly managed sources.

The UK arms of FSC and PEFC take responsibility for submitting the UKWAS standard to their international parent bodies for assessment and provided the UKWAS standard is judged to be conformant with each scheme's requirements it will provide a certification standard for certification through each of these schemes. A list of certification schemes that currently use the UK Woodland Assurance Standard as the basis for certification in the UK can be found on www.ukwas.org.uk.

The UKWAS recognises that one of the strengths of UK woodland management is its diversity. Therefore, there is broad scope within the certification standard for owners and managers to decide on appropriate objectives for their woodland. The certification standard generally prescribes what must, overall, be achieved but leaves it to the owner/manager to decide how this is best done in each situation.

2. Use of the certification standard

This certification standard has been designed primarily for use in the certification of UK woodlands by independent certification bodies to demonstrate that a woodland is sustainably managed.

The certification standard can be used in conjunction with a separate chain-of-custody certification standard to provide traceability and so facilitate on-product labelling of forest products from sustainably managed sources; full details are available from the relevant certification schemes. It may also be used in conjunction with an ISO 14001 environmental management system to provide performance targets or in conjunction with the Woodland Carbon Code to demonstrate that a forest-carbon sequestration project is managed in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management.

Full conformance with the certification standard is voluntary. However, an independent third-party evaluation by an

accredited certification body (sometimes referred to as a 'certification authority', 'conformity assessment body' or 'certifier') is necessary to confirm conformance in order to obtain a certificate. No woodland owner or manager is required by law or regulation to undergo such an audit. However, it should be noted that some requirements of the certification standard are also required by law, and so must be complied with by all woodland owners/managers. Other requirements are a condition of Forestry Commission and Forest Service grants and felling licences and must be complied with by all relevant licensees and grant-holders.

The structure of the certification standard relates to the way in which management is implemented in the woodland, addressing specific aspects of management or types of operation in turn.

The sections of the certification standard are as follows:

1. Compliance with the law and conformance with the requirements of the certification standard
2. Management planning
3. Woodland design: creation, felling and replanting
4. Operations
5. Protection and maintenance
6. Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity
7. The community
8. Forestry workforce.

Introduction (continued)

3. Structure of the certification standard

The certification standard is set out as follows:

Requirements

These are the compulsory elements of the certification standard. Woodland management must meet all relevant requirements and certification bodies will check that each requirement is being met. 'Requirements' are generally stated as 'shall' implying they are compulsory elements of the certification standard. Where 'requirements' are stated as 'should' this implies that, although not compulsory elements, evidence of conformance is checked by the certification body and will contribute to overall conformance with associated requirements.

Means of verification

These suggest the type of objective evidence - documents, actions or discussions - that the certification body should consider in order to verify that the requirement is being met. The verifiers suggested are not exclusive or exhaustive - certification bodies will not always need to use all the verifiers suggested, and may seek verification in other ways.

Guidance notes

These aim to help both the woodland owner/manager and the certification body to understand how requirements should be applied in practice. More information is provided to elaborate some requirements, the meaning of certain terms or phrases is explained, and examples of appropriate action are given.

Note 1: certification bodies shall take full account of the 'guidance notes' given for each 'requirement' when assessing conformance with the certification standard.

Note 2: the guidance note can include advice for owners/managers on related matters which are beyond the direct scope of a forest management certification standard e.g. owners/managers are advised to check the specific requirements of certification schemes in relation to chain-of-custody certification matters. Such information is provided as an advisory note only and shall not be considered by certification bodies when assessing conformance with the certification standard.

4. Procedures for use of the certification standard

Accreditation

Certification bodies shall be accredited to undertake independent woodland management certification using the UK Woodland Assurance Standard by a national or international accreditation service that operates in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011 2004. Accreditation services should normally demonstrate this through membership of the European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA), the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL). Any accreditation service operating outwith the auspices of these representative bodies shall provide the UKWAS company with evidence of conformance with ISO/IEC 17011 2004. The accreditation service shall ensure that the certification body meets all the requirements of ISO/IEC Guides 62 and 65 as well as all the criteria which are explicitly part of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.

The UKWAS company will challenge any use of UKWAS trademarks by certification bodies not accredited in this way.

Disputes procedures

Certification bodies shall have a formal dispute management procedure which is open to all parties at any time, to deal with non-conformance and challenges (ISO/IEC Guide 62:2.1.4; Guide 65:4.5 and the specific rules of the accreditation service). This procedure

shall be implemented when it has not been possible to resolve challenges regarding a decision made by the certification body in an assessment against this certification standard. Information on how a decision was made must be made available by certification bodies on request in a way which does not breach commercial confidentiality.

If the UKWAS company is concerned with the way in which a certification body is using the UK Woodland Assurance Standard it shall raise a dispute through the certification body's own procedure. If this approach fails to resolve the matter then the UKWAS company shall pursue it through the disputes procedure of the accreditation service. If this fails to resolve the matter it shall be taken up through the disputes resolution procedures of EA, IAF or ISEAL as appropriate. If the UKWAS company remains of the opinion that the UK Woodland Assurance Standard is misused it shall legally challenge the use of UKWAS trademarks by the certification body.

Defining the certification area

The areas to be certified to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard shall be individually identified and delineated woodland management units. The woodland management unit (WMU) is defined below and the requirements for management planning documentation are set out in section 2.1 of the certification standard. The WMU may

include both woodland and areas dedicated to protection, conservation, buildings, infrastructure and non-forest vegetation. The owners/managers of each unit shall have made a formal commitment to meet the requirements of this certification standard.

Owners/managers are advised to seek guidance from their certification body or group scheme manager.

Peer review

As parts of the certification process, auditing reports shall be subject to independent peer review by competent experts. Peer reviewers shall have access to all comments from the stakeholder consultations by the applicant and certification body together with an assessment of how they have been addressed.

Periodic monitoring

Certification to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard shall be subject to periodic monitoring and review. Certification is normally valid for up to five years and is subject to periodic surveillance to ensure continued conformance with the certification standard. Surveillance shall be undertaken at a frequency and sampling intensity appropriate to the scale and intensity of management of the site. This leaves scope for an alternative approach to be considered in relation to small and low intensity managed woodlands. The expectation

should be of an annual review (ISO/IEC Guide 65) but an annual site visit may not be mandatory in all cases. Re-assessment shall be carried out at least every five years.

Stakeholder consultations

Certification to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard shall provide an opportunity for, and take account of, inputs from stakeholders. Responsibility for undertaking consultation lies with the applicant in accordance with the requirements of this certification standard. The applicant shall invite consultees, through direct communication and public notification, to copy their responses direct to the certification body. Where this is undertaken as an integral part of a wider consultation, such as by a government department, there would be no requirement to present a copy to the certification body, provided that the information is available to the public. As part of the evaluation process, each time a certificate is issued or renewed, it shall be the responsibility of certification bodies to assess and verify stakeholder comments using appropriate sampling, independent of the applicant's own procedure. Feedback shall be provided by the certification body, on request, to respondents on how their comments have been addressed.

Transparency

The process of certification to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard is transparent and includes the production of an informative, publicly available summary for each certificate. The summary shall provide information on how and why the certification decision was made, to allow stakeholders to see for themselves what happened. This should include an explanation of how any areas of non-conformity with the requirements of the certification standard have been addressed to the satisfaction of the certification body, and a clear statement of any outstanding conditions which need to be addressed.

Flexibility in meeting requirements

It is recognised that some woodland owners and managers may feel that certain requirements are not appropriate to their situation. Some flexibility to allow local adaptation may therefore be acceptable under the following conditions:

- Either it is not physically possible to achieve the requirement in the woodland or the approach taken is an equally or more effective way of achieving the objectives intended by the certification standard
- The impacts of the action are carefully monitored.

The certification body carrying out the audit will make a professional judgement as to the acceptability of the flexibility, and may consult appropriate specialists or the UKWAS Steering Group (see section 5: Interpretation and revision of the certification standard).

Timing for full implementation of the requirements relating to woodland structure and layout

A special feature of woodland management is its long-term nature. Decisions made in the past have a strong influence on the woodlands of today.

Therefore, when assessing conformance with the certification standard, certification bodies will not evaluate woodlands solely on the present structure and layout, but will consider the plans for management in the short, medium and long term.

Where present structure and layout fail to meet the requirements, woodland owners/managers will need to demonstrate through management planning documentation, design plans and on-going activities in the woodland that they are taking active measures to achieve conformance with the requirements. They will also need to demonstrate that there is a time frame for achieving full conformance based on sound management principles. Further guidance on how non-conformities are dealt with can be obtained from certification bodies or group scheme managers.

The woodland management unit

The woodland management unit (WMU) is the area to which the management planning documentation relates – see section 2.1 of the certification standard. A WMU is a clearly defined woodland area, or areas, with mapped boundaries, managed to a set of explicit long-term objectives.

For example, a WMU might be a single ownership incorporating several areas of woodland that are managed within a woodland management plan; several separate ownerships managed within a woodland management plan; a community-managed forest; a management subdivision of a national forest service such as a forest district covered by a woodland management plan.

Note: The terms 'woodland management unit' and 'forest management unit' are synonymous.

Application of the certification standard to different scales of woodland management unit and intensities of operation

The level and complexity of management needed to meet the requirements of the certification standard will depend on the

size and type of the woodland management unit being audited. In undertaking their assessment, certification bodies will take account of the size of the woodland and the scale and intensity of management and operations – see the glossary for a detailed definition of 'Small and/or Low Intensity Managed' (SLIM) woodland. For some requirements, SLIM woodlands are not expected to need the same level of documentation or management systems and procedures as are normally used for larger or more intensively managed woodland areas.

Many of the requirements in the certification standard, particularly those relating to woodland design, woodland operations and conservation, relate to proportions of the overall woodland area. In applying the requirements, an approach must be adopted which allows the woodland owner/manager to achieve the requirement in a way that is best suited to the characteristics of the woodland and conforms to the spirit of the certification standard.

Cases may arise which are not covered by this guidance. Such cases will be assessed by the certification bodies on a case-by-case basis and, if necessary, referred to the UKWAS Steering Group (refer to paragraph 5 below).

Parkland and hedgerow trees

Parkland and hedgerow trees may be included in a certificate provided that the owner/manager has a written policy and plans for managing them.

Introduction (continued)

5. Interpretation and revision of the certification standard

The first edition of this certification standard was developed by a broadly based Technical Working Group and launched in May 1999.

A not-for-profit company, "United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)", was established in 2003 to own and manage the certification standard. The company is limited by guarantee (company number SC199337) and is managed by its members; its objectives are "to own, interpret, develop and promote a certification standard for forest management in the United Kingdom on behalf of United Kingdom forestry and environmental communities, and bodies which represent the interests of people working in woods and forests or using them for the purpose of recreation, for the general benefit of people".

UKWAS members appoint a broadly based Steering Group which has responsibility for interpreting the certification standard and ensuring its periodic revision to take account of experience from its application and new information that arises. The Steering Group sets up task-and-finish

groups with specific mandates to provide advice on specific topics and appoints a standing Interpretation Panel to provide it and users of the certification standard with advice on its interpretation. Following a full revision, a second edition of the certification standard was published in November 2006 and further amended in November 2008 following additional review to take the fullest account of the needs of those managing small and/or low intensity managed woods. This third edition of the certification standard has again been developed by the Steering Group through a formal revision process – see www.ukwas.org.uk for the standard-setting process document.

Any further corrections or revisions necessarily made to the certification standard prior to its next full revision will be incorporated into the electronic versions available on the UKWAS website. A list of all the changes made since publication of this edition will be maintained on the UKWAS website and users are recommended to check this on a regular basis.

The Steering Group places a high priority on making certification to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard as accessible as possible for owners and managers of small woods (500 ha or under) and those subject to a low intensity of management. It continues to support research into adapting auditing procedures for small woods, and it will continue to explore ways of reducing the cost and time involved in certifying small woods and those subject to a low intensity of management.

Certification Standard

- Third Edition -

Key to icons

The following abbreviations have been used throughout the text to highlight sources of additional information:



Management Planning
Check the UKWAS website for sources on developing management planning documentation. Any sources or examples posted are not definitive and following the guidance provides no guarantee of achieving certification.



Biodiversity Action Plan
Check the relevant Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) or Species Action Plans (SAPs) in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan available at www.jncc.defra.gov.uk



Forest Reproductive Material Regulations
Check Forestry Commission Information Note 53: Recent Changes to the Control of Forest Reproductive Material (2003) which describes the arrangements in Great Britain. Details of the arrangements in Northern Ireland may be obtained from the Forest Service.



References
Check the Appendix for references providing further guidance.

1. Compliance with the law and conformance with the requirements of the certification standard

1.1 Compliance and conformance

1.1 Requirement

The owner/manager shall establish and maintain woodland management practices, the requirements of which are described in the whole of sections 1 to 8 of this certification standard.

1.1.1 Requirement



There shall be compliance with the law. There shall be no substantiated outstanding claims of non-compliance related to woodland management.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- No evidence of non-compliance from audit
- Evidence of correction of any previous non-compliance.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- A system to be aware of and implement requirements of new legislation.

Guidance

Certification is not a legal compliance audit. Certification bodies will be checking that there is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant legal requirements including that:

- Management and employees understand and comply with all legal requirements relevant to their responsibilities
- All documentation including procedures, work instructions, contracts and agreements meet legal requirements and are respected
- No issues of legal non-compliance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.

1.1.2 Requirement



There shall be conformance to the spirit of any relevant codes of practice or good practice guidelines.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- No evidence of non-conformance from audit
- Evidence of correction of any non-conformance.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- A system to be aware of and conform to new codes of practice and good practice guidelines.

Guidance

The Appendix provides further information on good practice guidelines and codes of practice.

Conformance to the spirit means that the owner/manager is aiming to achieve the principles set out in relevant codes of practice or good practice guidelines and that:

- Management and employees understand and comply with all legal requirements relevant to their responsibilities
- All documentation including procedures, work instructions and contracts meet legal requirements
- No issues of legal non-conformance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.

1.1.3 Requirement

Legal ownership or tenure can be proved.

Means of verification

- A signed declaration detailing nature and location of tenure documentation.

Guidance

Legal ownership may be demonstrated by title deeds or solicitor's letter or long term unchallenged use.

1.1.4 Requirement

In the case of a significant dispute, legal documents such as title deeds, a solicitor's letter or land registry records shall be produced.

Means of verification

- Title deeds
- Solicitor's letter
- Land registry records
- Use of dispute resolution mechanism.

Guidance

Significant disputes would include, for example, land or tree crop ownership. Insignificant disputes would include, for example, maintenance of fencing.

Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an entity from being certified.

1.1.5 Requirement



The owner, manager or tenant shall commit to conformance to this certification standard and has declared an intention to protect and maintain the woodland management unit and its ecological integrity in the long term.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Signed declaration of commitment
- Dissemination of the requirements of this certification standard to the forestry workforce.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Public statement of policy.

Guidance

Examples of declarations of commitment are available from the UKWAS website.

The forestry workforce should be informed of the aim of the certification standard and, to the degree that is relevant, of the practical implications for them in carrying out their work functions. This might be done through, for example, meetings or briefings and the provision of appropriate written material.

If a substantial failure has led to withdrawal of a woodland certification to this standard in the past, then substantial changes in ownership, policy commitment and management regime should have been implemented or a two-year track record of conformance established.

Advice to owners/managers

Certificate holders may be subject to additional requirements from their certification scheme relating to any adjustment of the area in the woodland management unit. Owners/managers are advised to seek guidance from their certification body or group scheme manager.

1.2 Protection from illegal activities

1.2.1 Requirement



The owner or manager shall take all reasonable measures to stop illegal or unauthorised uses of the woodland which could jeopardise fulfilment of the objectives of management.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- The owner/manager is aware of potential and actual problems
- Evidence of response to actual current problems.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Evidence of a pro-active approach to potential and actual problems including follow-up action.

2. Management planning

2.1 Documentation

2.1.1 Requirement



All areas in the WMU shall be covered by management planning documentation which shall incorporate:

- a) A long-term policy for the woodland.
- b) Assessment of relevant aspects of the woodland resource.
- c) Identification of any special characteristics and sensitivities of the woodland and appropriate treatments.
- d) Set and prioritise objectives.
- e) Rationale for management prescriptions.
- f) Outline planned felling and regeneration over the next 20 years.
- g) Rationale for the operational techniques to be used.
- h) Plans for implementation, first five years in detail.
- i) Appropriate maps.
- j) Plans to monitor, at least those elements identified under section 2.3.2 against the objectives.
- k) Specific measures to maintain or enhance those areas identified under section 6.1.1 considering areas where either the extent of these areas or their sensitivity to operations may be unknown.
- l) A short summary of the management planning documentation's primary elements.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Appropriate maps and records.

SLIM woodlands:

- Long-term management objectives will suffice to meet (a).

Guidance

Assessment and mapping of the woodland resource should include appropriate aspects of physical, silvicultural, ecological, historic environment, social and landscape issues and any special characteristics, and demonstrate consideration to neighbouring landowners. Relevant UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs) and Red List species should be taken into account.

The documentation and level of detail associated with the planning process should be appropriate to:

- The size of the woodland
- Its environmental and social sensitivity
- The intensity of management
- The likely impact of the operations planned
- Context in the landscape
- UKBAP priority woodland and non-woodland habitats and species.

The documentation might include:

- For low intensity managed woodlands: a brief statement of intent and an annotated map
- For other woodlands: a plan covering a 20 year period and incorporating an assessment at the landscape level
- For a WMU consisting of multiple areas: an overarching plan.

The management planning documentation should cover all elements of the requirement but may refer to other documents as appropriate; these might include:

- A fire plan
- A deer management plan
- An integrated pest management strategy
- A research policy
- Project plans
- Necessary permissions from applicable regulatory and licensing authorities.

2.1.2 Requirement



While respecting the confidentiality of information, woodland managers shall, upon request, make publicly available either:

- management planning documentation, or
- a summary of the management planning documentation.

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Summary management planning documentation.

2.1.3 Requirement



The management planning documentation shall be reviewed every five years as a minimum.

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation.

Guidance

The review should be conducted in order to assess whether any aspects of the management planning documentation require revising or updating taking into account, for example:

- Monitoring data (see section 2.3.4)
- Advances in scientific research
- Improved technical and forestry practice guidance
- Results from surveys, research and consultation relating to the woodland covered by the management planning documentation.

2.2 Productive potential

2.2.1 Requirement



The planning of woodland management operations shall:

- Take fully into account the environmental, social and economic impacts of proposed operations.
- Aim to secure the necessary investment to maintain the ecological value of the woodland.



Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Financial records relating to the woodland resource
- Budget forecasting, expenditure and potential sources of funding
- Field inspection.

2.2.2 Requirement



Harvesting and restocking plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.

Means of verification

- Compartment records
- Growth and yield estimates
- Production records or appropriate standing sale volume assessments and reconciliation with estimates
- Demonstrated control of thinning intensity
- Owner's/manager's knowledge
- Field observation.

Guidance

Examples of growth and yield estimates include:

- Average growth rates or yield class for major species on different site types
- Predictions of thinning and felling yields for different crop types
- Forecasts of areas to be subject to harvesting operations in future years.

Accuracy of growth and yield estimates should be appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operation.

The resilience of the woodland and different species to climate change should be considered.

It is recognised that in some circumstances (e.g. during restructuring) the harvest level will exceed the increment.

It is recognised that some management objectives, e.g. replacing conifers with broadleaves or creating additional open space, will reduce the productive potential of the woodland.

In SLIM woodlands, or where timber production is not a primary objective, area rather than volume predictions are acceptable in planning and monitoring.

2.2.3 Requirement



Authorised harvesting of non-timber woodland products shall not permanently exceed, or diminish, the long-term productive potential of the woodland.

Means of verification

- Evidence from records and discussions with the owner/manager that quantities harvested are in line with sustainable growth rates and that there are no significant adverse environmental impacts.

Guidance

Non-timber woodland products include foliage, moss, fungi, berries, seed, venison and other animal products.

See also sections 5.1.4 in relation to protection from wild mammals, and 6.4 in relation to game management.

2.2.4 Requirement

Harvesting and timber sales documentation shall enable all timber sold to be traced back to the woodland of origin.

Means of verification

Evidence from:

- Harvesting output records
- Contract documents
- Harvesting contractors' invoices
- Despatch or delivery notes
- Hauliers' invoices
- Chain-of-custody codes on all invoices and delivery documents.

Guidance

The purpose of this clause is to ensure that timber can be traced back to the point of sale from the woodland (standing, at roadside or delivered). The responsibility of the owner/manager is limited to ensuring that timber removed from the woodland can be traced forward along the wood supply chain from the first point of supply.

Where logs from other sources are being stored in the same area, appropriate records should be maintained to demonstrate the source and quantity of timber obtained from other woodland areas.

Advice to owners/managers

Certification schemes may require certificate holders to provide additional information on sales documentation relating to:

- chain-of-custody certification, and
- the use of certification scheme trademarks.

Owners/managers are advised to seek guidance from their certification body or group scheme manager.

2.3 Implementation and revision of the plan

2.3.1 Requirement



The implementation of the work shall be in close agreement with the details included in the management planning documentation. Any deviation from prescription or planned rate of progress shall be justified, overall objectives shall still be achieved and the ecological integrity of the woodland maintained.

Means of verification

- Cross-correlation between the management planning documentation, annual work programmes and operations seen on the ground
- Owner's/manager's familiarity with the management planning documentation and woodland
- Documentation or owner's/manager's explanation of any deviation.

Guidance

Changes in planned timing of operations should be such that they do not jeopardise the ecological integrity of the woodland in the long term.

Changes in planned timing may be justified on economic grounds if overall management practices continue to conform to the other requirements of this certification standard.

Refer to section 3.4.1 for information about thinning, felling and regeneration plans.

2.3.2 Requirement



- a) The owner/manager shall consider what information to collect and record in order to monitor progress towards their management objectives and conformance to the requirements of this certification standard. A monitoring programme shall be implemented. Information shall be collected appropriate to the scale and intensity of management.
- b) Monitoring procedures shall be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.
- c) As a minimum the following shall be monitored:
 - Economic, environmental and social aspects
 - Harvesting yield
 - Woodland composition and structure
 - Flora and fauna (e.g. those in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan).

Means of verification

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- A documented plan for monitoring to be undertaken consistent with management objectives and baseline information.

SLIM woodlands:

- Evidence of the owner's/manager's knowledge of the woodland; a pro-active approach to field observation and field notes, supplemented by available maps and reports, may be sufficient.

Guidance

Monitoring should consist of a combination of:

- Supervision during operations
- Regular management visits and systematic collection of information
- Long-term studies, where appropriate, particularly on changes to the woodland ecosystem. Information from studies (particularly research programmes) carried out at one site can be extrapolated and the results used to assist management of other similar sites. For more complex long-term studies it is often more important for woodland owners/managers to be aware of the results and conclusions of such studies than to try to replicate them in their own woodland.

Detail of information collected should be appropriate to the:

- Size of the enterprise
- Intensity of operations
- Objectives of management
- Sensitivity of the site.

Monitoring should include means to identify any significant changes, i.e. those likely to have sufficient impact to alter existing ecosystems or endanger the flora and fauna present, in particular any rare species.

2.3.3 Requirement



Monitoring records shall be kept and be in a form which ensures that they are of use over the long term.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Documented monitoring records
- Information from studies in similar woodlands
- Analysis of information collected.

SLIM woodlands:

- Field notes based on the owner's/manager's observation of the woodland may be sufficient.

2.3.4 Requirement



Monitoring data shall be analysed and the findings taken into account by management, particularly during revision of the management planning documentation.

Means of verification

- Monitoring records
- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with owner/manager.

Guidance

Expert advice should be sought where necessary and taken into account.

2.3.5 Requirement

For areas and features of particular significance, as identified under section 6.1.1, periodic monitoring shall be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance these areas.

Means of verification

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Monitoring records
- Management planning documentation.

SLIM woodlands:

- Discussions with owner/manager.

Guidance

The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be appropriate to the assessed threat to the conservation value of the site over the period of the plan.

The frequency of monitoring might range from daily during management activities to monthly, annually or longer.

2.3.6 Requirement

A summary of monitoring results shall be produced, as a minimum, at the end of each five-year period and made publicly available if requested.

Means of verification

- A copy of the summary
- Evidence of response to requests.

Guidance

The summary should include information on work completed and other major changes in the woodland.

A summary of the main information collected should be made available to any interested party who asks for it. The owner/manager may make a reasonable charge for making the summary available.

Sensitive data e.g. sites of species protected by law and confidential commercial information can be kept confidential.

For SLIM woodlands, the public summary should be made available for inspection locally on request.

3. Woodland design: creation, felling and replanting

3.1 Assessment of environmental impacts

3.1.1 Requirement



The environmental impacts of new planting and other woodland plans shall be assessed before operations are implemented, in a manner appropriate to the scale of the operations and the sensitivity of the site.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Documented environmental impact assessment or 'Appropriate Assessment' where such has been requested by the FC or DARD.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Design plans
- Documented environmental appraisals.

Guidance

Depending on scale and sensitivity the assessment of environmental impacts may be:

- Brief environmental appraisals for planting or felling which might affect sites recognised for cultural, landscape, hydrological or ecological value
- Ecological assessments of ancient semi-natural woodland and projections of their response to management and natural processes
- Specific assessments for unusual and/or extensive operations
- Specialist advice on impacts of woodland operations on rare or vulnerable species or special sites
- Specialist advice on the impact of woodland operations on historic environment sites and landscapes
- Checks against relevant UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs) paying particular attention to BAP priority habitats and species.

3.1.2 Requirement



The impacts of woodland plans shall be considered at a landscape level, taking due account of the interaction with adjoining land and other nearby habitats.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Maps
- Discussions with the owner/manager.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Design plans.

Guidance

In particular, planning including layout and design of woodland should take into account the following factors and action should be taken if required:

- The character of other woodland in the area
- Needs or impacts of animals (both wild and domestic) which use both woodland and surrounding land
- Impacts on flora in the woodland and on surrounding land
- Scale and pattern of open land
- Habitats which are continuous from inside to outside the woodland (e.g. water courses)
- Woodland margins as transitional habitats
- Linking open space within the woodland with similar habitats outside
- The spread of invasive species into or out of the woodland
- Impacts on natural features (e.g. wetlands, rock exposures, drainage patterns)
- Nature of historic landscapes and links with similar historic environment sites outside the woodland
- Relevant UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs).

3.1.3 Requirement



The results of the environmental assessments shall be incorporated into planning and implementation in order to minimise adverse impacts.

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with owner/manager
- Field observations.

3.2 Location and design

3.2.1 Requirement



New woodlands shall be located and designed in ways that will maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the wider landscape.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Maps
- Field observation.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Design plan.

Guidance

In particular, new woodlands should contribute to the conservation of neighbouring semi-natural woodland and other habitats.

BAP priority habitats and sites for BAP priority species as given in the UK and local Biodiversity Action Plans should be avoided.

Where appropriate and possible, use should be made of natural regeneration or planting stock from parental material growing in the local native seed zone (native species) or region of provenance (non-native species).

3.2.2 Requirement



New planting shall be designed in such a way as to ensure the creation over time of a diverse woodland.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Maps
- Field observation.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Design plan.

Guidance

A diverse woodland may be achieved through one or more of the following:

- Use of a diversity of species, clones and provenances
- Planting mixed stands
- Variation in site types and growth rates
- Management designed to avoid the need for felling over a very limited period
- Phased planting
- Retention of open ground
- Design and creation of wind firm edges.

The general aim should be to create a woodland that is sufficiently diverse to allow achievement of the felling rates given in section 3.4.2.

3.2.3 Requirement



Even-aged woodlands shall be gradually restructured to diversify ages and habitats.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Maps
- Field observation.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Design plan.

Guidance

Restructuring should be planned and implemented in accordance with FC Practice Guide Forest Design Planning - A Guide to Good Practice.

3.2.4 Requirement



Where appropriate, contact shall be made with the owners of adjoining woodlands to try to ensure that restructuring of one woodland complements and does not jeopardise the management of adjoining ones.

Means of verification

- Letter or other records of communication with the owners/ managers of adjoining woodlands.

Guidance

It is recognised that the owners of neighbouring woodlands may not be known, and in such cases the owners/managers should be able to show that they have considered likely impacts on their neighbours.

3.3 Species selection

3.3.1 Requirement



- Species selected for new woodlands, natural regeneration and restocking shall be suited to the site and matched to the objectives.
- For new woodlands, native species shall be preferred to non-native. If non-native species are used it shall be shown that they will clearly outperform native species in meeting the objectives.

Means of verification

- Discussions with the owner/manager demonstrate that consideration has been given to a range of species, including native species, in meeting management objectives.

Guidance

Results of research into site suitability of different species origins and provenances and their resilience to climate change should be used to assist species choice. Because of the uncertain effects of climate change, selecting a range of genotypes may be prudent.

Where appropriate and possible use should be made of natural regeneration or planting stock from parental material growing in the local native seed zone (native species) or region of provenance (non-native species).

3.3.2 Requirement



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REF

The proportions of different species in new planting, or planned for the next rotation of an existing woodland, shall be as follows:

- Where at least two species are suited to the site and matched to the objectives:
 - < 65% primary species
 - > 20% secondary species
 - > 10% open space
 - > 5% native broadleaf.
- Where only one species is suited to the site and matched to the objectives:
 - < 75% primary species
 - > 10% open space
 - > 5% native broadleaf
 - > 10% other areas managed for biodiversity as a major objective.

The requirement in relation to open space does not apply to very small woodlands (i.e. 10 ha or under).

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Field observation.

Guidance

Refer to section 6.2.1 which gives the requirements relating to areas managed with biodiversity as a major objective.

Additional open space and/or native shrubs can be provided instead of native broadleaved trees if they are not suited to the site.

Open space with wildlife value contiguous to the woodland can be counted towards the requirement if it is managed as part of the woodland.

Where appropriate and possible, use natural regeneration or planting stock from parental material growing in the local native seed zone (native species) or region of provenance (non-native species).

3.3.3 Requirement

Woodland areas shall be converted to areas used solely for Christmas tree production only where conversion is consistent with other requirements of this certification standard, including the need to leave open space, and in accordance with any approved FC or DARD management plan, or when clearance is required for non-forestry reasons such as a wayleave agreement. Christmas trees shall be grown using traditional, non-intensive techniques.

Means of verification

- Field inspection
- Management records.

Guidance

The requirement restricting conversion relates to use for growing Christmas trees of less than 4 metres in height.

The chemicals regime for Christmas trees must meet all the requirements of section 5.2.

Examples of Christmas trees which may be covered by a certificate are:

- Trees (<4 m in height) grown on areas within the woodland matrix used solely for Christmas tree production
- Trees (<4 m in height) grown on areas used solely for Christmas tree production which, although outwith the woodland, form part of the woodland management unit
- Thinnings from forest tree crops
- Tops from harvested forest tree crops
- Trees grown by interplanting of forest tree crops
- Mature trees (>4 m height)
- Trees which have regenerated onto, and have been harvested from, adjacent open land in the interest of maintaining its biodiversity or landscape value, and provided that the adjacent area is managed as part of the woodland management unit.

Christmas trees grown as a horticultural or nursery crop cannot be covered by a certificate.

3.3.4 Requirement



- a) Non-native plant (non-tree) and animal species shall only be introduced if they are non-invasive and bring environmental benefits.
- b) All introductions shall be carefully monitored.

Means of verification

- Documented impact assessment of any introductions made after the first certification
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Field observation.

Guidance

The requirement includes the re-introduction of once native animals not currently present within the United Kingdom.

Use of non-native biological control agents such as *Rhizophagus grandis* may be desirable to control non-native pests.

Game species may be introduced if managed in accordance with section 6.4.

3.4 Silvicultural systems

3.4.1 Requirement



An appropriate silvicultural system shall be adopted which is designed to meet the management objectives and which stipulates soundly-based planting, establishment, thinning, felling and regeneration plans.



Where there is a range of options in windfirm conifer plantations, lower impact silvicultural systems shall be increasingly favoured where they are suited to the site and species.



Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Field observations.

Guidance

The choice of silvicultural system should take into account:

- Silvicultural characteristics of the species
- Site limitations including potential growth rates and wind firmness
- Intended stem size and quality
- Current and future markets for timber products
- Impacts on the landscape and wildlife
- Age-structure and felling plan of nearby woodlands
- Ecological processes and natural disturbance regime for that woodland type
- Future resilience
- Historical management practices
- Views of local people.

The establishment of research trials or plots to assess the suitability of species, origins and provenances and/or silvicultural systems including management and protection treatments should be undertaken only in the context of a research policy and conform to the spirit of the certification standard.

Thinning, felling and regeneration plans should cover:

- Felling age or size
- Thinning type, intensity and frequency
- Species preferences and selection criteria
- Means of regeneration and desired species composition
- Scale of operations and rate of application (i.e. areas and time periods).

Lower impact systems can include:

- Group selection
- Shelterwood or under-planting
- Small coupe felling systems
- Coppice or coppice with standards
- Minimum intervention
- Single tree selection systems.

Use of lower impact silvicultural systems in windfirm plantations may not be appropriate where there is evidence that clearfelling provides habitat that has a high value for biodiversity.

Species and habitats which might justify such high-impact felling will normally be those included in UK Biodiversity Action Plans (HAPs and SAPs) or other widely recognised biodiversity priorities.

3.4.2 Requirement



MP



REF

Felling and restocking shall be in accordance with the principles and guidelines set out in the UK Forestry Standard and supporting guidelines series, including those on soils and water.

Where site factors favour coupe sizes over 5 ha in lowland plantations and 20 ha in upland plantations, all felling and restocking shall be in accordance with a felling design plan if these thresholds are exceeded.

The rate of felling shall be subject to the following condition: in plantations over 20 ha, no more than 25% is felled in any five-year period unless all felling and restocking is based on a felling design plan.

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Design plan.

Guidance

Design plans should ensure that in large even-aged plantations the woodland improves in age structure through:

- Prescribing felling that is spread over a period of at least 20 years
- Prescribing restocking which will provide options for further diversification and reduction in clearfell size at the end of the next rotation.

Site factors favouring larger coupe sizes might include:

- Windthrow risk
- Landscape scale
- Current plantation design
- Historic environment features
- Wildlife habitats.

3.4.3 Requirement



MP



BAP



REF

In semi-natural woodland (as defined in the glossary) lower impact systems shall be adopted as specified in the UK Forestry Standard. All felling shall be in accordance with the specific guidance for that type of native woodland in the relevant Forestry Commission Practice Guide.

In semi-natural woodlands over 10 ha, no more than 10% shall be felled in any five-year period unless justified in terms of biodiversity enhancement or lower impact.

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Field observations.

Guidance

Lower impact systems can include:

- Group selection
- Shelterwood or under-planting
- Small coupe felling systems
- Coppice or coppice with standards
- Minimum intervention
- Single tree selection systems.

For areas with UKBAP priority habitats and species, consider consulting with relevant species and habitat experts in statutory conservation agencies or NGOs.

3.5 Conversion to non-forested land

3.5.1 Requirement



Conversion to non-forested land shall take place only in certain limited circumstances as set out in this requirement.

The new land use shall be more valuable than any type of practicably achievable woodland cover in terms of its biodiversity, landscape or historic environment benefits, and conditions a, b, c and d shall be met:

- a) The woodland is not identified as of high conservation value in section 6.1.1.
- b) There is no evidence of unresolved substantial dispute.
- c) Conversion and subsequent site management protect and substantially enhance at least one of the following:
 - i. The status and condition of UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and habitats.
 - ii. Important landscape features and character.
 - iii. Important historic environment features and character.
- d) The subsequent management of the converted area shall be integrated with the rest of the woodland management.

Means of verification

- Transition plan
- Management planning documentation for the converted area after felling
- Records of planning process and discussions
- Consultation with interested parties
- Monitoring records
- Environmental impact assessment process documentation.

Guidance

Conversion to non-forested land should be planned and implemented in accordance with the UKFS Guidelines on biodiversity, landscape and historic environment.

A transition plan should set out as a minimum the justification for conversion and a strategy for implementation, subsequent management and monitoring.

Under current regulations an environmental impact assessment may be required before such conversions are implemented.

Planning consent or an approved Environmental Statement can provide sufficient evidence that there is no unresolved substantial dispute.

Deforestation to facilitate infrastructure or built development which is not integral to the management of the rest of the woodland cannot meet this requirement.

See also section 6.1.3 in relation to restoration of small scale habitats within a woodland matrix.

Advice to owners/managers

Only timber felled in accordance with this requirement can be certified.

Owners/managers are advised to seek guidance from their certification body or group scheme manager.

4. Operations

4.1 General

4.1.1 Requirement



The planning of woodland operations shall include:

- a) Obtaining any relevant permission and giving any formal notification required.
- b) Assessing and taking into account on and off-site impacts.
- c) Taking measures to protect special features, including adapting standard prescriptions where required.
- d) Measures to maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the value of identified services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Documented permissions
- Contracts
- Discussions with owner/manager, staff and contractors.

SLIM woodlands:

- Demonstration of awareness of impacts and measures taken.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Site-specific, documented assessment of impacts.

Guidance

Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the forestry workforce has been well briefed.

Contracts can be in writing or the forestry workforce may be given oral instructions where this is appropriate to the scale and sensitivity of the operation.

Checks should be made against relevant UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs).

4.1.2 Requirement

Implementation of operational plans shall be monitored by the manager or owner.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Discussions with owner/manager
- Records of site visits.

SLIM woodlands:

- As a minimum, records of when operations were visited and observations, e.g. a field diary.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Monitoring and internal audit records including completed checklists.

Guidance

Appropriate monitoring may range from regular supervision of active operations to internal audits of active and completed operational sites.

4.2 Harvest operations

4.2.1 Requirement



Harvesting operations shall conform to all relevant FC forestry practice guidance.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Field observations
- Discussions with the owner/manager and forestry workforce.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Monitoring and internal audit records.

4.2.2 Requirement

Timber shall be harvested efficiently and with minimum loss or damage.



MP

Means of verification

- Field observation.



REF

Guidance

Harvesting should particularly seek to avoid:

- Damage to soil and water courses during felling, extraction and burning
- Damage to standing trees during felling, extraction and burning
- Timber degrade.

Thinning to waste may be appropriate in some circumstances.

4.2.3 Requirement

Lop and top shall be burnt only where there is demonstrable management benefit, after full consideration of impacts.



MP

Means of verification

SLIM woodlands:

- Discussion with the owner/manager demonstrates awareness that impacts have been considered
- Evidence of registration of exempt activity.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented appraisal
- Evidence of registration of exempt activity.



REF

Guidance

If lop and top is burned:

- The location and density of fire sites should be carefully planned
- Some lop and top should be left unburned as habitat except where it will result in pest or disease problems.

Burning on site must be registered as an exempt activity with the statutory environment protection agencies in accordance with the Waste Management Regulations 1994 (plus amendments).

4.2.4 Requirement

Whole tree harvesting or stump removal shall not be practised where it is likely to have significant negative effects.



MP

Means of verification

SLIM woodlands:

- Discussion with the owner/manager demonstrates awareness that impacts have been considered.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented appraisal.



REF

Guidance

Significant negative impacts to consider include:

- Leaching
- Soil compaction
- Nutrient loss
- Damage to historical features and archaeological deposits.

Operator safety should be considered.

4.3 Forest roads

4.3.1 Requirement

For new roads, all necessary consents shall be obtained.



MP

Means of verification

- Records of consents
- Environmental assessment where required.



REF

Guidance

Where new roads are planned, a documented evaluation should be made to achieve a balance between timber extraction distances and road density, which takes into account the impact on the environment. Non-timber activities also need to be taken into account, e.g. access for sporting.

4.3.2 Requirement



MP



REF

Roads and timber extraction tracks and associated drainage shall be designed, created, used and maintained in a manner that minimises their environmental impact.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Documented plans for the design and creation of permanent roads and tracks
- Control systems for the creation and use of temporary tracks and extraction routes
- Field observation.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented maintenance plans.

Guidance

Particular attention should be paid to:

- Avoiding features of historic environment, biological, geological or cultural value
- Use of bridges, arches or culverts to cross water courses
- Ensuring that verges and ditches are created and managed to promote their habitat value
- Materials used, especially rock type, are in keeping with the ecology of the woodland
- Avoiding erosion and adverse impacts on water systems and wildlife habitats
- Careful landscaping of roads, both internally and externally
- Use of brash mats.

5. Protection and Maintenance

5.1 Planning

5.1.1 Requirement



Planting and restructuring plans shall be designed to minimise the risk of damage from wind, fire, invasive plant and animal species, and other pests and diseases.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Management planning documentation
- Discussions with the owner/manager.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Design plan.

Guidance

Evaluation should consider:

- Robust planting design
- Climate change adaptation
- Diversity of species, ages and distribution of open ground.

5.1.2 Requirement



Tree health shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning together with measures to prevent the introduction and onward spread of tree pests and diseases according to guidance arising from national monitoring of plant health.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Owner/manager is aware of potential risks
- Evidence of unhealthy trees, tree pests and disease is noted and appropriate action taken
- Compliance with statutory Plant Health Notices.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented systems for assessing tree health
- Notes or records of monitoring and responses to problems.

Guidance

Plans and actions related to plant health ecology should be appropriate to the scale and composition of the woodland and to plant health hazards.

Significant or new incidence of tree pests or disease should be reported to the competent authority.

5.1.3 Requirement



Grazing and browsing impacts shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Owner/manager is aware of potential risks
- Evidence of grazing and browsing impacts is noted and appropriate action taken.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented systems for assessing grazing and browsing impacts
- Notes or records of monitoring and responses to problems.

Guidance

Plans and actions related to grazing and browsing regimes should be appropriate to the scale and composition of the woodland and to grazing and browsing hazards.

5.1.4 Requirement



Management of invasive plants and of wild mammals, excluding deer, shall be undertaken in co-ordination with neighbours where possible (see section 5.1.5 in relation to deer).

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Awareness of potential problems and verbal description of appropriate action
- Justification given for not joining a wildlife management group.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Where there is a significant problem caused by wildlife, a documented plan (which may take the form of a contract or licence) for control.

Guidance

If management cannot maintain populations at a level that ensures they are not causing ecological damage, then sensitive areas - including regeneration sites, coppice coupes and areas with vulnerable flora - should be protected from browsing and other damage.

5.1.5 Requirement



Management of wild deer shall be based on a written strategy which identifies the management objectives, and aims to regulate the impact of deer.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Awareness of potential problems
- Description of appropriate action in the management planning documentation
- Justification given for not joining a deer management group
- Evidence of cull targets and achievements.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Where there is a significant problem caused by deer, a documented plan for control; this may take the form of a contract or licence.

Guidance

This requirement may involve the setting of cull targets and should involve the membership of a Deer Management Group where appropriate.

5.1.6 Requirement



A fire plan shall be developed as appropriate to the level of risk.

Means of verification

- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Fire plan
- In sites with high risk of fire, evidence of contact with the fire and rescue service and that their advice has been heeded.

Guidance

Fire plan should include:

- Responsibilities for action
- Contact details
- Emergency procedures.

5.1.7 Requirement



Staff and contractors shall clearly understand and implement safety precautions, environmental protection plans, biosecurity protocols and emergency procedures.

Means of verification

- Discussions with staff and contractors
- Field observation.

Guidance

See also section 8.1.1.

5.2 Pesticides, biological control agents and fertilizers

Background to use in the UK

In some countries with substantial woodland cover and well established forestry management practices the use of pesticides is not considered to be compatible with good woodland stewardship, or is prohibited because of actual and potential hazards. However, within the UK, the combination of an oceanic climate, the recent historical dominance of clearfell silvicultural systems and the desire to expand woodland cover, particularly on fertile lowland (often former agricultural) sites, may require the use of a limited range of pesticides and/or fertilizers to establish trees rapidly. These should be carefully selected and applied to minimise or eliminate adverse effects on the environment or operator.

In addition, pesticides, fertilizers or biological control agents may be needed to:

- Control outbreaks of non-native pests on native and non-native tree species
- Control locally damaging native pests on non-native tree species
- Improve nutrient availability
- Reduce local damage by native pests on native tree species
- Control invasive vegetation for biodiversity conservation.

The UK forestry sector has been actively researching a number of alternatives to pesticide use in specific areas and this work is ongoing.

Woodland owners and managers should be mindful of the likelihood that the number of pesticides approved for forestry use will decrease in future as existing products are re-evaluated at a European level. This gives added impetus for owners and managers to seek alternative methods of control.

5.2 Requirement

Owners/managers shall minimise their use of pesticides and fertilizers and endeavour to avoid their use where practicable.

Guidance

Where there is no practicable alternative, in terms of economic, social and environmental costs, owners/managers should provide justification for their use.

5.2.1 Requirement



MP



BAP



REF

- The owner/manager shall prepare and implement an effective Integrated Pest Management Strategy which:
 - Adopts management systems that shall promote the development and application of non-chemical methods of pest and crop management by placing primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods where practicable
 - Takes account of the importance of safeguarding the value of sites with special biodiversity attributes (see also section 6.1.1) when considering methods of control
 - Demonstrates knowledge of the latest published advice and its appropriate application.
- The strategy shall include a description of all known use over the previous five years, or the duration of the current woodland ownership if that is less than five years.
- The strategy shall specify aims for the minimisation or elimination of pesticide usage, taking into account considerations of cost (economic, social and environmental), and the cyclical nature of woodland management operations.
- The strategy shall be appropriate to the scale of the woodland and the intensity of management.

Means of verification

- Written policy and strategy or statement.

Guidance

Sites with special biodiversity attributes include:

- All ancient woodland on the inventory of ancient woodland, and other known sites which meet the same criteria, distinguishing between the categories of the individual national inventories
- Semi-natural features in plantations on ancient woodland sites
- Valuable or diverse wildlife communities
- Rare and vulnerable species
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and Species
- Breeding sites, feeding areas and habitats of notable species
- Water courses, ponds and lakes
- Wetland habitats
- Lowland heath
- Peatlands covered by the Forestry Commission's forests and peatlands policy or the Forest Service's afforestation and environmental policy
- Rides and open ground
- Woodland margins and hedges
- Veteran trees
- Decaying deadwood habitat
- Any other valuable habitats or features.

Identification and mapping of areas and features may be carried out on an ongoing basis, provided that it has been completed for an area prior to operations taking place.

5.2.2 Requirement



Where pesticides and biological control agents are to be used:

- a) The owner/manager shall provide reasons to justify their use demonstrating that there is no practicable alternative, in terms of economic, social and environmental costs.
- b) The owner/manager, staff and contractors shall be aware of and implement legal requirements and non-legislative guidance for use of pesticides and biological control agents in forestry. (See also section 5.2.5 on fertilizers.)
- c) The owner/manager shall keep records of pesticide usage and biological control agents as required by current legislation.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- COSHH assessments
- FEPA records
- Waste transfer notes
- Discussions with the owner/manager, staff and contractors
- Field observation, particularly in respect to storage, application sites, protective clothing and warning signs.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Adequate written procedures, work instructions, and other documentation
- FEPA record of the precise usage including the rationale, method of application, site and quantity.

Guidance

Usage should be recorded in such a way that comparisons can be made year on year. Therefore additional to the requirement to record information under current legislation (which includes product, application rates and area treated), owners and managers should sub-divide usage according to operations (e.g. establishment of broadleaves, establishment of conifers, harvesting, control of invasive species). This may enable trends to be observed and future action targeted accordingly, including any necessary revision of the strategy.

5.2.3 Requirement



Where pesticides or biological control agents are to be used the owner/manager shall be able to demonstrate that they are meeting the requirements of best practice for use of pesticides and biological control agents.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Field observation of facilities for storage and disposal
- Safety equipment
- Availability of lockable boxes for transport
- Availability of absorbent materials
- Risk assessments
- Safety equipment
- Emergency plans
- Operators are trained and competent, and hold pesticide operator certification where required.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Written emergency plan.

5.2.4 Requirement



Pesticides and biological control agents shall only be used if:

- they are approved for forest use by the UK regulatory authorities, and
- they are not banned by international agreement, and
- their use is permitted by the certificate holder's certification scheme.

Pesticides categorised as Type 1A and 1B by the World Health Organization or any other pesticides whose use is restricted by the certificate holder's certification scheme shall not be used unless:

- no effective and practicable alternatives are available, and
- their use is sanctioned using a mechanism endorsed by the certificate holder's certification scheme, and
- any such mechanism provides for their use to be justified and on the condition that usage shall be discontinued once effective and practicable alternatives are available.

Means of verification

- Records of chemicals purchased and used
- Field observation
- Discussions with owner/manager, staff and contractors.

Guidance

Advice to owners/managers

Owners/managers are advised to seek guidance from their certification body or group scheme manager on any additional certification scheme requirements relating to the use of pesticides.

5.2.5 Requirement



Fertilizers (inorganic and organic):

- Fertilizers shall only be used where they are necessary to secure establishment or to correct subsequent nutrient deficiencies.
- Where fertilizers are to be used the owner/manager, staff and contractors shall be aware of and shall be implementing legal requirements and best practice guidance for their use in forestry.
- In addition, bio-solids shall only be used following an assessment of environmental impacts in accordance with section 3.1.
- The owner/manager shall keep a record of fertilizer usage.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Discussions with owner/manager, staff and contractors
- Field observation, particularly in respect to storage, application sites, protective clothing and warning signs.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Adequate written procedures, work instructions, and other documentation.

Guidance

Unnecessary use of fertilizers may be avoided through the appropriate choice of species.

5.3 Genetically modified organisms

5.3.1 Requirement

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) shall not be used.

Means of verification

- Plant supply records
- Discussions with the owner/manager.

Guidance

GMOs are created through gene transfer under laboratory conditions and are not the product of tree breeding, vegetative propagation, cloning or tissue culture programmes.

5.4 Fencing

5.4.1 Requirement



Where appropriate, wildlife management and control shall be used in preference to fencing.

Means of verification

- Discussion with the owner/manager.

Guidance

This requirement is especially important in areas where Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) and Black grouse (*Lyrurus tetrix*) are present.

5.4.2 Requirement



Where fences are used, alignment shall be designed to minimise impacts on access (particularly public rights of way), landscape, wildlife and historic environment sites.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Field visits to verify alignments chosen.

SLIM woodlands:

- Discussions with the owner/manager demonstrate an awareness of impacts of fence alignments and of the alternatives.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented policy or guidelines regarding any specific significant impacts; or
- Expert advice sought for one-off fencing operations.

Guidance

Decisions to erect fences and their alignment should take account of:

- Landscape
- Public rights of way
- Existing users of the woodland
- Wildlife especially woodland grouse
- The historic environment.

5.5 Pollution

5.5.1 Requirement



Waste disposal shall be in accordance with current waste management legislation and regulations.

Means of verification

SLIM woodlands:

- No evidence of significant impacts from waste disposal.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented policy or guidelines on waste disposal including segregation, storage, recycling, return to manufacturer.

Guidance

Waste includes:

- Surplus chemicals
- Chemical containers
- Plastic waste
- Fuels and lubricants.

Plastic tree shelters should not be allowed to create a litter problem at the end of their effective life.

5.5.2 Requirement



Biodegradable cutting-chain lubricants shall be used where practicable.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Evidence from purchase records and discussions with the owner/manager, staff and contractors.

SLIM woodlands:

- Justification if non-biodegradable lubricants are being used.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented policy on the use of lubricants.

Guidance

Practicability encompasses operator health and costs of running machinery.

5.5.3 Requirement

Plans and equipment shall be in place to deal with accidental spillages.



MP

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Discussions with owner/manager and relevant staff
- Appropriate equipment available in the field.



REF

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Written plans.

6. Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity

6.1 Protection of rare species, habitats and natural resources

6.1.1 Requirement



- a) Areas and features of high conservation value having particular significance for:
- biodiversity including sites important for endangered but mobile species, and/or
 - natural processes in critical situations
- shall be identified by reference to statutory designations at national or regional level and/or through assessment on the ground.
- b) The identified areas, species and features of high conservation value shall be maintained and, where possible, enhanced.
- c) There shall be evidence of ongoing communication and/or consultation with statutory bodies, local authorities, wildlife trusts and other relevant organisations.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- All known areas and features mapped
- Field inspection.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Pro-active approach to the identification of areas and features of significance for biodiversity, appropriate to likely biodiversity value
- Pro-active approach to the identification of areas and features of significance for watershed/erosion protection.

Guidance

These areas and features of high conservation value include:

- Areas designated as:
 - Special Areas for Conservation
 - Special Protection Areas
 - Biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Areas of Special Scientific Interest
 - Ramsar Sites
 - National Nature Reserves
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites
- Areas supporting priority habitats and species listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Examples of where woodlands affect natural processes include watershed management and erosion control. Guidance on where these may be critical should be sought through reference to the statutory environment protection agencies and the Forestry Commission's Forests and Water Guidelines.

Identification and mapping of these features may be carried out on an ongoing basis, provided that it has been completed for an area prior to significant woodland management operations taking place.

6.1.2 Requirement



Areas designated as Special Areas for Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites, National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Areas of Special Scientific Interest shall be managed in accordance with plans agreed with nature conservation agencies, and shall be marked on maps.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Staff and contractors are aware of such sites and of plans for their management
- For all potentially damaging operations, awareness is demonstrated of how areas will be protected and/or safeguarded
- Management plans for statutory conservation areas and monitoring of implementation of those plans
- Condition statements from statutory bodies
- Maps.

SLIM woodlands:

- Discussions with owner/manager demonstrate how areas will be safeguarded and/or enhanced.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Planning documentation shows how areas will be safeguarded and/or enhanced.

Guidance

The system of designated sites in the UK forms a representative sample of existing ecosystems within the landscape.

Protection and enhancement may be through:

- Following best practice recommended by relevant statutory bodies
- Excluding areas from conventional woodland operations which may involve temporary demarcation
- Minimising the impact of operations carried out on surrounding land, whether woodland or other land
- Carrying out operations specifically prescribed to protect these sites or species
- Seeking specialist advice particularly for rare or vulnerable species
- Setting aside minimum intervention areas surrounding these areas
- Protecting areas with valuable flora from browsing except where required to maintain the flora
- Protecting UK BAP priority habitats and species.

6.1.3 Requirement



MP



REF

Valuable woodland and other semi-natural habitats (e.g. moorland, heathland, wood pasture and grassland) which have been colonised, planted, or incorporated into plantations, but which have retained their ecological characteristics (or have a high potential to be restored), shall be identified and restored or treated in a manner that does not lead to further loss of biodiversity or cultural value.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Staff and contractors are aware of such sites and of any plans for their management
- For all potentially damaging operations, awareness demonstrated of how areas shall be protected and/or safeguarded.

SLIM woodlands:

- Discussions with owner/manager demonstrate how such areas will be managed.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Planning documentation shows how areas will be managed.

Guidance

This requirement relates to small scale habitats within a woodland matrix.

Appropriate management may include:

- Rides and glades containing remnant semi-natural communities are widened and extended
- Areas with a rich ground flora and shrub layer are heavily thinned
- Remnants of wood pasture, veteran trees or other 'open-forest' habitat are gradually opened up
- Heathland, bog and other open habitats are re-created by premature felling without restocking
- Maintenance of open ground around historic environment sites.

Priority should be given to habitats identified in the Forestry Commission's forests and peatlands policy or the Forest Service's afforestation and environmental policy and UK national and local Biodiversity Action Plans.

Woodland removal to facilitate infrastructure or built development which is not integral to the management of the rest of the woodland cannot meet this requirement.

See also section 3.5.1 which covers larger scale habitat restoration through conversion to non-forested land.

Advice to owners/managers

Only timber felled in accordance with this requirement can be certified.

Owners/managers are advised to seek guidance from their certification body or group scheme manager.

6.2 Maintenance of biodiversity and ecological functions

6.2 Requirement

When preparing management planning documentation, woodland owners/managers shall draw upon those requirements of this certification standard which relate to the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity.

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation.

Guidance

In determining the future composition and management of the woodland consideration should be given to the requirements in section 6 and other sections such as:

- Adopting low impact silvicultural systems (3.4.3)
- Identifying, maintaining and enhancing semi-natural features (5.2.1)
- Altering the proportion of native species and open space (3.3.2)
- Converting part of the woodland to non-forested land (3.5.1).

6.2.1 Requirement



A minimum of 15% of the woodland area shall be managed with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective including:

- Conservation areas and features as identified in sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.3.
- Long-term retentions: stable stands and clumps are identified and constitute a minimum of 1% of the woodland area.
- Natural reserves: areas of woodland have been set aside where biodiversity is the prime objective. Natural reserves shall comprise at least 1% of plantations and 5% of semi-natural woodlands.
- Areas being restored to semi-natural woodland or to non-woodland habitats (see requirements in sections 3.5.1, 6.1.3 and 6.3.2).

Means of verification

- Management planning documentation including maps
- Field observation
- Demonstration of the rationale for the balance between adequate dispersal of sites across the woodland area and concentration of sites in important locations with justification based on maximising the benefits for biodiversity conservation and/or enhancement.

Guidance

Where the total of the conservation areas, long-term retentions and natural reserves comprises less than 15% of the woodland area, additional areas should be identified where the enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective is to be pursued.

Natural reserves should be predominantly wooded, permanently identified and in locations which are of particularly high wildlife interest or potential. They should be managed by minimum intervention unless alternative management has a higher conservation or biodiversity value.

In very small woodlands (i.e. 10 ha or under) natural reserves may consist of groups of, or individual, over-mature trees.

The identification of large natural reserves should be given particular priority in woodlands which contain large areas (i.e. more than 50 ha) of semi-natural woodland.

Larger and more widespread woodland estates may fulfill this requirement across the estate as a whole rather than reserving specified areas in each and every wood or woodland management unit.

In young plantations minimum intervention may often not be the best management regime for biodiversity during the establishment phase, but potential areas for future non-intervention should be identified wherever appropriate.

6.2.2 Requirement



Owners/managers shall plan and take action over time to provide a diversity of both standing and fallen deadwood habitats throughout the WMU and to accumulate deadwood volumes and maintain veteran trees, where this does not conflict with safety of the public or forestry workers or the health of the woodland.

Actions shall include:

- Identifying areas where deadwood is likely to be of greatest ecological value
- Keeping standing dead trees, snags and veteran trees
- Keeping and protecting old, previously pollarded trees alive through appropriate management
- Managing suitable trees to eventually take the place of existing veterans
- Only harvesting windblow when it is of significant value unless more than 3 m³/ha is blown and sufficient deadwood is already accumulating on site
- Keeping naturally fallen trees or major branches
- When thinning or clearfelling, creating snags and providing fallen deadwood where insufficient has already accumulated.

Means of verification

- Field observation
- Harvesting contracts
- Discussions with owners/managers, staff and contractors
- If there is a conflict with safety or woodland health, the issues have been documented
- Management planning documentation.

Guidance

Management practices should be contributing to the accumulation of standing and fallen deadwood, in approximately equal proportions. About 20 m³/ha, excluding tree stumps, should be provided across the whole WMU and the greatest volumes concentrated in areas of higher ecological value. In order to provide deadwood habitat throughout the woodland, in most hectares there should be a few dead standing and fallen stems contributing to the overall deadwood provision and at least some stumps should be retained. The accumulation of deadwood throughout a rotation provides for greater continuity of the full range of deadwood habitat types.

The most valuable areas within which to develop deadwood habitats are where linkages can be made with existing deadwood habitats to develop ecological connectivity over time; these areas include:

- Wood pasture/parklands
- Ancient semi-natural woodland with veteran trees
- Long-term retentions and natural reserves
- Riparian or wet woodland.

Retained deadwood should be matched to the requirements of those species likely to be important on the site.

Habitat diversity is improved by having:

- Stems of greater than 20 cm diameter, particularly large dimension timber from native species
- Snags at variable height
- A range of tree/shrub species at varying stages of decay and in a variety of light conditions.

See also section 7.4.2 relating to mitigation of risks to public health and safety.

6.3 Conservation of semi-natural woodlands and plantations on ancient woodland sites

6.3.1 Requirement



MP



REF

- a) Woodland identified in section 6.1.1 shall not be converted to plantation or non-forested land.
- Areas converted from semi-natural and ancient semi-natural woodlands after 1985 shall not normally qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the owner/manager is not responsible directly or indirectly for such conversion.
- b) Enhancement and/or restoration shall be a priority in ancient semi-natural woodlands and other semi-natural woodlands. Non-native species shall not be introduced or be allowed to become established in such woodlands. A plan to contain and progressively remove under-planted non-native or invasive species shall be implemented.
- Management shall be in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard and the relevant FC practice guides for semi-natural woodlands.
- c) Adverse ecological impacts of non-native species shall be monitored in ancient semi-natural woodlands and other semi-natural woodlands.

Means of verification

- Field observations
- Discussions with the owner/manager
- Management planning documentation including FC or DARD approved management plan and restocking plans
- Monitoring records.

Guidance

Non-native species may be retained where they have a high ecological or cultural value.

Note to certifiers

Restocking of semi-natural and ancient semi-natural woodlands should have been in accordance with this requirement since the introduction of the Broadleaves Policy to Great Britain in 1985 and similar policies and strategies to Northern Ireland. These requirements were incorporated into the UK Forestry Standard in 1998 and are a condition of relevant felling licences and permissions.

6.3.2 Requirement



a) Evaluation

Owners/managers shall identify action which will progressively improve the biodiversity, environmental and cultural values of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), considering the site, landscape context and management objectives.



b) Prioritisation

Owners/managers shall maintain and enhance remnant features of ancient woodland on all PAWS sites by:

- Undertaking field assessment and evaluation of the biodiversity, environmental and cultural values of PAWS to identify threats, ongoing declines and potential gains
- Prioritising action taking account of:
 - Degree and immediacy of threat to remnant features
 - Potential biodiversity gains at a site and landscape scale.

c) Identifying management prescriptions

Owners/managers shall identify management prescriptions that:

- Maintain ancient woodland features by addressing threats and ongoing decline on all PAWS
- Secure potential gains identified as a priority
- Adopt appropriate silvicultural systems that minimise negative impacts.

d) Implementation

Owners/managers shall implement management prescriptions to ensure that:

- Field assessments are carried out prior to planned operations to ensure remnant features are safeguarded
- Operations are implemented in a manner that does not adversely impact the sites' values.

e) Monitoring

Owners/managers shall implement a monitoring plan that includes:

- Monitoring and reviewing the condition and response of remnant ancient woodland features
- Monitoring the status of threats
- Monitoring the condition of cultural heritage features.

Means of verification

a) Evaluation

- Management planning documentation, including a long term policy
- Field observations
- Discussions with owner/manager.

b) Prioritisation

- Management planning documentation, including a long term policy
- Field observations
- Discussions with owner/manager.

c) Identifying management prescriptions

- Five-year implementation plan
- Long-term policy.

d) Implementation

- Operational records.

e) Monitoring

- Management planning documentation
- Monitoring records.

Guidance

For all PAWS, continued growth of plantations for economic reasons on ancient woodland sites is likely to mean that active management is needed to maintain the biodiversity, environmental and cultural values of these sites. Remnant features (e.g. ground flora) should be maintained through protection and management.

A precautionary approach is appropriate in most instances so that enhancement will be a gradual and long-term process. Silvicultural decisions such as thinning intensity and felling plans should be guided by the remnant and cultural features in the stand.

Refer to the glossary for definition of 'remnant' and 'cultural features'.

Sources of guidance for each step are given below. Refer to the requirement in section 7.4.1 for cultural values.

a) Evaluation

Establishing the validity of the site's status as PAWS need not solely rely on ancient woodland inventories.

This evaluation should take account of:

- Historical and archaeological features and landscape implications
- Remnant features including the ground flora, shrub layer, underwood, naturally regenerated native trees, veteran trees and deadwood.

A precautionary approach should be adopted in evaluating the latent potential of densely shaded or unthinned plantations. This could include exploratory work and subsequent monitoring.

Detailed survey and species lists are unlikely to be necessary but features should be annotated on an outline map that allows managers to ensure that these features are protected and favoured during operations.

Threats may include shading, deer browsing, windthrow and soil compaction.

Typically, urgent operations are opening up ride and stream sides, releasing veteran trees, thinning around suppressed broadleaves and deer control.

b) Prioritisation

Dense shade and invasive species present the greatest threat to remnant features and hence are likely to be a priority for action.

The threats posed vary with the type, occurrence and distribution of remnant features and the individual characteristics of a stand.

Sites with the potential to offer greatest gain may be those in close proximity to ASNW and other semi-natural habitats.

c) Identifying management prescriptions

A gradual process of change is often favoured but clearfelling may be an acceptable option where it can be demonstrated that this system will not adversely impact on remnant features of ancient woodland or cultural heritage interests. Exploratory silvicultural interventions may help inform the choice of management prescription.

Restocking should be carried out in such a way that remnant features are enhanced and buffered.

d) Implementation

Operational threats include:

- Extraction damage
- Roading impacts
- Brash
- Herbicide use
- Soil compaction.

e) Monitoring

See also section 2.3.2.

Monitoring may also be used to:

- Evaluate PAWS sites
- Evaluate the effectiveness of management prescriptions.

6.3.3 Requirement



MP



FRM



REF

Where appropriate and possible, owners/managers shall use natural regeneration or planting stock from parental material growing in the local native seed zone (native species).

In ancient and other semi-natural woodland, where natural regeneration is insufficient, planting stock from 'source-identified' stands in the local native seed zone shall be used wherever it is available (see FRM). If timber quality is an objective of the planting, the use of stock deriving from selected stands within the local native seed zone shall be considered appropriate.

Means of verification

- Seed and plant supply invoices and other relevant records
- Evidence of efforts to identify planting stock from source-identified stands in the local native seed zone.

Guidance

There should be clear justification where non-local sources are used. This may include reasons of tree vigour, timber quality, pest and disease resilience and climate change adaptation.

The identity code used for parental material includes an 'N' when it applies to native material from known indigenous sources.

The voluntary Local Native Seed Zone does not operate in Northern Ireland.

6.4 Game management

6.4.1 Requirement



MP



REF

Hunting, game rearing and shooting and fishing shall be carried out in accordance with conditions, where they are in force, and the recommendations and codes of practice produced by relevant associations.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Relevant permissions and leases
- Discussions with the owner/manager/responsible person demonstrate awareness of the law and good practice
- Discussions with interested parties
- Field observation.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- A written guideline or policy.

6.4.2 Requirement



MP



BAP



REF

Shooting of native game and quarry species, excluding deer, shall be at a level which does not threaten the viability of the local population of the species (see section 5.1.5 in relation to deer).

Means of verification

- List of species hunted or shot and the number of animals killed
- Evidence that the owner or manager has considered impacts on game species' populations
- No evidence that local bans have been contravened.

Guidance

Species which currently have local or regional restrictions on shooting include Black grouse (*Lyrurus tetrix*).

Check against relevant UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) or Species Action Plans (SAPs).

6.4.3 Requirement



Game management shall not be sufficiently intense to cause long-term or widespread negative impacts on the woodland ecosystem.

Means of verification



- Management planning documentation and specific game management plans
- Field inspection.

Guidance

Feeding and rearing areas should be located in areas where there will be low impact on ground flora.

Predator control should be:

- Carefully planned
- Species-specific
- Only carried out where strictly necessary
- Carried out with minimal suffering
- Reducing rather than eradicating natural predator populations
- Carried out without the use of snares within Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) woodlands.

7. The community

7.1 Consultation

7.1.1 Requirement



- a) Local people and relevant organisations and interest groups shall be identified and made aware that:
- New or revised management planning documentation, as specified under section 2.1.1, is being produced
 - A new or revised FC or DARD scheme application and associated documents are available for inspection
 - High impact operations are planned
 - The woodland is being evaluated for certification.
- b) The owner/manager shall ensure that there is full co-operation with FC or DARD consultation processes. The owner/manager shall consult adequately with local people and relevant organisations and make a reasonable response to issues raised or requests for ongoing dialogue and engagement.

At least 30 days shall be allowed for people to respond to notices, letters or meetings before certification.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Consultation with FC or DARD
- Evidence that users of the woodland are informed about high impact operations (e.g. signs, letters or other appropriate means).

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- A list of interested parties
- Established means of pro-active communication.

Guidance

The owner should be able to justify the frequency and level of consultation and the certification body will look for corroborating evidence.

Examples of methods for identifying and making local people and relevant organisations aware include:

- Statutory consultations by the FC or DARD or voluntary consultation with relevant bodies
- Letters to individuals or groups
- Temporary or permanent signs in or near the affected woodland
- Information in local newspapers or other publications
- Meetings
- Internet
- Notification to curators of archaeology
- Other appropriate methods.

The certification body is also obliged to consult with relevant stakeholders and may be able to supply a list of those to consult, or work with the owner/manager on a co-ordinated approach to consultation.

7.2 Woodland access and recreation including traditional and permissive use rights

7.2.1 Requirement



All existing permissive or traditional uses of the woodland shall be sustained except when such uses can be shown to threaten the integrity of the woodland or the achievement of the objectives of management.



Means of verification

- Documentation or maps of all existing permissive and traditional uses of the woodland
- Discussions with interested parties
- Field observation of public rights of way
- Evidence presented to justify any restriction of permissive or traditional uses.

Guidance

Permissive and traditional uses include:

- Permissive footpaths and bridleways
- *De facto* access to well-known landmarks
- Gathering fruit or fungi by the public for their own consumption where this does not jeopardise the achievement of biodiversity objectives (having regard to codes of good practice)
- Traditional 'common rights'.

Permissive routes can be closed annually to maintain their permissive status.

Traditional uses which exploit the woodland resource (e.g. peat cutting) should be carried out at a traditional scale.

'Integrity' refers principally to the ecological maintenance of the woodland.

7.2.2 Requirement



There shall be provision for some public access to the woodland subject only to specific exemptions.

Means of verification

- Field observation to confirm that access is available
- Maps show public rights of way through or beside the wood
- Evidence of publicised annual open days or guided walks
- Access agreements with local authorities
- Evidence that account has been taken of local demand.

Guidance

In Scotland:

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act (2003) grants a right of responsible access to land, including woodland.

Guidance on responsible behaviour together with circumstances where access may be restricted is set out in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

There is no statutory right of general access to woodland but public access may be provided through one or more of:

- A permissive freedom to roam
- Public rights of way through or beside the wood
- Publicised open days or guided walks each year
- Permissive access on specified routes
- Access management agreements with local authorities
- In England and Wales only - by voluntarily dedicating woodland for public access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW).

Public access, other than on public rights of way, may be denied in the following situations:

- Woodlands under 10 ha in size with a high private amenity value
- Areas that adjoin dwellings or private gardens
- Isolated woodlands to which there is no ready access route for the public across adjoining land
- Woodlands where there is current evidence of serious and sustained abuse or damage
- Areas of the woodland that contain sites, species or features that would be particularly vulnerable to disturbance
- Periods or days when country sports, outdoor recreation or special events would be jeopardised
- Temporary closures in order to ensure public safety.

7.2.3 Requirement



Where there is a special demand for further public access, particularly for the purpose of environmental education, the owner/manager shall make reasonable efforts to try to meet this demand or to help locate an alternative site.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- No evidence from consultation with interested parties of unreasonable refusal of access.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Records of publicised annual open days or guided walks, school visits or research undertaken in the woodland.

Guidance

Examples of reasonable efforts include:

- When cropping schedules or stock management or silvicultural regimes require restricted public access, the owner/manager advertises the days when closure restrictions are lifted. Woodlands accessed across open arable fields may need time for preparation and marking of access routes; bull or lambing fields may need access diversions; storm damage or woodland operations may make woodlands temporarily unsafe. Temporary notice boards should explain the reasons for diversions and closures
- Persistent vandalism may force owners/managers to place particular woodland blocks or areas 'out of bounds'. Reasons should be communicated through local schools, libraries, post offices and parish halls to help stimulate community co-operation to combat damage
- Woodlands containing or adjoining notable historic environment or ecological features may attract large numbers of visitors even to small properties. Professional associations can advise on necessary safety and insurance provisions, ways of supporting educational visits and studies, and methods for recovering some or all of the extra costs of satisfying public demand.

7.3 Rural economy

7.3.1 Requirement

- a) Owners/managers shall promote the integration of woodlands into the local economy.
- b) Management and marketing operations shall encourage making the best use of the woodland's potential products and services consistent with other objectives.

Means of verification

Evidence of:

- Local or specialist market opportunities
- Promoting and encouraging enterprises to strengthen and diversify the local economy.

Guidance

Promotion of integration into the local economy may be achieved by:

- Allowing local or specialist markets opportunities to purchase small scale or specialist parcels
- Promoting and encouraging enterprises which will strengthen and diversify the woodland economy and the local economy.

The woodland's potential products include non-timber forest products and recreational activities.

An example of how the owner/manager might help to diversify the processing industry is that a proportion of timber parcels are advertised and sold by open tender or auction.

Reference to country or regional forestry strategies, and engagement with local woodland and community forest initiatives may highlight opportunities to fulfil this requirement.

7.3.2 Requirement

Communities within or adjacent to the woodlands shall have equitable opportunities for employment and to provide supplies and services.

Means of verification

- Equitable provision for local employment and suppliers.

Guidance

This may be achieved by:

- Making equitable provision for local employment for contractors and suppliers to provide services and supplies and making this known.

7.4 Minimising adverse impacts

7.4.1 Requirement

Sites and features of special cultural significance shall be identified and discussed with interested local people, the relevant authorities and interest groups and measures shall be taken to protect them.

See also section 7.1.1.



MP



REF

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Any known features mapped and/or documented
- Discussions with the owner/manager demonstrate rationale for management of relevant sites.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Records of consultation with statutory bodies, local authorities and interest groups to identify features
- Documented plans.

Guidance

Typical examples include:

- Prominent viewing points
- Landscape features
- Veteran and other notable trees
- Historical features and archaeological sites
- Woodlands which feature in literature or which are of artistic significance
- Historic landscapes and woodlands which are still managed under traditional systems.

7.4.2 Requirement



The owner/manager shall mitigate the risks to public health and safety and the wider impacts of woodland operations on local people.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- No evidence of legal non-compliance
- Evidence that complaints have been dealt with constructively.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented evidence that owners/managers have considered actual and potential impacts of operations on local people and interest groups and have taken reasonable steps to mitigate them.

Guidance

Examples of impacts include:

- Smoke
- Timber traffic, particularly in and around the woodland
- Natural hazards to operators and public, e.g. unsafe trees.

7.4.3 Requirement



The owner/manager shall respond constructively to complaints and shall follow established legal process should this become necessary.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Discussions with interested parties.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- A complaints process and public contact point.

8. Forestry workforce

8.1 Health and safety

8.1.1 Requirement



There shall be:

- a) Compliance with health and safety legislation.
- b) Conformance with associated codes of practice.
- c) Contingency plans for any accidents.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Field observation that health and safety legislation and codes of practice are being implemented
- Discussions with staff and contractors demonstrate that they are aware of relevant requirements and have access to appropriate AFAG codes of practice
- Contracts specifying health and safety requirements
- Records maintained and up to date (e.g. accident book, site risk assessments, chemical record book, tree safety reports)
- System to ensure that anyone working in the woodland has had relevant instruction in safe working practice and that the appropriate number has had training in basic first aid and, where relevant, holds a certificate of competence
- Procedure for monitoring compliance with safety requirements (written for larger organisations) and for dealing with situations where safety requirements are not met.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented health and safety policy and consideration of issues in all procedures and work instructions
- Evidence of a systematic approach to accident prevention.

Guidance

Workers include employees, contractors and volunteer labour.

See also section 8.2.1.

Advice to owners/managers

With respect to health and safety, it is important for owners/managers to be aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to fulfilling one or more of the relevant management roles of:

- a) Landowner.
- b) Forestry works manager (FWM).
- c) Forestry work supervisor (FWS).
- d) Contractor.
- e) Subcontractor/operator.

8.2 Training and continuing development

8.2.1 Requirement

Only those with relevant qualifications, training and/or experience shall be engaged to carry out any work unless working under proper supervision if they are currently undergoing training.

Means of verification

All woodlands:

- Copies of appropriate certificates of competence
- Discussions with staff and contractors
- System to ensure that only contractors who are appropriately trained or supervised work in the woodland
- No evidence of personnel without relevant training, experience or qualifications working in the woodland.

Non-SLIM woodlands:

- Documented training programme for staff
- Documented system to ensure that only contractors who are appropriately trained or supervised work in the woodland
- Training records for all staff.

Guidance

Where requirements of the work are likely to change, a programme of ongoing training and development should be undertaken.

8.2.2 Requirement

The owner/manager of large enterprises shall promote training, and encourage and support new recruits to the industry.

Means of verification

- Documented policy
- Involvement with industry bodies promoting training, including AFAG
- Records of training sessions, provision of sites for training, subsidies for training courses.

Guidance

Promotion of training may be achieved through:

- Providing sites for training courses
- Offering subsidies for training courses.

8.3 Workers' rights

8.3.1 Requirement

Employees and other workers shall not be deterred from joining a trade union or employee association.



REF

Means of verification

- Discussions with employees and other workers do not suggest that they have been discouraged.

8.3.2 Requirement

Employees and other workers shall be permitted to negotiate collectively with their employers should they so wish.



REF

Means of verification

- Discussions with employees and other workers reveal no evidence that they have been prevented from negotiating collectively.

8.4 Insurance

8.4.1 Requirement

Owners/managers, employers and contractors shall hold and demonstrate adequate public liability and employer's liability insurance.

Means of verification

- Insurance documents.



Glossary of Terms

Access (for public)

Refers to woodland and its associated land open to the public for recreational or educational use (sometimes subject to charges).

Accreditation service

An authoritative body which evaluates and recognises the competence of bodies to certify that woodland management conforms to the specific requirements of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. Accreditation Services International (ASI) and the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) both provide an accreditation service in the UK. Those bodies which are accredited are referred to as certification bodies.

AFAG

Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group to the Health & Safety Executive.

Ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW)

See Woodland.

Ancient woodland

See Woodland.

Ancient woodland site

See Woodland.

Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is the process and documentation associated with the statutory requirement under the EU Habitats and Species Directive.

Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)

A statutory designation in Northern Ireland that offers statutory protection to habitats and species.

Biodiversity

The variety of ecosystems and living organisms (species), including genetic variation within species.

Biodiversity Action Plan(s) (BAP)

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) sets out a programme of action to conserve and enhance biological diversity throughout the UK. It includes action plans for key habitats and species, and cross-sectoral programmes to encourage biodiversity conservation within all land uses and businesses. Local Biodiversity Action Plans integrate these measures at a local or regional level.

Biological control agent

A living organism used to eliminate or regulate the population of another living organism. Their use can play an important role in an integrated pest management strategy.

Brash mats

Cut branches spread along the route where forest machinery will be driving to reduce soil damage.

Broadleaves

Broadleaved trees are characterised by their broad leaves and most are deciduous. They produce 'hardwood' timber. *Also see Conifers.*

Buffer

An area of non-invasive trees or other land use of sufficient width to protect semi-natural woodland from significant invasion by seed from a nearby non-native source.

Certification body

A body which is accredited by an accreditation service to certify (by giving written assurance) that woodland management conforms to the specific requirements of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. Also sometimes referred to as a conformity assessment body.

Certification scheme

A scheme that establishes a set of standards and processes that govern a system to verify that its standards (e.g. for sustainable forest management and chain-of-custody) are met and thereby provide assurance to customers and stakeholders.

Chain-of-custody certification

Chain-of-custody certification is a traceability system that ensures that certified products come from a well-managed source. The chain starts at the forest and is maintained through every link of the chain through to the end user.

Clearfelling

Cutting down of an area of woodland (if it is within a larger area of woodland it is typically a felling greater than 0.25 ha). Sometimes a scatter or small clumps of trees may be left standing within the felled area.

Common rights

Rights of Common that have been legally registered with local authorities in England and Wales.

Compliance

In the context of this certification standard, the term 'compliance' refers to meeting legal requirements.

Conformance

In the context of this certification standard, the term 'conformance' refers to meeting the requirements of the certification standard.

Conifers

Coniferous trees are characterised by their needle or scale-like leaves and most are evergreen. They produce 'softwood' timber. *Also see Broadleaves.*

Coppice

Management based on regeneration by re-growth from cut stumps (coppice stools). The same stool is used through several cycles of cutting and re-growth.

Also see short rotation coppice.

Coppice with standards

Coppice with a scatter of trees of seedling or coppice origin, grown on a long rotation to produce larger sized timber and to regenerate new seedlings to replace worn out stools.

COSHH

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.

Coupe

An area of woodland that has been or is planned for clearfelling.

Cultural features

Historic environment sites, historic buildings and heritage landscapes including ancient woodlands.

DARD

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development - the government department responsible for the regulation of forestry and the management of the state woodlands in Northern Ireland.

Also see Forest Service.

Deadwood

All types of wood that are dead including whole or wind-snapped standing trees, fallen branch wood and stumps, decaying wood habitats on living trees such as rot holes, dead limbs, decay columns in trunks and limbs, and wood below the ground as roots or stumps.

Design Plan (Forest Design Plan)

Long term outline planting or felling and regeneration plan (20 years or more) which takes account of the environmental characteristics of the woodland as well as the management of the growing stock. The first few years planting, felling, regeneration and environmental management plans are shown in detail. For woodlands managed by the FC, referred to as a Forest Design Plan. Design plans for private woodlands are encouraged through some grant schemes.

Where a design plan is in preparation but has not received full approval at the time of the intended felling operation, an approved felling licence may constitute an acceptable short term substitute with regard to the requirement in section 3.4.2, provided that the licence application deals comprehensively with the environmental implications of the proposed felling.

Drainage

An operation to remove excess water from an area in a controlled way. In woodlands, drains are usually open, unlined channels.

Ecological integrity

The health and vitality of the woodland's physical and biological components.

Ecosystem

A community of plants and animals (including humans) interacting with each other and the forces of nature. Balanced ecosystems are stable when considered over the long term (hundreds of years in the case of woodlands).

Environmental appraisal

Generic term for the process of assessing the impact of plans or operations on the environment.

Environmental impact assessment

Environmental impact assessment (EIA) is the process and documentation associated with the statutory requirement under the EU Environmental Assessment Directive.

FC

See Forestry Commission.

Felling licence

Licence issued by the Forestry Commission to permit trees to be felled. With certain exceptions it is illegal to fell trees in Great Britain without prior Forestry Commission approval. Similar arrangements are anticipated in Northern Ireland.

FEPA

Food and Environment Protection Act 1985.

Forest management unit (FMU)

Synonymous to woodland management unit.

See Woodland management unit (WMU)

Forest Service (FS)

An agency of Northern Ireland's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development which undertakes the regulation of forestry and the management of the state woodlands in Northern Ireland.

Forestry

The science and art of managing woodlands.

Forestry Commission (FC)

The government department with responsibility for the regulation of forestry and the management of the state woodlands throughout Great Britain. The abbreviations FCE, FCS and FCW refer to the FC's divisions for England, Scotland and Wales respectively.

Game

Animals, either wild or reared, managed for hunting or shot for food.

Genotype

The genetic constitution of an organism, as contrasted with its expressed characteristics which are known as the phenotype.

Glade

Small area of open ground which forms an integral part of the woodland.

Group selection

A method of managing irregular stands in which regeneration is achieved by felling trees in small groups.

HAP

Habitat Action Plans (*see Biodiversity Action Plans*).

Historic environment

Several thousand years of human activity has contributed to the landscape of the UK that we experience today. The surviving elements of the past take many forms, including ancient woods and forests, veteran trees, earthworks, ruined structures and features buried below ground. Together these elements provide a rich source of information about past societies and how they used and managed the land including their woods and forests.

Horticultural

In relation to section 3.3.3 on Christmas trees: intensive production on a small or large scale in a setting which cannot reasonably be considered to be a forest or woodland.

HSE

Health & Safety Executive. HSE is the government body charged with ensuring that risks to people's health and safety from work activities are properly controlled.

Glossary of Terms (continued)

ILO

International Labour Organization. The ILO is the specialised agency of the United Nations which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. The ILO formulates international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations setting minimum standards for basic labour rights.

Interested parties

People directly affected by or who have a significant interest in the woodland being managed.

International agreement

An agreement under international law entered into by sovereign states and international organizations which may also be known as a treaty, protocol, covenant, convention, exchange of letters, etc. It provides a means for willing parties to assume obligations among themselves, and a party that fails to live up to their obligations can be held liable under international law. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office's 'UK Treaties Online' database on www.fco.gov.uk lists those involving the UK.

Invasive (species)

Introduced non-native species which spread readily and dominate native species.

ISO

International Organization for Standardisation. ISO is the international network of national standards institutes.

ISO 14001

An international standard for environmental management systems (EMS) developed by the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO). It can be applied to any industry sector. ISO 14001 requires a company to undertake a review of its environmental impact, and based on this, to develop a policy, objectives and targets and a programme to ensure they are implemented. ISO 14001 does not set specific performance targets, other than legal compliance, and therefore sector-specific performance targets can be linked with this certification standard.

Landscape level

The level of the landscape unit.

Landscape unit

An area of broadly homogeneous landscape character.

Local Authority

See statutory body.

Local people

Anyone living or working in the vicinity who has an interest in the woodland. It is intentional that this term is not more closely defined, and the wider public is not excluded. It is particularly difficult to be precise about how local people are to be contacted or consulted. In some situations, it would be appropriate for this simply to mean those living beside the woodland (e.g. concerning noise disturbance). In other cases (such as using local services) a much wider geographical area will be appropriate. If there is difficulty in identifying local contacts, then the elected representatives should be the first choice.

Long-term retention

Trees retained for environmental benefit significantly beyond the age or size generally adopted by the woodland enterprise.

Lop and top

Woody debris from cutting operations, sometimes converted into chippings.

Low intensity managed woodland

Woodland management units are classed as being managed in a low intensity manner when:

- a) the rate of timber harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI) within the total production woodland area of the unit

AND

either

- b) the annual harvest from the total production woodland area is less than 5,000 cubic metres

or

- c) the average annual timber harvest from the total production woodland is less than 5,000 m³/year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.

Note: where Woodland Management Unit-specific estimates of mean annual increment are unavailable or impracticable, regional estimates of growth rates for specific woodland types may be used.

Also see Small woodland and SLIM woodland.

Lower impact silvicultural systems

Silvicultural systems including group selection, shelterwood or under-planting, small coupe felling, coppice or coppice with standards, minimum intervention and single tree selection systems which are suitable for windfirm conifer woodlands and most broadleaved woodlands.

Management planning documentation

See Woodland management plan.

Minimum intervention

Management with no systematic felling or planting of trees. Operations normally permitted are fencing, control of exotic plant species and vertebrate pests, maintenance of paths and rides and safety work.

National Nature Reserve (NNR)

A statutory designation that offers statutory protection to habitats and species.

Native (species)

A species that has arrived and inhabited an area naturally, without deliberate assistance by man, or would occur had it not been removed through past management. For trees and shrubs in the UK this is usually taken to mean those species present after post-glacial recolonisation and before historic times. Some species are only native in particular regions. Differences in characteristics and adaptation to conditions occur more locally hence the term 'locally native'.

Natural reserve

Natural reserves are predominantly wooded, are permanently identified and are in locations which are of particularly high wildlife interest or potential. They are managed by minimum intervention unless alternative management has higher conservation or biodiversity value.

Non-SLIM woodland

A woodland that is not classed as Small and/or subject to Low Intensity Management ('SLIM').

Also see Small woodland and Low intensity managed woodland.

Open space

In a woodland this includes streams, ponds and well laid-out roads and rides.

Origin (of seed)

The original natural genetic source of those trees which are native to the site.

PAWS

Plantation on ancient woodland site.

See Woodland.

Permissive (access/use)

Use is by permission whether written or implied, rather than by right.

Pesticides

Any substance, preparation or organism prepared or used, among other uses, to protect plants or wood or other plant products from harmful organisms, to regulate the growth of plants, to give protection against harmful creatures or to render such creatures harmless.

Plantation

See Woodland.

Plantation on ancient woodland site (PAWS)

See Woodland.

Provenance

Location of trees from which seed or cuttings are collected. Designation of Regions of Provenance under the Forest Reproductive Materials regulations is used to help nurseries and growers select suitable material. The term is often confused with 'origin' which is the original natural genetic source.

Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way are statutory rights of way in England and Wales and are recorded on Definitive Maps held by local authorities showing whether the right of way is by foot, horse or vehicle.

In Northern Ireland, records of public rights of way are held by district councils.

Ramsar sites

Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Recreation

Activity or experience of the visitor's own choice within a woodland setting. (Facilities may sometimes be provided and charges levied for their use.) *Also see Access.*

Red List species

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is widely recognised as the most comprehensive, objective global approach for evaluating the conservation status of plant and animal species. It provides a global context for the establishment of conservation priorities at the local level.

Regeneration

Renewal of woodland through sowing, planting, or natural regeneration.

Remnant

The baseline of surviving ancient woodland features found in PAWS, for which there is physical or documentary evidence.

These include:

- Woodland specialist flora. These are species with a strong affinity for ancient woodland but may vary in relation to geographic region
- Trees originating from the pre-plantation stand. They can be maidens, standards, coppice stools or pollards and may include ancient or veteran trees
- Deadwood originating from the pre-plantation stand, coarse woody debris and associated decomposer communities.

These features provide the continuity of habitat with the pre-plantation phase.

Restocking

Replacing felled areas by sowing seed, planting or natural regeneration.

Retentions

Trees retained, usually for environmental benefit, significantly beyond the age or size generally adopted by the owner for felling.

Ride

Permanent unsurfaced access route through woodland.

SAP

Species Action Plans (*see Biodiversity Action Plans*).

Semi-natural woodland

See Woodland.

Shelterwood

The shelterwood system involves the felling of a proportion of the mature trees within an area whilst leaving some trees as a seed source and shelter for natural regeneration. The seed trees are subsequently removed. Note that the term 'seed tree system' is often used to describe 'shelterwoods' with densities of <50 retained mature trees per hectare.

Short rotation coppice (SRC)

Short rotation coppice (usually willow or poplar) typically grown as an energy crop and harvested every 3 years.

Also see coppice.

Short rotation forestry (SRF)

Short rotation forestry crops are typically harvested at between 8 and 20 years.

Silviculture (silvicultural)

The techniques of tending and regenerating woodlands, and harvesting their physical products.

Glossary of Terms (continued)

Single tree selection

A method of managing irregular stands in which individual trees of any size are removed more or less uniformly throughout the stand.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A statutory designation in Great Britain that offers statutory protection to habitats and species.

SLIM woodland

A woodland that is classed as Small and/or subject to Low Intensity Management ('SLIM').

Also see Small woodland and Low intensity managed woodland.

Small coupe felling

A small scale clearfelling system. The system is imprecisely defined but coupes are typically between 0.5 ha and 2.0 ha in extent, with the larger coupes elongated in shape so the edge effect is still high.

Small woodland

An individual woodland of 500 ha or under in size; a small woodland of 10 ha or under is sometimes referred to as a 'very small woodland'.

Snag

A standing dead tree that has lost its top.

Special Area for Conservation (SAC)

Area designated under the EU Habitats and Species Directive.

Special Protection Area (SPA)

Area designated under the EU Birds Directive.

Spirit, conformance to

Conformance to the spirit means that the owner/manager is aiming to achieve the principles set out in the certification standard.

Statutory body(ies)

There are four categories:

- The statutory nature conservation and countryside agencies: Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, Countryside Council for Wales and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency
- The statutory environment protection agencies: Environment Agency in England and Wales, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency
- The statutory historic environment agencies: English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Cadw (in Wales) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency
- Local authorities responsible for a wide range of functions including highways and planning.

Thinning

Tree removal, which results in a temporary reduction in basal area, made after canopy closure to promote growth and greater value in the remaining trees.

Trademarks

'UKWAS' and 'United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard' are registered trademarks.

Traditional

In relation to section 3.3.3 on Christmas trees: production on a small scale in a setting which can reasonably be considered to be a woodland.

Traditional rights

Rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, which have, by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit.

Under-planting

The planting of young trees under the canopy of an existing stand - often combined with a shelterwood or group selection system.

United Kingdom

References to the 'United Kingdom' or 'UK' refer to the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland' which comprises England, Scotland and Wales (collectively referred to as 'Great Britain') and Northern Ireland.

Value(s)

The weights given to economic, biodiversity, recreational, environmental, social and cultural impacts when considering management options.

Very small woodland

See Small woodland.

Veteran tree

A tree that is of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically because of its age, size or condition, including the presence of deadwood micro-habitats.

Water course

Streams and rivers. References to forestry practice on adjacent land should be taken as applying also to adjacent water e.g. ponds and lakes.

Whole tree harvesting

The removal from the harvesting site of every part of the tree above ground or above and below ground.

Windthrow

Uprooting of trees by the wind.

Windthrow risk

A technical assessment of risk based on local climate, topography, site conditions and tree height.

Wood pasture

Areas of historical, cultural and ecological interest, where grazing is managed in combination with a proportion of open tree canopy cover.

Woodland

Predominantly tree covered land whether in large tracts (generally called forests) or smaller units (known by a variety of terms such as woodlands, woods, copses and shelterbelts).

Those woodlands which are comprised mainly of locally native trees and shrubs, and have some structural characteristics of natural woodland are referred to as **semi-natural woodland**.

Those woodlands which are derived principally from the human activity of planting, sowing or intensive silvicultural treatment but lack most of the principal characteristics and key elements of semi-natural woodland are generally referred to as **plantations** or **woodlands of planted origin**. They often include a proportion of naturally regenerated trees and are often managed to become more like natural woodlands over time.

Woodland is referred to as **ancient woodland** when it has been in continuous existence since before AD 1600 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or since before AD 1750 in Scotland.

The term **ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW)** is used to describe those semi-natural stands on ancient woodland sites. The precise definition varies according to the local circumstances in each country within the United Kingdom and guidance should be sought from the Forestry Commission or Forest Service as appropriate.

The term **ancient woodland site** refers to the site of an ancient woodland irrespective of its current tree cover. Where the native tree cover has been felled and replaced by planting of tree species not native to the site it is referred to as a **plantation on ancient woodland site (PAWS)**.

Also see Small woodland, Low intensity managed woodland and SLIM woodland.

Woodland management plan

The collection of documents, reports, records and maps that describe, justify and regulate the activities carried out by any manager, staff or organization in a management unit, including statements of objectives and policies.

Woodland management unit (WMU)

The woodland management unit (WMU) is the area to which the management planning documentation relates. A WMU is a clearly defined woodland area, or areas, with mapped boundaries, managed to a set of explicit long term objectives.

Appendix: Main legislation, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice referred to in the UKWAS

The main legislation, guidelines and codes of practice relevant to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard are set out in the Appendix. These are correct and as complete as possible as at August 2011 but should not be treated as an exhaustive list. It is important at all times to refer to the most recent and/or new documents and relevant websites should be checked frequently.

The following abbreviations have been used throughout the text of the certification standard to highlight sources of additional information:



Management Planning

Check the UKWAS website for sources on developing management planning documentation. Any sources or examples posted are not definitive and following the guidance provides no guarantee of achieving certification.



Forest Reproductive Material Regulations

Check Forestry Commission Information Note 53: Recent Changes to the Control of Forest Reproductive Material (2003) which describes the arrangements in Great Britain. Details of the arrangements in Northern Ireland may be obtained from the Forest Service.



Biodiversity Action Plan

Check the relevant Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) or Species Action Plans (SAPs) in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan available at www.jncc.defra.gov.uk



Main Reference Documents

Refer to the relevant documents in this Appendix.

The key main documents are listed below :

Key Legislation

1967: Forestry Act 1967 (as amended)

1967: Plant Health Act 1967

1982: Forestry Commission Bye-laws

1953: Forestry Act (Northern Ireland) 1953

2010: Forestry Act (Northern Ireland) 2010

Key Forestry Commission Publications

2011: The UK Forestry Standard

2011: UKFS Guidelines series:

Forests and Biodiversity

Forests and Climate Change

Forests and Historic Environment

Forests and Landscape

Forests and People

Forests and Soil

Forests and Water

See www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs for further information and to download the UK Forestry Standard and UKFS Guidelines series.

Information on forestry grant schemes and regulations applicable to England, Scotland and Wales may be obtained from the Forestry Commission and, to Northern Ireland, from the Forest Service. Guidance on environmental regulations is provided for small businesses on www.netregs.gov.uk

Other Reference Documents

The other main reference documents are provided in a separate Appendix document available on www.ukwas.org.uk

For easy reference, the documents are assigned to the appropriate section headings of the certification standard.

Notes



UKWAS

United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard

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