**Climate Adaptation and building Resilience - Information Note**

**Summary:**

The contribution of Scotland’s woodlands and forests to achieving Net Zero by 2045 and halting biodiversity loss depends not just on delivering our ambitious targets to increase woodland creation to 18,000 hectares per year by 2024/25, we also need to ensure they are can adapt to a changing climate, and be resilient to an increasing number of threats and challenges that it brings.

**Key points:**

1 An Independent assessment of climate change risk by the Climate Change Committee states that more action is needed to adapt in all sectors including our woodlands, forestry and wider land management.

2 If we are to achieve the potential of trees to mitigate climate change and help halt biodiversity loss, we need to ensure our forests can adapt to a changing climate, and be resilient to the increasing number of threats and challenges that it brings. These include increased extreme events such as wildfire, drought and frosts, increased temperatures, and increased pests and diseases. We also need to harness trees to help communities adapt, from increased flood and temperature threats for example.

3 We need to plan carefully what trees we plant where in Scotland, how they are managed, and with the right kind of investment. Along with growing other forms of natural capital, responsible private investment for woodland creation is vital to achieve the pace of change we need. Scottish Government will be looking to ensure that this investment in trees continues to provide a diverse range of environmental, social and economic objectives, and is values led, so that it supports a Just Transition and benefits communities.

4 Forest creation and management needs to evolve, and to help achieve this Scottish Government will work alongside the private sector and wider stakeholders. New Guidance ‘*Adapting forest and woodland management to the changing climate’* commissioned by Scottish Forestry and the other UK countries, has just been published explaining clearly the actions that can be taken.

5 These actions include increasing the diversity of tree species, provenance and management system, using mixed species stands and natural regeneration, future proofing forest design, and contingency planning. Now this is available, Scottish Forestry will be considering further policy or practice needs to guide, facilitate, and monitor delivery of actions on the ground.

6 Forests and woodlands not only have a key role in sequestering carbon and providing many social and environmental benefits, the wood produced has a crucial role too to substitute for non-renewable products, such as concrete, steel, and fossil fuels. Home-grown wood products also reduce carbon miles from importing the wood we need (see our Climate Change Mitigation Information Note).

7 Therefore, we must ensure a balance between effective adaptation and efficient mitigation; both are crucial to deliver in a climate-smart and values-led way for the people of Scotland.