

Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029: Parliamentary progress report 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2022

**Laid before the Scottish Parliament by Mairi McAllan MSP, Minister for
Environment and Land Reform, under Section 7 of the Forestry and
Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018**

Ministerial foreword



Forestry in Scotland is a sector that we can be justifiably proud of.

Forestry has a significant role in confronting not just the twin global climate and biodiversity crises but also the increase in global demand for timber and wood fibre that we face today and into the future. Tackling these global challenges through woodland expansion rightly has strong cross-party support in the Scottish Parliament.

And Scotland is punching above its weight when it comes to forestry, with nearly 80% of all new woodlands in the UK created right here in Scotland. Between 2019 and 2022 we created more than 32,000 hectares of new woodland, planting around 64 million trees. These trees will provide multiple benefits for Scotland now and into the future, absorbing carbon, protecting and enhancing our rich biodiversity, supporting a sustainable economy and providing people with health and wellbeing benefits, thereby helping deliver the Bute House Agreement including our ambitious commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2045 through a Just Transition.

Our actions on forestry are built on the foundation provided by Scotland's Forestry Strategy. I am therefore pleased to present this first progress report on the Strategy to the Scottish Parliament, as required under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018.

This report marks an important milestone since the devolution of forestry and sets out the first steps that we and our partners have taken to realise the Strategy's 50-year vision; to expand our forests and woodlands and increase the benefits they deliver to Scotland's people now and into the future.

The report covers the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2022 and includes the actions set out in the Implementation Plan 2020-2022. Despite the multiple challenges that forestry in Scotland has experienced in this period, from the impacts of Covid-19, the deep and ongoing economic harm of Brexit, and the damage inflicted by extreme weather events such as Storm Arwen, it has continued to be a growing success story.

As a score card, the report says significant progress has been made, but it also signals that we must not rest on our laurels.

We need to continue to build and maintain strong partnerships with many land use sectors if we are to realise the full scale and range of benefits that sustainably created and managed woodlands can deliver for Scotland. Central to this is ensuring

that we create woodlands with the right tree in the right place, and for the right reasons.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all those whose hard work has enabled us to make such a strong start in delivering our 10-year Forestry Strategy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Máiri McAllan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Máiri McAllan MSP

Minister for Environment and Land Reform

Ro-ràdh bhon Mhinistear



'S e roinn às am faod sinn a bhith moiteil a th' ann an roinn na coilltearachd ann an Alba.

Tha àite cudromach aig coilltearachd ann a bhith a' toirt aghaidh air chan e a-mhàin an dà èiginn chruinneil - gnàth-shìde agus bith-iomadachd ach cuideachd ann a bhith a' toirt aghaidh air an àrdachadh san iarrtas chruinneil airson fiodh agus snàithleach fiodha a tha mur coinneamh an-diugh agus san àm ri teachd. Tha taic thar-phàrtaidh ann am Pàrlamaid na h-Alba airson a bhith a' dèiligeadh ris na dùbhlain chruinneil seo tro leudachadh choilltean, mar as còir.

Agus tha Alba a' dèanamh nas fheàrr na bhiodte an dùil airson dùthaich de a meud a thaobh coilltearachd, le faisg air 80% de na coilltean ùra uile san RA air an cruthachadh an seo ann an Alba. Eadar 2019 agus 2022, chruthaich sinn còrr is 32,000 heactair de choilltean ùra, a' cur mu 64 millean craobhan. Bheir na craobhan seo grunn bhuannachdan do dh'Alba an dà chuid aig an àm seo agus san àm ri teachd, a' gabhail a-steach tòrr mòr carboin, a' dìon agus ag àrdachadh na bith-iomadachd beartich againn, a' cumail taic ri eaconamaidh sheasmhach agus a' toirt buannachdan slàinte is sunnd do dhaoine, agus mar sin a' cuideachadh le bhith a' libhrigeadh Aonta Taigh Bhòid, a' gabhail a-steach ar gealltanais àrd-amasach gus Cothromachadh Carboin a ruighinn ro 2045 tro Eadar-ghluasad Cothromach.

Tha na gnìomhan againn air coilltearachd air an togail air a' bhunait a thug Ro-innleachd Coilltearachd na h-Alba dhuinn. Mar sin tha mi toilichte a' chiad aithisg adhartais seo air an Ro-innleachd a thaisbeanadh do Phàrlamaid na h-Alba, mar a tha riatanach fo Achd Coilltearachd agus Riaghladh Fearainn (Alba) 2018.

Tha an aithisg seo a' comharrachadh clach-mhìle chudromach bho chaidh coilltearachd a thiomnadh agus tha i a' cur an cèill na ciad cheumannan a tha sinne agus na com-pàirtichean againn air gabhail gus lèirsinn 50 bliadhna na Ro-innleachd a thoirt gu buil; gus na coilltean againn a leudachadh agus gus àrdachadh a thoirt air na buannachdan a bheir iad do mhuinntir na h-Alba aig an àm seo agus san àm ri teachd.

Tha an aithisg seo airson 1 Giblean 2019 gu 31 Màrt 2022 agus a' gabhail a-steach nan gnìomhan a tha air am mìneachadh ann am Plana Buileachaidh 2020-2022. A dh'aindeoin nan iomadh dùbhlain a bha mu choinneamh coilltearachd ann an Alba san ùine seo, bho bhuidhean Covid-19, an cron eaconamach domhainn is leantainneach aig Brexit, agus am milleadh a rinn tachartasan fìor droch shìde leithid Storm Arwen, tha e air a bhith na sgeulachd de shoirbheachas a tha a' sìor-fhàs.

Mar chairt-sgòr, tha an aithisg ag ràdh gun deach adhartas mòr a dhèanamh, ach tha e cuideachd a' comharrachadh nach fhaod sinn a bhith nar tàmh idir.

Feumaidh sinn cumail oirnn a' togail agus a' cumail suas com-pàirteachasan làidir le mòran roinnean cleachdaidh fearainn ma tha sinn gu bhith a' toirt gu buil làn sgèile agus farsaingeachd nam buannachdan as urrainn coilltean a tha air an cruthachadh agus air an riaghladh gu seasmhach a libhrigeadh do dh'Alba. Aig cridhe seo tha a bhith a' dèanamh cinnteach gun cruthaich sinn coilltean leis a' chraobh cheart san àite cheart, agus airson nan adhbharan ceart.

Mu dheireadh, bu mhath leam a h-uile duine a chomharrachadh a rinn an obair chruaidh a leig leinn tòiseachadh gu làidir ann a bhith libhrigeadh na Ro-innleachd Coilltearachd deich bliadhna againn.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Màiri NicAilein', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Màiri NicAilein BPA Ministear airson na h-Àrainneachd agus Ath-leasachadh Fearainn

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Progress	5
3. Delivery and funding	10
4. Reviewing the Forestry Strategy	11
5. Continued delivery	11
Annex 1: Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018	13
Annex 2: Key Scottish delivery partners.....	14
Annex 3: Implementation Plan 2020-2022 key actions.....	15

1. Introduction

On 1 April 2019, the [Forestry and Land Management \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) (FLM(S)A)¹ came into effect, completing the devolution of forestry to Scotland. The FLM(S)A required that a Forestry Strategy be prepared, and prior to its enactment, in February 2019, Scottish Ministers published [Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029](#)². With its 50-year vision and 10-year framework for action, the Strategy clearly articulated Scotland's ambition to have more forests and woodlands and for them to deliver more benefits to the people of Scotland, including carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation, enhancing and protecting Scotland's rich biodiversity, supplying Scotland with timber and wood fibre, growing an inclusive and sustainable rural economy, and helping Scotland's people adapt to the changing climate and improve their health and well-being.

The Act also sets out the requirement for the Scottish Government to report to Parliament on progress towards delivering its Forestry Strategy every three years (see Annex A). To coincide with the progress reporting cycle, in 2020 the first Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan (2020-2022) was published, which included the actions that the Scottish Government and its partners agreed to undertake to support delivery of the Strategy until the end of March 2022. A second Implementation Plan covering the reporting period from 2022-2025 was published on 29 June 2022.

This is the first progress report covering the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2022 as required under Section 7 of the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018. The report includes key forestry achievements, delivery of the actions under the Implementation Plan 2020-2022, status of the Forestry Strategy indicators, Scottish Government delivery and funding, and the initial review of the Forestry Strategy.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2018/8/enacted>

² <https://forestry.gov.scot/forestry-strategy>

2. Progress

2.1 Significant forestry achievements

Since the completion of forestry devolution and the publication of Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029, forestry in Scotland has been a real and growing success story. Highlights in this period include:

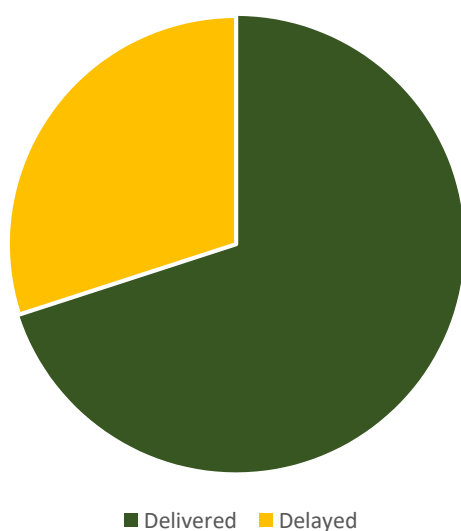
- More than 32,000 hectares of new woodland have been created in Scotland, including over 12,000 hectares of native woodland. This equates to roughly 64 million trees, and almost 80% of all woodland creation in the UK over that period.
- 131 projects in Scotland have been validated under the Woodland Carbon Code, bringing the total to 226. Projects validated since 2019 have created 9,381 hectares of woodland in Scotland, which are predicted to sequester around 3 million tonnes of CO₂e over the next 100 years. The annual sequestration capacity of Scotland's forests is equivalent to some 14% of Scotland's total greenhouse gas emissions.
- Between 2019 and 2021, it is estimated that around 7.5 million cubic metres, or around a third of the total harvest of Scottish timber in the form of sawn timber and wood panel products, was used in construction in the UK. Scotland's annual timber production would fill a train 1000 miles long.
- The Scottish Government's Strategic Timber Transport Scheme has invested more than £21 million into 128 projects, with a total value of more than £29.8 million. The majority has been invested in minor public roads across rural local authorities and in projects focused on moving timber by sea. The Strategic Timber Transport Fund has contributed £2.6m to support the Timberlink Service which ships timber from Argyll across the Forth of Clyde to processors in Ayrshire.
- In 2019, 19% of all outdoor visits in Scotland were to forests and woodlands - 123 million visits in total.
- Despite restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic, almost 600 vulnerable adults with enduring mental health conditions accessed our flagship positive mental health through nature programme called 'Branching Out'.

- Using Scottish Government funding, the Community Woodlands Association provided advice and support to an average of 64 community woodland groups a year. Topics of advice and support included woodland acquisition, social benefits from woodlands, business development, governance, and woodland management and planning.
- Approximately 1.2 million hectares of trees have been surveyed annually under the Scottish Forestry Tree Health Programme.

2.2 Delivery of Scotland's Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan 2020-2022

[Scotland's Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan 2020-2022³](https://forestry.gov.scot/forestry-strategy) was developed with input from a stakeholder reference group and published in June 2020. The plan included 30 key actions alongside a wide range of on-going activities. By 31 March 2022, 70% of these key actions had been delivered through work by Scottish Government and a range of public, private and voluntary sector partners (Annex 2 lists these). Some were delayed largely due to the need to re-prioritise resources to respond to the Covid pandemic, however most of these will still be delivered. Annex 3 describes the status of each key action.

Figure 1: Delivery status



³ <https://forestry.gov.scot/forestry-strategy>

In addition to supporting the delivery of the significant forestry achievements outlined above, the following outputs were delivered under the Implementation Plan:

- Published the Science and Innovation Strategy for Forestry in Great Britain, to continue to build the evidence base underpinning the sustainable management of Scotland's forests.
- Increased the accessibility of the Forestry Grant Scheme for small-scale and non-sensitive applications by launching a small loans scheme and woodland creation guidance aimed at non-foresters.
- Published guidance on ground preparation for forest managers, specifically on cultivation for upland productive woodland creation sites, to support management decisions relating to woodland establishment.
- Established a Forest Plant & Seed Supply Forum, made up of representatives of UK administrations and the private nursery sector, to understand plant supply issues relating to delivering woodland creation targets.
- Published a sector skills strategy and a careers toolkit to attract new and more diverse talent to the forestry sector.
- Rolled out a forest therapy programme in Scotland to promote the use of woodlands to improve mental well-being, including training practitioners to deliver forest bathing sessions.

2.3 Forestry strategy indicators

Beyond measuring progress against the specific actions set out in the Implementation Plan, a set of high-level Forestry Strategy indicators was also identified to track and report progress against the Strategy's 10-year objectives, policies and priorities:

- Increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- Improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment.
- Increase the use of Scotland's forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances.

The indicators were selected to cover a range of the Strategy's activities and designed to reflect national and international priorities including:

- Relevant National Performance Framework indicators.
- Internationally recognised measures of sustainable forest management (e.g. indicators for UN Sustainable Development Goal 15).
- Scottish Government forestry commitments on climate change, community ownership, biodiversity and economic growth.

The indicators are described in more detail at [Forestry Strategy 2019 to 2029 description of indicators](#)⁴. Table 1 sets out the status of each indicator within the reporting period. Methodological changes may account for data trends. The indicators will continue to be measured over the lifetime of the Forestry Strategy.

Table 1: Status of each indicator

Indicator	Data points (within reporting period)
i. Total area of forests and woodland	1,460,000 hectares (2020) 1,467,000 hectares (2021) 1,480,000 hectares (2022)
ii. Area of woodland creation	11,210 hectares (2020) 11,050 hectares (2021) 10,660 hectares (2022)
iii. Area of UK Woodland Assurance Standard certified forests and woodland	863,000 hectares (2020) 859,000 hectares (2021) 886,000 hectares (2022)
iv. Area of forests and woodland covered by management plans	845,009 hectares (2019) 854,994 hectares (2021)

⁴ <https://forestry.gov.scot/forestry-strategy>

Indicator	Data points (within reporting period)
v. Number of community groups that own and lease forests and woodland ⁵	71 groups owning 79 assets (2019) 72 groups owning 80 assets (2020) 74 groups owning 82 assets (2021)
vi. Economic contribution of forestry to the Scottish economy	<i>[Measure delayed by 12 months due to pandemic]</i>
vii. Volume of available timber	8,766,000 cubic metres per year during 2022-2026 10,067,000 cubic metres per year during 2027-2031
viii. Forestry sector net greenhouse gas emissions	-9.6MtCO ₂ e data for 2018 published 2020 -7.8MtCO ₂ data for 2019 published 2021 -7.6MtCO ₂ data for 2020, published 2022
ix. Woodland ecological condition score	Average of all woodlands in Scotland (2020): Favourable Condition: 1.1% Intermediate Condition: 94.7% Unfavourable Condition: 4.2%
x. Condition of protected forest and woodland sites	64.3% woodland features in favourable condition in 2020 64.3% woodland features in favourable condition in 2021

⁵ Comprehensive data not available on community groups that lease forests and woodlands. Indicator will be reviewed.

Indicator	Data points (within reporting period)
	62.8% woodland features in favourable condition in 2022
xi. Index of Abundance for Scottish Terrestrial Breeding Birds – Woodland Species	158.3 - 'Unsmoothed woodland data': 2019
xii. Number of visits to forests and woodlands	Total number of visits made to forests was 123.4 million in 2019

3. Delivery and funding

During the reporting period the Scottish Government provided funding and support of over £244.8 million to Scottish Forestry and Forestry and Land Scotland, with an additional £47.7 million from European Commission co-financing, towards the delivery of the Forestry Strategy's objectives, policies and priorities – see Scottish budget (www.gov.scot). This funding supported Scottish Forestry⁶ and Forestry and Land Scotland's⁷ direct delivery including Implementation Plan actions, management of the National Forests and Land, regulation of the forestry sector and delivery of the Forestry Grant Scheme, alongside £15 million of other Scottish Government funding for the Scottish Timber Transport Fund, supporting the key achievements set out in section 2.1.

In addition, the Scottish Government has committed in this parliamentary term to provide an additional £150 million to accelerate progress towards our commitment of 18,000 hectares of woodland creation a year by 2024-2025. This includes £20 million to support an increase in state nursery production, £30 million to support the expansion of Scotland's national forests, as well as an extra £100 million of funding support available through the Forestry Grant Scheme.

⁶ <https://forestry.gov.scot/about/reports-and-plans>

⁷ <https://forestryandland.gov.scot/what-we-do/who-we-are/corporate-information/annual-report-accounts>

4. Reviewing the Forestry Strategy

During the Bill process for the FLM(S) Act, there was clear cross-party support for the creation of a Strategy that was long-term in nature and this was reflected in the Forestry Strategy provisions made under the Act. Therefore, during the production of the first Strategy the following decisions were made:

- That no new forestry targets be included in the Strategy itself and instead reference be made to how the Strategy would help support delivery of other Government plans and strategies and the forestry-related targets contained therein, including the Climate Change Plan and the Biodiversity Strategy.
- That shorter-term implementation plans be used to ensure delivery remains responsive to changes in policy emphasis and new or updated Government targets over the Strategy's lifetime, rather than having to continually revisit the Forestry Strategy document itself.

During the development of the second Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan, a review of the continuing relevance of the Strategy's objectives, priorities and policies was undertaken and shared with stakeholders.

The review found that the Strategy's 50-year vision and 10-year objectives continued to meet the requirements under the FLM(S) Act 2018 and remained closely aligned with Government priorities. It was therefore concluded that the Forestry Strategy objectives, policies and priorities were still fit for purpose.

5. Continued delivery

On 29 June 2022, the second [Scotland's Forestry Strategy Implementation Plan 2022-2025](https://forestry.gov.scot/publications/forestry-strategy-2022-2025)⁸ was published. The plan was prepared with input from the [National Forestry Stakeholder Group](https://forestry.gov.scot/about/national-stakeholder-group)⁹ and key delivery partners. Building on progress already made, as well as recognising current and emerging priorities, it sets out the actions that the Scottish Government and its partners will deliver over the next three

⁸ <https://forestry.gov.scot/publications/forestry-strategy>

⁹ <https://forestry.gov.scot/about/national-stakeholder-group>

years to continue to progress the realisation of the Forestry Strategy's vision, objectives and priorities and Scottish Government outcomes.

Annex 1: Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018

Section 7: Report on Forestry Strategy

(1) The Scottish Ministers must, as soon as practicable after the end of each reporting period, prepare and publish a report setting out —

(a) progress made in the reporting period in respect of the objectives, priorities and policies included in the forestry strategy,

(b) an assessment of the extent to which funding and support provided by them has assisted in achieving such progress,

(c) steps taken in the reporting period to keep the forestry strategy under review.

(2) The Scottish Ministers must lay a copy of each report prepared and published under this section before the Scottish Parliament.

(3) In this section, “reporting period” means the period of 3 years beginning with the day on which the forestry strategy was last published and each subsequent period of 3 years.

Annex 2: Key Scottish delivery partners

Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmillers
Atlantic Woodland Alliance
British Trust for Ornithology
Butterfly Conservation
Cairngorms National Park
Central Scotland Green Network Trust
Community Woodlands Association
Confederation of Forest Industries
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations
Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust
Farm Advisory Service
Forest Industry Safety Accord
Forest Research
Forest Therapy Institute
Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership
Heads of Planning Scotland
Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Historic Environment Scotland
Institute of Chartered Foresters
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
National Access Forum
National Health Service Scotland
National Trust for Scotland
NatureScot (previously known as Scottish Natural Heritage)
Planning Authorities
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels
Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture
Scottish Enterprise
Scottish Environment LINK
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Scottish Forest and Timber Technologies Industry Leadership Group
Scottish Land Commission
Scottish Local Authorities
Scottish Raptor Monitoring Group
Scottish Tree Health Action Group
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Soil Association
South of Scotland Enterprise Woodland Trust Scotland
Transport Scotland
Trees for Life

Annex 3: Implementation Plan 2020-2022 key actions

Status on 31 March 2022: Blue = delivered / Amber = delayed

Priority: Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed

Action	Status	Comment
Coordinate cross-UK work to prepare for the next UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) review.	Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparatory work for the review completed.• UKFS review project board established with representatives from Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Review was launched in February 2021. The first stakeholder consultation was held in August 2021. A draft of the fifth edition of the Standard is being prepared ahead of the second stakeholder consultation planned for October 2022.
Work with other UK administrations on research commissioning and production of the next Science and Innovation Strategy.	Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Science and Innovation Strategy for forestry in Great Britain¹⁰ was published on 28 October 2020.
Complete a stock-take of UKFS implementation and use the findings to inform the next UKFS review.	Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action was postponed due to a re-prioritisation of resources needed to adapt to the pandemic and new ways of working.
Work with the forestry and wood	Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SF continued to support the delivery of the priority actions including the Forest and Water

¹⁰ <https://gov.wales/science-and-innovation-strategy-forestry-great-britain>

Action	Status	Comment
processing sector to deliver Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) sector plan priority actions to ensure forestry activities and businesses comply with environmental regulations.		<p>Scotland Initiative¹¹, providing support to river restoration projects, collaborating to deliver the government's woodland creation target, and engaging SEPA in the review of the UKFS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint working agreement between Scottish Forestry and the SEPA has been updated.

¹¹ <https://www.confor.org.uk/resources/forestry-water-scotland>

Priority: Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives

Action	Status	Comment
Consult stakeholders on revised woodland creation targets and publish an updated Climate Change Plan.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Climate Change Plan Update (March 2021) contains revised woodland creation targets (18,000 ha/year by 2024-2025). Parliamentary scrutiny included stakeholder consultation.
Refresh guidance to support planning authorities to meet the requirement to produce forestry and woodland strategies (FWS).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work was paused whilst the National Planning Framework 4 and the associated planning policy context for FWS was developed. Action included in the implementation plan 2022-2025.
Improve Forestry Grant Scheme effectiveness by completing the actions identified in the review of the grant application process and increasing the accessibility of the scheme for small-scale and non-		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New loan scheme for small woodlands launched on 17 March 2021 supported by new woodland creation guidance aimed at non-foresters and a revised small woodland operational plan.

Action	Status	Comment
sensitive applications.		
Identify opportunities to increase green finance investment to support woodland creation including through use of the Woodland Carbon Code.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborated with partners on research and development to facilitate innovation in green finance, including Scottish Government work streams on private investment in natural capital • Further developed the Woodland Carbon Code and its role in expanding the domestic woodland carbon market. • Worked with private sector to enable the development and implementation of specific project proposals on forestry-related natural capital investment.
Support the forestry sector to develop a plant and seed supply strategy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Forest Plant & Seed Supply Forum, made up of representatives of UK administrations and the private nursery sector, was established in June 2021. The purpose of the forum is to improve the exchange of information between the private sector and governments to develop the understanding of plant supply issues.
Review options on how to support rural population and deliver economic and social benefits by ensuring synergies between planning, woodland		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated non-domestic permitted development rights circular (2021) to include a section on the “Conversion of Agricultural and Forestry Buildings to Residential Use” as an option to support rural re-population priority.

Action	Status	Comment
creation and housing provision.		
Publish and disseminate guidance on ground preparation for forest managers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance published in July 2021: Cultivation for upland productive woodland creation sites
Coordinate a review into suitable approaches for monitoring urban canopy cover and how these can best target opportunities for creating new urban woodlands.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action taken forward by initiatives such as Clyde Climate Forest exploring approaches to assessing the level of regional urban canopy cover. Continued to discuss options for assessing extent of canopy cover with other projects and to share lessons on different approaches.

Priority: Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets

Action	Status	Comment
Publish a study on the economic contribution of the forestry sector.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A survey of forest sector businesses across the UK was carried out to gather data for the study. A supplementary survey is planned for autumn 2022 to generate sufficient data. A separate pan-GB job creation study was completed. This provides estimates on the employment effects of investments in forestry as part of a green recovery.
Publish a 25-year timber availability forecast and updated productive species yield models.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 25-year forecast of softwood timber availability for the UK is due to be published in July 2022.
Coordinate support for forestry sector businesses to adopt new technologies and build data management capability to improve efficiency and productivity.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed due to pandemic. Work has now started on digitising the supply chain and maximising recovery of wood fibre. The Industry Leadership Group has set up a Digitisation Working Group to look at this area in more detail.
Publish a sector skills strategy to attract new and more diverse talent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector skills plan¹² was published in May 2020.

¹² <https://forestryscotland.com>

Action	Status	Comment
to the forestry sector including increasing the proportion of women working in forestry.		

Priority: Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands

Action	Status	Comment
Publish Scottish Ministers' response to the Deer Working Group review including actions relating to forestry.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Government response to the Deer Working Group was published on 24 March 2021. • Scottish Forestry and Forestry and Land Scotland represented on the Scottish Government Deer Strategic Board responsible for implementing Ministers' response to the Deer Working Group recommendations.
Develop the Tree Health Service in response to emerging threats and improved understanding of specific pests and diseases, including exploring the feasibility of new technology to enhance monitoring.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pandemic meant that Scottish Forestry's typical programme of tree health surveillance was severely modified. Surveys were completed across Scotland during 2020 and 2021. Helicopter surveys have been supplemented by using alternative technologies, including fixed wing photography and the use of drones. The Tree Health team are currently evaluating the benefits of these technologies with a view to making greater use of them in future surveillance programmes.
Implement a refreshed Deer Management Strategy for national forests and land.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry and Land Scotland supported Scottish Government in all four work streams that have been set up to facilitate implementation of the recommendations within the Deer Working Group Report. Forestry and Land Scotland will finalise and

Action	Status	Comment
		publish its refreshed Deer Management Strategy by the end of 2022.
Promote the new approach to monitoring the ecological condition of woodland, and use the monitoring data to support implementation of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS) post 2020.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Woodland Ecological Condition (WEC) report¹³ was published in January 2020 as the baseline data against which future five-year reports will be compared. Publication of second report delayed. New SBS due in late 2022 and implementation thereafter. WEC data have been suggested as one of the data sets to be used to monitor progress.
Create a forest resilience 'resource' to provide the latest evidence on risks and approaches to improve forest resilience, and to engage the forestry sector and stakeholders on the key findings from this evidence.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest Research appointed a Project Manager in January 2022 and are actively taking forward hub development with a Steering Group. Hub is expected to be launch in Winter 2022. The UK Forestry Standard Practice Guide 'Adapting forest and woodland management to the changing climate' to be published in May 2022.

¹³ <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/national-forest-inventory/what-our-woodlands-and-tree-cover-outside-woodlands-are-like-today-nfi-inventory-reports-and-woodland-map-reports/nfi-woodland-ecological-condition/>

Priority: Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands

Action	Status	Comment
Develop and implement policies to increase carbon sequestration through management of Scotland's forests and woodlands.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioned a study to quantify the carbon cycle in forestry from planting to end use and an easy-to-use carbon modelling tool has been developed to assist in development of new policies. The Quantifying the Sustainable Forestry Carbon Cycle summary report due to be published June 2022.
Undertake further mapping of the extent of known historic features and disseminate the data to help inform woodland creation proposals and forest plans.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The formal polygonisation programme is currently paused. Historic Environment Scotland continued to create polygons during survey and desk-based projects (e.g. recent survey of the Whiteadder catchment dealt with 1,954 sites and a block of ground in Kilmartin Glen dealt with 405 sites). Historic Environment Scotland hold 94,058 polygons relating to 67,526 unique site records. The current tally of total records is 167,520 Archaeology, 135,252 Architecture and 24,754 Maritime.
Review evidence of the contribution of urban forestry to the quality of urban environments, and		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest Research published a Factsheet Climate change and urban forests: Can urban forests help cities adapt to climate change?¹⁴ in January 2022.

¹⁴ <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/publications/factsheet-climate-change-and-urban-forests/>

Action	Status	Comment
its potential role in helping towns and cities in Scotland adapt to a changing climate.		
Develop an asset management approach to the historic environment within Scotland's national forests and land.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance is now available for Forestry and Land Scotland staff (Forestry and Land Scotland Asset Management Approach) and five Regional Historic Asset Management Plans are in place.

Priority: Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands.

Action	Status	Comment
Develop a Forest Therapy programme.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training was delivered in partnership with the Forest Therapy Institute¹⁵. • The trainee Forest Therapy Guides were certified in 2021.
Deliver a campaign designed by young people, for young people, to raise the profile of the role of forestry in delivering environmental, social and economic benefits and associated employment opportunities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A social media campaign co-designed with young people ran in July 2021 with interactive content across a number of platforms. A webpage was established called May Forests Be With You Young Scot¹⁶ containing information for young people.
Develop and implement a Communities Strategy and Visitors Strategy for Scotland's national forests and land.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial draft of the Visitor Strategy has now been consulted on. It is anticipated that the final version will now be published by September 2022. • The Communities Strategy has been prepared and due to be published for public consultation in May 2022.

¹⁵ <https://foresttherapyinstitute.com/>

¹⁶ <https://young.scot/campaigns/national/may-forests-be-with-you>

Action	Status	Comment
Coordinate the delivery of a public information campaign to improve understanding of the practice and benefits of sustainable forest management.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed due to pandemic. Action included in Implementation Plan 2022-2025.
Produce and promote a careers resource with a range of education and training providers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A careers toolkit has been published Working with Trees and Timber¹⁷. The document is aimed at helping people in the sector deliver career events.

¹⁷ <https://forestry.gov.scot/forests-people/working-with-trees-and-timber>



Scottish
Forestry
Coilltearachd
na h-Alba



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

© Crown copyright 2022

ISBN: 978-1-80525-353-2

Published by Scottish Forestry, December 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1206522 (12/22)