Prospects for new productive woodland in Scotland: insights from stakeholders

FCS response

Background
Over the last few years the Scottish Government aimed to deliver a sustainable annual planting programme of 10,000 hectares, of which around 60% should constitute softwood production forests (FCS, 2009). Disappointed results prompted the Woodland Expansion Advisory Group to explore the reasons why these targets were not met.

Forest Research was commissioned in response to the recommendation from the Woodland Expansion Advisory Group ‘Forestry Commission Scotland should work with the wood processing industry to encourage woodland owners and managers to consider opportunities for producing timber and/or wood fuel when creating new woodlands of all types. Measures to achieve this will include grants under the next SRDP, advice and facilitation’.

The report ‘Prospects for new productive woodland in Scotland: insights from stakeholders’ developed by FR, is based on qualitative analysis that engaged 33 stakeholders in one-to-one semi-structured interviews. It seeks to understand why landowners and managers are less likely to create productive woodland. The report is available on the FCS website.

The research presents the relationships of four types of landowners (farmers, estate owners, investors and new ‘hands on’ owners) to other stakeholders, including advisors and regulators.

Four sets of factors are observed to influence decisions about whether different types of woodland are created: 1) grants and other incentives; 2) regulation and the approval process; 3) communication, advice and knowledge exchange; 4) policy support and leadership.

FR were asked to present a suite of options to address the identified constraints.

**Key findings**
Different factors seem to influence decisions about whether to create woodland and what type of woodland is created:

- Grants and incentives underpin most woodland creation decisions and over the past few years they have tend to favour native woodland creation. For most stakeholders the simple answer to the problem is to change the financial incentive, including carbon finance, so that to make them more favourable to conifer/broadleaf productive schemes. Furthermore the current SRDP is seen as complex, bureaucratic, inflexible and as discouraging integration between forestry and farming activities.
• Large-scale productive schemes normally depend on whole-farm sale and planting. In these cases, the approval process is long, expensive and cumbersome. Stakeholders also feel that the process is weighted against production, with opponents of new productive schemes exercising undue influence on the process.
• The advisory service replicate the farming/forestry split and integration between the two activities, including productive farm-forestry, require changes in the structure, the culture and the knowledge of the outreach system.
• Stakeholders complained about a lack of political support for productive forestry and a lack of leadership on this issue by FCS and SG. Political support is thought to influence the other three factors: level of funding, the extent to which forestry can ‘stand up’ to non supportive parties and the resources allocated to services that encourage integrated land management.

Implementation
FCS has developed this implementation plan in response to this challenge i) to recognise the progress made to date and ii) to continue to guide future work. Appendix 1 includes a detailed action plan.

We recognise that continuous input from key stakeholders is needed to secure the effectiveness of delivery measures. In particular we intend to continue to work closely with Confor, UKPFA and Regional Forestry Fora to shape appropriate options for the different regions.

Key FCS actions:
Despite some of the criticisms recorded in the report, FCS Conservancy staff has been very proactive in providing advice and supporting proposals of a more productive nature. This increased FCS support and activity can be demonstrated by the number and the quality of productive schemes recently approved under SRDP and by the support that productive planting schemes have been given on Regional Forestry Fora and on Forest Industry Clusters. Productive planting figures for the different regions are routinely (monthly) assessed and monitored at Conservators meetings.

We are committed in taking forward the recommendations highlighted by FR in their report, accepting that we need to strike a balance between relying on policy delivery through existing stakeholders and therefore focusing on improving the approval process and reaching out to a wider range of landowners by investing into a more integrated advisory system.

We will focus on seeking to:

• Promote well-designed, resilient productive forests and wood production as providers of valuable services and goods in liaison with Confor, UKPFA and the private sector.
• Demonstrate to land managers how well designed woodland creation proposals- both small and large scale- can contribute to climate change targets and how afforestation targets can be achieved while respecting the other requirements that we have for our land.
• Showcase good examples of productive woodland established in Scotland to secure support for well designed and resilient large-scale schemes.
• Work with the private sector to continue to improve the quality of the management of existing forests and address some of the negative perceptions that the public has in relation to productive forests in Scotland.
• Finalise supporting measures under the next SRDP that increase the emphasis on producing wood and timber in discussion with the Customer Reps Group.
• Encourage applicants and land agents to consider – both woodland creation and forest plans- suitable species on the basis of potential opportunities for productive woodland, if the site is capable of productivity.
• Review our consultation arrangements on forestry proposals with the input of the Customer Rep Group and the statutory consultees.
• While assessing the effectiveness of regional improved guidance (forestry-focused pilots) on informing opportunities for planting schemes, continue to develop suitable Forestry and Woodland Strategies to identify where forestry (productive or otherwise) should be located and maintain the emphasis on good forest design.
• Invest resources in securing links with existing farming networks, such as Focus Farms, Monitoring Farms and Machinery Rings and providing opportunities for farming advisors to interact with professional forestry agents to take advantage of these networking opportunities.
• Organise forestry training opportunities for the advisory service and our consultees, to promote well designed and sustainable productive woodland and to improve relationship between FCS staff and agents.
• Engage with Scotland’s Rural College on incorporating forestry-related learning into agriculture and land management courses, through the appropriate Scottish Qualifications Authority process.
Implementation

1 Options for grants and Incentives

Revise the level of grants for productive and native scheme:
The most consistent message from stakeholders is that, in terms of cash flow, the current rates are more attractive for native woodland, rather than for productive conifer/broadleaf schemes. This has been seen driving land managers towards native woodland schemes on site that were suitable for models of a productive nature.

Addressing the current imbalance of the grant aid support across the different models would encourage land managers to consider more productive schemes. The impact would be felt particularly on farms and estates managed for multiple objectives, where decisions about which model to opt for would be influenced by grant surplus in the short-term.

Develop a grant system that responds to specific circumstances, but is also easy to administer:
Stakeholders are critical either of the complexity of SRDP, and its bureaucracy by trying to address many circumstances, or its lack of complexity, and therefore the attempt to develop a ‘one size fits all’ approach.

A number of specific recommendations made include:
• Consider grant rates based on actual establishment costs;
• Reflect differences in establishment costs linked to different sizes of woodland;
• Expand the lists of species choices available under the productive model, in particular Birch; similarly biomass options were supported;
• Introduction of grants for the use of tubes, rather than fencing;
• Introduce rates for pruning to encourage productive broadleaved schemes;
• Consider the introduction of regional locational premiums to target areas particularly suited to productive schemes.

Address the bureaucratic problems with SRDP, especially related to prompt payments of grants:
The problem of delays in payments, sometimes by months, has been reported, especially because the landowner may be charged interest while waiting for the payment to come through.

De-coupling is desired: separating the reimbursement of costs of operations that happen at different times of the year i.e. fencing in the summer and planting in the winter.

Revise the Woodland Carbon Code so that carbon finance supports commercial planting:
Carbon finance is increasingly explored as a way to improve the financial viability of woodland creation schemes. The approach, however, seems to favour native woodland schemes because currently it does not include
carbon that is sequestered in timber and removed from the site and in roots and stumps left on site after harvesting.

**Tax relief:**
Tax relief, or similar incentives, would have an impact in the uptake of new productive woodland if introduced. For example tax relief on the cost of establishment could be considered.

**Progress**
FCS has developed grant rates for the next SRDP in response to feedback from stakeholders- the proposed standard costs, shared with the Customer Reps Group, have been included in the submission for EU approval. The standard costs for woodland creation models for SRDP 14-20 reflect a more balanced approach, place the emphasis on producing wood and timber and encourage the delivery of different types of woodland- more productive and more resilient.

FCS is committed to continue to work with the Customer rep group- whose input is greatly valued- so that the proposed standard costs will suitably supports delivery on the ground- for example we have included additional contributions (AC) for specific regions in the submission.

It must be recognised that there is a class of landowners/agents that seek to optimise the short-term cash flow from public grants, rather than deliver broader SG objectives. This could be addressed by FCS liaising with statutory consultees on supporting productive schemes and making sure that native woodland creation is supported in the right places and for the right reasons (for examples to aid the connection of forest habitat networks). The intention of grant support is to deliver good woodland creation schemes and as such, woodland officers seek to add value to proposals that have the potential to deliver public benefits.

With regards to the administration of claims, discussion is currently ongoing around the possibility to offer a higher level of contribution up front, rather than staggering instalments over a certain period- this option may be preferred by the applicant and easier to administer by us.

The reason why the carbon in timber products isn’t included in the Woodland Carbon Code is due to the fact that questions arise as to who owns the carbon in the purchased timber and various products- as it changes hands in the processing and supply chain. FR is currently exploring this 'attribution' issue.

Taxation is not a devolved matter and would require action from the UK Government. The Independent Panel in England however looked recently at the current arrangements on tax relief and proposed no change.

**Action**
Through the Customer Rep Group, secure that our stakeholders are kept up to date with regards to the budget allocation, the proposed forestry options and the relevant standard costs. Make sure that information is
shared with regional stakeholders through the Regional Forestry Fora to continue to support the uptake of grants for productive schemes.

We will work with FR to revise the WCC guidance to include estimates for roots and stumps left on site after harvesting. We also intend to publish a set of guide carbon values for timber products alongside but separate to the existing woodland carbon figures. These figures will inform the estimate of carbon in timber products, but won’t be certified and claimable by project developers.

2 Options for the approval process

Establish agreed timeframes for each step in the process, so long as it does not lead to unnecessary EIA determinations

The WEAG report and the SG response have identified the development of a Customer Charter as an important document to identify the acceptable steps and time limits in the screening, scoping and consultation process for both FCS and the applicant. While this proposal will help speed up decision-making, there might be a risk that FCS is forced to make an EIA determination based on incomplete information and limited consultation. Furthermore although the Charter may lead more quickly to a consensus, it would not remove unpredictability from the process i.e. opposition to the scheme from a local resident or concerns raised by a consultee.

Give FCS greater power to support schemes in ‘preferred’ areas through improved evidence, planning and guidance

The development of improved Forestry and Woodland Strategies (FWS) or more detailed sub-regional analysis, agreed by statutory consultees and considered local or regional policy could support the identification of sites where there is a ‘presumption to plant’. Consultees would therefore share the burden of providing the necessary evidence with applicants with regards to particular schemes identified in ‘preferred’ areas.

It was suggested for national planting targets to be mirrored in regional FWS, so that to develop explicit regional contributions to the national vision of 10,000 ha per year. This suggestion could be supported by the sub-regional analysis developed under WEAG recommendation 4. Greater use of catchment analysis could be supported by clear regional and local criteria on the situation where certain types of schemes should be supported. Such ‘guidelines’ would guide applicants in preparing suitable proposal and increase their confidence for a successful outcome.

Progress

It is proposed to review the consultation arrangements as laid out in ‘How do we consult’ FC booklet, published in 2002. The Customer Rep Group and the statutory consultees will be closely involved in the development of a Scotland-only document, due for completion by Spring 2015.

We have developed and published a Customer’s Charter to offer all participators a reassurance that applications will be processed within an agreed timescale. To ensure an efficient process, general and specific guidance on what information applicants must provide within their
application is available on the grants web-pages of FCS and SRDP. We have also worked with colleagues in SG to improve the online system to submit and process forestry applications under the next SRDP.

With regards to the development of regional frameworks to guide suitable woodland expansion in the different regions land availability, ownership objectives, as well as other factors, vary quite significantly from area to area and we need to retain certain flexibility in our approach to reflect those differences. Different regional mechanisms to inform suitable locations for woodland creation have however been developed:

• Based on the planning guidance ‘The Right Tree in the Right Place’ new, improved FWS- developed in partnership with planning authorities and regional consultees- aim to guide the expansion of different kinds of woodland. These have been and should be used to inform applicants about the suitable locations for productive schemes. Some of these frameworks identify regional expansion targets to secure local and regional contribution to the SG targets. The most recently developed FWS include information on historic rates of woodland creation and the assessment on suitable future rates for the area- this level of detail is intended to reassure consultees on ongoing land use changes.

• Following the set of principles for sustainable land use as set out in the Land Use Strategy, two land use pilot projects (led by Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Borders Councils) are currently developing regional spatial frameworks, using an ecosystems approach, to consider existing and future land uses in a collective and integrated way.

• FWS are suitable mechanisms, as recognised by the land Use Strategy, to guide decision-making processes for integrated land management. Other mechanisms are already in place across Scotland- such as development plans, River Basin Management Plans or National Park Plans, along with a range of less formal approaches that suit the variety of different locations and circumstances across Scotland.

• In addition FCS worked with statutory consultees and interested organisations to develop 2 catchment-scale forestry-focussed pilots. The sub-regional analysis, developed in Cowal and Dumfries and Galloway, favour a more ‘qualitative assessment’ of proposals to plant trees and should be used to inform the expansion of productive woodland, as well as different types of woodland.

• Scottish Border Council published a technical note, to be read alongside the FWS, supposed to provide more guidance and description of the type of woodland and forests that are sought and encouraged in the different sub-regions and the issues that need to be addressed when preparing planting proposals. The technical note is intended to guide landowners, agents and other interested parties towards the development of better integrated, more sensitive planting proposals that consider economic and community impacts as well as the environmental impact of schemes.
In the Flow Country following the work of a dedicated science group, FCS developed guidance for land managers, supported by seminars and field visits, to guide forest plans and restocking proposals that consider sensitivities in Caithness and Sutherland and to promote integration with other land uses.

The development of this wide range of guidance and frameworks will hopefully support forest managers and the interested stakeholders during the preparation of planting proposals - giving them additional information on the issues and opportunities of a particular area.

**Action**

In order to continue to improve the approval process, FCS has organised workshops for staff focused around what kind of information Woodland Officers require in order to secure effective EIA determinations. We are considering whether similar training is required for the private sector and consultees. Once the future grants options have been finalised, we are planning to organise training for FCS and external stakeholders on woodland creation, the forthcoming SRPD and the approval process.

We will update our public consultation procedure on forestry proposals working with the Customer Rep Group.

We will assess the effectiveness of regional improved guidance (forestry-focused pilots) on opportunities for planting schemes at ground level. Such evaluation would help to inform the adoption of such approaches in other authority areas. It is however important to state strategic objectives as per where forestry (productive or otherwise) should be located (or not) and maintain the emphasis on good forest design and planning across the board.

We are currently undertaking an independent evaluation of Forest Plans and Felling Licences in two Conservancies - Perth and Argyll and South) to assess compliance at the planning stage with the UK Forestry Standard by FCS and the forest sector in Scotland, as well as developing a greater understanding of coniferous restocking intentions through forest plans. The results from this study will inform future plans around compliance with the standards across a wide range of forestry proposals, including woodland creation schemes.

3 Options for advice and outreach systems

**Invest in knowledge exchange:**

More proactive approaches with land managers, including understanding of their objectives and constraints, were advocated. The advisory and outreach system replicate the farming /forestry split and there is a demand for advisors that can bridge the gap between the two communities and professions: farm advisors more aware of forestry and associated grant options and forestry consultants with an agricultural background that can speak to and gain the trust of farmers.

**Learn from success:**
An improved advisory system needs to be proactive, free, innovative, issue-focused, it needs to provide a direct personal contact and it needs to introduce woodland topics into more mainstream farming issues. In particular demonstration farms and estates seem to provide the best basis for outreach. Owners seem to have the means to learn from them through organised events and networks that facilitate the exchange of ideas and experience and farmer-to-farmer communication.

**Review the role of FCS conservancy staff to allow them to advise and guide applications:**
Although it is important to continue to ensure a separation of roles between advisory and approval within FCS, woodland officers were seen as trustworthy, informed professionals that could guide the development of suitable applications. Woodland officers should have the necessary resources to deliver this role.

Particularly in the farming sector, where landowners were reluctant to engage with forestry agents, woodland officers were invited to advice on small-scale productive schemes on the farm. FCS needs to continue to invest resources in areas where there are opportunities for real integration of forestry and agricultural activities.

**Develop models based on ‘trusted intermediaries’:**
It is recommended for advice and support to be offered to farmers from organisation and networks already known and trusted by them.

**Progress**
There are already excellent examples of networking opportunities, events and knowledge-sharing models that bring together forestry and agriculture advisors and farmers. We have already worked in partnership with some of these trusted intermediaries and organised /run events with SRUC and regional woodfuel fora, farm surveys with the Soil Association, training events and farm demonstration days with SRUC and regional Machinery Rings (e.g. Scottish Borders, Tayforth).

As part of the SG’s Veterinary and Advisory Services Programme, FCS continues to work with SRUC to inform advice on farm woodland. The bulletin Farm Woodland News gets distributed to agents and land managers involved with the Farm woodland Scheme- about 3,200 people in total. The discussed topics range from rhododendron control; wood ants; continuous cover forestry; drainage; mammal records; restocking; sustainable forestry; woodfuel; tree hazards and tree diseases. Advice and information is also disseminated through other SRUC newsletters to farmers.

The James Hutton Institute has developed case studies for 11 farms across Scotland to demonstrate how woodland creation and management can improve farms’ profitability. Some of these case studies include examples of how productive woodland can diversify a farm’s business. These [case studies](#) are available on our website and will be promoted to stakeholders. SRUC has agreed to use these case studies to promote woodland creation amongst farmers at their events. We are also planning
to organise events with SRUC for their area advisors to raise awareness of the opportunities that woodland creation and management can provide for farmers.

SAOS has conducted surveys across a wide range of farms in Scotland and produced farm management plans to identify woodland creation opportunities to diversify the farm business and increase its profitability. There plans are fully costed. We are working with a range of Machinery Rings across Scotland to continue to promote woodland creation opportunities to farmers.

Although there need to be a clear separation of role between advisory and regulatory, woodland officers invest resources in supporting forestry agents and applicants so that to help shaping good quality applications and secure added public value to what is proposed. This investment is recognised to be saving time later in the approval process.

FCS is currently in dialogue with Scotland’s Rural College to investigate what forestry-related learning is already incorporated into agriculture and land management courses. These are already content rich, but more specific voluntary forestry topics could be introduced.

**Action**

While we finalise the forestry options under the next SRDP, we continue to strengthen our links with networks involving demonstration farms and estates to bring forestry and agricultural communities closer, through the support from ‘trusted intermediaries’. We intend to continue to engage with Confor, Machinery Rings, SRUC/SAC and others in the charitable sector in order to reach farmers, making sure that professional forestry agents take advantage of these networking opportunities. We will also encourage models of forestry suitable for application in a farming context.

We will work with SRUC and SG to focus the content of the next Farm Woodland News bulletin around the next SRDP, the administration system and the available training.

We are planning to organise different modules of forestry training and make them available to the advisory service and our consultees (some of the proposed topics cover EIA, forest plans, UK Forestry Standards) so that to continue improving relationship between FCS staff and agents. In particular a specific module on woodland creation will be developed alongside EIA training. Relevant training time will be negotiated for woodland officers to guide the development of suitable applications.

We will continue to engage with Scotland’s Rural College on formal course content change, through the appropriate Scottish Qualifications Authority process.

**4 Options for leadership and policy**

Provide political leadership so that there is more of a presumption for, rather than against, productive woodland creation
Some of the stakeholders called for a stronger support for productive woodland both at political level, from Ministers and FCS policy group and at the decision-making level, from Conservancy staff. Furthermore no stakeholders seem to be actively championing productive forestry. We want to work with the private sector and the timber users downstream to promote sustainable productive forestry in all its various formats.

**Support integrated land management**
There is the need to encourage for a change in culture and practices of farmers and estate owners to return to a more integrated land management. People need to think differently and creatively about the management of the land that they have. Such a shift requires investment in the education system to bridge the gap between separate groups of farmers, foresters, managers and advisors. It also requires an active national debate in a wide range of media, including engagement in such topics as CAP/SFS reform to ensure that forestry is consider as a potential solution to help address issues in the farming sector.

**Bolster the timber industry and encourage positive perceptions of productive woodland**
Opportunities to promote the benefits delivered by productive woodland need to be sought. These benefits include sustainable production, a green economy and the provision of multiple services and goods to society. FCS and others, that can influence the policy of land use change and decision-making at local level, should promote these positive messages so that to encourage a confident and strong timber industry.

A key challenge is however to improve the quality of management of existing forests. By doing so productive woodland would be able to provide multiple social benefits and be perceived differently by Scottish society: wood production would be seen as a valued service-economically, socially and culturally.

**Progress**
The role that forestry plays in supporting Scotland’s economy has been recognised. Opportunities have already been identified in order to highlight the role of forestry and support to the creation of productive woodland from FCS senior managers, SG and Ministers. Current Ministerial discussions have been very supportive of the role of the forestry industry for Scotland’s economy while providing a wide range of benefits for society. The Confor conference in May 2014 presented an excellent opportunity to highlight these positive messages.

Under the forthcoming Common Agricultural Policy there will be continuous entitlement for single farm payment (to become direct payment) on farmland afforested under SRDP measures from 2016 onwards.

The WEAG group proposed a new direction for woodland creation that is more integrated, diverse, inclusive, productive, positive, resilient and that it takes full account of the woodlands we already have. The programme’s
action plan published earlier in January demonstrates how we intend to continue to steer actions against the set recommendations.

An integrated approach to land management will allow us to continue to derive a wide range of benefits from our land, whilst ensuring that these resources are cared for, maintained and enhanced for current and future generations. There are already many excellent examples of where land managers optimise the use of land in order to achieve wider benefits- we need to promote these examples to other stakeholders.

Two regional FWS were evaluated under the Land Use Strategy and demonstrated to meet most of the objectives across the LUS principles and to present a good framework for land use management and decision making processes- the full report is available on the SG website. We will continue to promote forestry and woodland strategies as a good example of framework for land-use decisions.

We continue to support investment in improved infrastructure via playing an active role on Regional Timber Transport Groups and supporting Timberlink that are crucial to delivering projects to improve and sustain infrastructure to secure the viability of productive forests.

FC England and ICF have been running training courses for forestry professionals on UKFS- these courses were well attended. We are now scoping woodland creation courses to continue to promote FCS and SG policies and to continue to engage with the private sector and consultees.

We are currently working on Resilient Forests, a programme aimed at promoting the sustainable management of forests and woodland in order to improve their capacity to adapt to a changing climate. Information on how to improve resilience of woodland and forests to a changing climate are available www.forestry.gov.uk/resilientforests

**Action**

In liaison with Confor, UKPFA and the private sector, we will continue to champion well-designed productive forests and wood production as providers of valuable services and goods and we will try and address the concerns from the private sector.

We have recently approved some very good example of well designed productive schemes. We intend to use these examples as sites for our proposed training courses on EIA and woodland creation aimed at both FCS officers and external stakeholders. We will continue to work with the private sector and colleagues across the SEARS family in order to showcase good examples of productive woodland established in Scotland and secure support for well designed and resilient large-scale schemes.

We are planning to conduct a review of some of the recently approved large-scale schemes in order to improve the process, particularly around timescales and uncertainty.
We will work with the private sector to continue to improve the quality of the management of existing forests and address some of the negative perceptions that the public has in relation to productive forests in Scotland.

Woodland on farms can provide livestock shelter, wildlife habitats and carbon retention, whilst opportunities for outdoor recreation are often pursued alongside productive forestry. We need to continue to demonstrate to land managers how well designed woodland creation proposals- both small and large scale- can contribute to climate change targets and how afforestation targets can be achieved while respecting the other requirements that we have for our land.

We will continue to deliver land integration programmes across the 24 recommendations, according to the WEAG Action Plan.

We will seek to provide opportunities that bring the different professional groups together within the education system.

**FC Scotland**  
**October 2014**
### Action Plan

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<th>Action</th>
<th>Who</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Options for grants and Incentives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Through the Customer Reps Group continue to regularly inform our stakeholders on progress on SRDP 14-20: standard costs, budget allocation and development of forestry options</td>
<td>National Office</td>
<td>Ongoing until Spring 2015</td>
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<td>Make sure that the above information and the timeline are shared with regional stakeholders through the Regional Forestry Fora to continue to support the uptake of grants for productive schemes.</td>
<td>Conservancies Regional Forestry Fora</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with FR in order to revise the WCC guidance and estimate of carbon in timber products.</td>
<td>National Office/ FR Confor</td>
<td>March 16</td>
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<td><strong>2. Options for the approval process</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>We will update our public consultation procedure on forestry proposals.</td>
<td>National Office/ Customer rep Group</td>
<td>Spring 15</td>
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<td>Organise workshops focused around what kind of information woodland officers require in order to secure effective EIA determinations. This will also strengthen relationship between Conservancy staff and agents</td>
<td>National Office</td>
<td>Summer 2015</td>
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<td>We will assess the effectiveness of regional improved guidance on opportunities for planting schemes at ground level, Such</td>
<td>National Office</td>
<td>February 2015</td>
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evaluation would help to inform the adoption of such approaches in other authority areas.

Assess the FCS processes for assessing, amending, approving and checking the compliance with UKFS on Forest Plans and Felling Licences. Consider widening study for woodland creation proposals.

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<th>3 Options for advice and outreach systems</th>
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<tr>
<td>Work with Machinery Rings, Soil Association and SRUC to build the network around demonstration farms and estates to increase trust between the forestry and the agricultural communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Input into training offered by the advisory service (some of the proposed topics cover EIA, forest plans, UKFS) so that to continue to offer guidance to land managers.</td>
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<td>Focus the content of Farm Woodland News bulletins so that to communicate forestry options, standard rates and other information about the forthcoming SRDP.</td>
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<td>Engage with Scotland’s Rural College on formal course content change, through the appropriate Scottish Qualifications Authority process.</td>
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<td>Champion well-designed productive forests and wood production as providers of valuable services and goods and we will try</td>
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<td>Activity</td>
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<td>Deliver training opportunities on recently approved productive schemes so that to raise their profile. Involve SEARS colleagues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct a review of some of the recently approved large-scale schemes in order to improve the process, particularly around timescales and uncertainty.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliver land integration programmes according to the WEAG action plan</td>
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<td>We will seek to provide opportunities that bring the different professional groups together within the education system</td>
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<td>Work with the private sector to continue to improve the quality of the management of existing forests and address some of the negative perceptions that the public has in relation to productive forests in Scotland.</td>
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