

# Sustainable Forest Management



The International Framework



Forestry Commission





**Forestry Commission**

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THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

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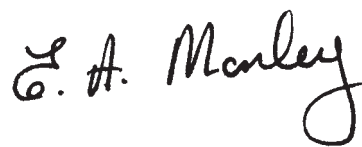
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Forests cover over 30% of the world's land area, fulfilling a wide range of economic, ecological and social functions. The public, policy makers and politicians all over the world have become increasingly concerned about deforestation and standards of forest management, especially since the early 1980s.

The objective of the international community is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The UK has played an active role in international forestry discussions since the 'Earth Summit' in Rio in 1992 and we have a good story to tell. Domestically, we have given practical expression to our commitment to sustainable forest management by publishing the UK Forestry Standard. We deliver this through a range of policies and practices outlined in the forest strategies for England, Scotland and Wales and in the strategy being prepared for Northern Ireland. At the same time we work with partner countries to manage their forests according to their national priorities, and most especially for the elimination of poverty.

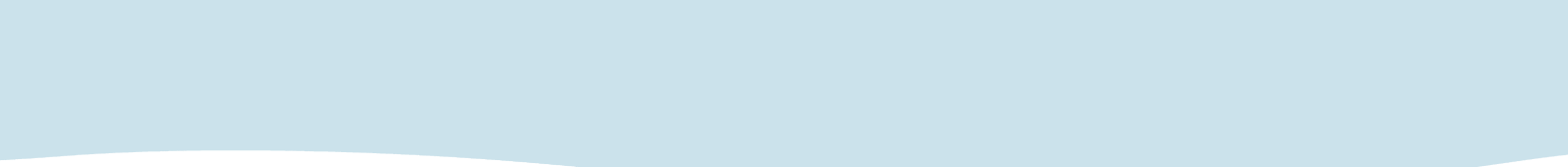
The international debate on forests provides a broad context for national action, whereby national priorities can reflect national circumstances. Nonetheless, the issues discussed in the various international and regional forums often chime with domestic forest policy issues. As an active participant at these gatherings, the Forestry Commission is in a strong position to ensure a balanced approach between international commitments and domestic policy and practice.

This publication describes some of these key international commitments, outlines the actions associated with each and explains how they relate to the UK. Although it was initially developed for a Forestry Commission audience, I believe that it is likely to be of interest to many more people, both within the UK and further afield.



Elliot Morley MP

Forestry Minister  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
February 2002



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This publication outlines, from a domestic perspective, some of the key international commitments on forests and identifies the actions associated with them.

Forests provide many economic, environmental and social benefits. Recognition of the importance of these multiple functions has been at the root of international efforts to develop the concept of sustainable forest management.

The UK is committed to sustainable forest management and, despite the small size of our forest estate, we are seen as a valuable influence in international forestry discussions. We have also provided leadership through implementation of the international agreements that emerge from them.

The Forestry Commission plays an active role both domestically within the Whitehall Forestry Group and internationally in the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), the European Union (EU), G8, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Where issues impinge on Northern Ireland domestic forestry interests, the Northern Ireland Forest Service generally makes representation through the Forestry Commission.

A wide range of bodies contributes to the formulation and delivery of forest policy in the UK. They include central and local Government, wildlife and countryside agencies, non-governmental organisations, trade associations, rural communities, researchers, voluntary bodies and the forest industry.

The UK has well developed consultation mechanisms – both formal and informal – that encourage communication between different interest groups and enable stakeholders to become actively involved in forestry issues. As well as exchanges of written or electronic information, regular meetings take place where stakeholders can engage in live debate with woodland managers, policy makers and officials. It is likely that development and refinement of mechanisms to achieve consensus will continue to be a growth area.

The international debate on forests provides a context for national action in which national priorities reflect national circumstances. The issues discussed in the inter-national and regional forums often coincide with domestic, UK priorities for forestry policy. As a result of the commitments made at Rio in 1992 and at Helsinki in 1993, the Government published *Sustainable Forestry – the UK Programme*, which confirmed its commitment to the sustainable management of existing forests and a steady expansion of tree cover to increase the benefits provided by forests.

National forest programmes have been promoted internationally as useful tools that provide a policy and planning framework for translating the principles of sustainable forest management into domestic action.

Criteria and indicators have been widely recognised as a means to help monitor, evaluate and develop policies. Criteria define the essential elements of sustainable forest management, while indicators provide a basis to assess forest conditions.

Research and information systems are recognised by the international forest community for their value in helping to develop and achieve national objectives as well as enabling forestry practitioners to improve outcomes.

This publication summarises commitments under the three elements of sustainable forest management – economic, environmental and social – and under the three cross-cutting areas of national forest programmes, criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management and research.

This publication outlines, from a domestic perspective, some of the key international commitments to sustainable forest management and identifies the actions associated with them. The international milestones have been:

1. Strasbourg Resolutions 1990
2. The Forest Principles agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio 1992
3. Helsinki Resolutions 1993
4. The Report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, New York 1997
5. Lisbon Resolutions 1998
6. The Report of the UN Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, New York 2000

The Forestry Commission shares a joint lead with the Department for International Development on international forest issues and participates on behalf of the UK in a range of international initiatives. Our international involvement has three aims:

- to represent and promote UK interests in international discussions;
- to demonstrate the high standard of management in the UK forest resource;
- to contribute to a fuller understanding of sustainable forest management.

Interdepartmental co-ordination for international discussion of forest policy is promoted through the Whitehall Forestry Group. This comprises the Forestry Commission, the Department for International Development, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Northern Ireland Department for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Forestry Commission works with national administrations, other government departments, government agencies, landowners, environmental organisations and many other partners in both the public and private sectors, to implement its objectives.

Sustainable forestry is one component of the UK Government's wider commitment to sustainable development. In 1999, the Government published *A Better Quality of Life*, the revised strategy for sustainable development in the UK. The strategy contains a section on Forests and Woodlands setting out the contribution that forests can make to the wider sustainable development objectives. To define what constitutes sustainable forest management in practice is complex but, at the simplest level, the Government's approach is based on the better management of existing forests and a continuing expansion of the woodland area.

*The UK Forestry Standard* was published by the Forestry Commission in 1998 after wide consultation. It provides a comprehensive statement of the government's approach to sustainable forestry, explains how it will be delivered in practice, and defines the criteria and indicators of sustainable management for all forests in the UK. The criteria and indicators are linked to the developing international protocols for sustainable forestry.

The UK Forestry Standard also formed the basis for the UK Woodland Assurance forest certification standard. This provides a voluntary national standard of responsible forest management which is supported by forestry, environmental and social organisations and by the Government.

The key commitments, programmes and actions for the delivery of sustainable forest management in England, Scotland and Wales are set out by the devolved administrations in the forestry strategies of the individual countries. These are based on extensive consultation with a broad range of interests and reflect the distinctive circumstances, needs and aspirations of each country. A strategy for Northern Ireland is in preparation and will go out for consultation in due course.

# • International Commitments – UK Role •

The UK has a long record of helping to shape international forest policy in inter-governmental discussions and expert-level working groups. We also have a long history of collaboration and international co-operation with developing countries.

The Department for International Development (DfID) is working to promote development and eliminate world poverty. It is responsible for formulating policy, implementing programmes and for bilateral and multilateral aid. The Department is committed to the internationally agreed target to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 and to the associated targets for human development and environmental sustainability.

International policy is interpreted and promoted in the UK through a series of development target strategy papers, country strategy papers and, in the case of multilateral aid, institutional strategy papers. The strategy and approach papers that relate most directly to DfID's work with forests are: *Forests Matter*, *the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach* and the *Environmental Sustainability and Poverty Elimination Target Strategy Paper*.

DfID's support for forestry is delivered through bilateral aid in 28 countries, and through multilateral organisations. Apart from centrally funded research, no funds are specifically earmarked for forestry. Nevertheless, although forestry is not the primary focus in many programmes, expenditure on forests-related work is significant.

Direct country programmes, of which there are 19 at present, account for the largest part of DfID's support to the forest sector. The past five years have seen the closure of small programmes in the Pacific and parts of Latin America, the decline of programmes in some 'middle-income' countries such as Sri Lanka and Mexico, and a concentration of resources on a smaller number of 'focus' countries. The 10 countries that receive most aid are: India, Brazil, Indonesia, Nepal, Ghana, Cameroon, South Africa, Guyana, Uganda and Malawi. DfID has been working continuously in most of these countries for the past 10–20 years.

The nature of forest sector development co-operation has changed too. There is greater emphasis on the role of forests in poverty reduction: 'forests' encompasses closed forests, woodlands, trees on farms and plantations. This puts people rather than forests at the centre of development. Stand-alone and area-specific forestry projects have become the exception rather than the rule. Much more attention is now given to direct support for the processes of policy and institutional change. This involves working with a range of stakeholders, rather than just with governments, to help them negotiate objectives, manage conflicts and redefine roles and responsibilities.

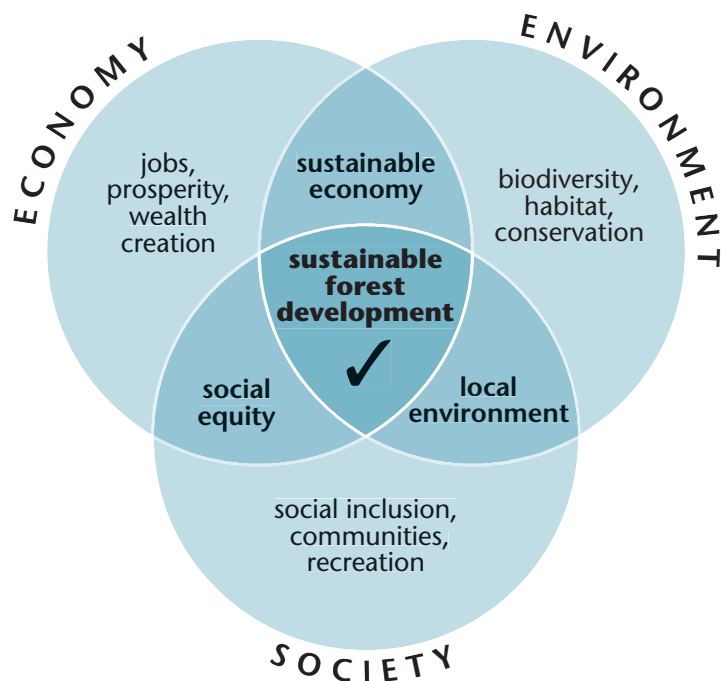
Where it can, DfID provides its support within the framework of national forest programmes, and helps to develop them where they are lacking. The nature of the work undertaken in a given country is decided following a joint process of identification and design. The process takes account of the involvement and plans of other development agencies in assessing how the UK can add value. The existence of national forest programmes greatly facilitates the co-ordination of support for development and DfID increasingly works in collaboration with other development agencies, especially those of the European Union and the World Bank.

# • Sustainable Forest Management •

Forests are home to a great variety of animals, plants and microbes, and provide a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits. They influence our climate, and the quality of air, water and soil; they are important sources of food, fuel, building materials and income; they provide homes, employment and recreation. Ancient and native forests represent the cultural heritage of many people around the world, not least in the UK. Recognition of the multiple roles and values of forests has been the foundation of international efforts to develop the concept of sustainable forest management. It is encapsulated in the Helsinki Resolution H1:

*'... the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.'*

Using the above definition, we can represent the interaction of the three functions – economic, environmental and social – in the following way:



How these functions interact and how we manage our forests to support them vary from site to site and over time. Decisions on the management of sites (which of course include a deliberate choice to abstain from management) to achieve the appropriate balance should be taken at a local level within national guidelines. For the UK, these are provided by the UK Forestry Standard.

The box on pages 6–7 outlines the various global and European processes and the associated responses at UK level in the form of strategies, policies and guidelines.

## United Nations

The management, conservation and sustainable development of forests was one of the key issues at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio in 1992. The main outcome for forests was the adoption of Agenda 21 and the Statement of Forest Principles.

At UNCED, many countries, including the UK, advocated an international convention on forests. Others believed that such a legally binding instrument would be incompatible with the sovereign right of countries to use indigenous natural resources to meet national policy objectives. The outcome of the debate was agreement on the non-legally binding Statement of Forest Principles.

The first review of forests took place in 1995 when the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) established the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) for a two-year term. The IPF reached broad agreement on a range of proposals in a report presented to the UNCSD in 1997 for consideration by the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS) in June 1997.

A key issue again was whether or not to start negotiations on a Forest Convention, but no consensus was reached on the desirability of a legally-binding convention similar to those on biodiversity, climate change and desertification. The UK recognised that there was no way forward without consensus and worked hard to encourage others to consider alternatives to a convention which might also meet collective objectives.

As an intermediate step, the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) was established with a requirement to report in 2000. At its final session in February 2000, the IFF agreed to initiate a new international arrangement on forests. This included the establishment of a new UN body, the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), to provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for debate. Its mandate was to promote the implementation of the internationally agreed actions expressed in the Forest Principles and the proposals for action in the reports of the IPF and IFF.

This marked a breakthrough, providing a clear focus for the sustainable management of forests and a mechanism through which countries could report on the implementation of their existing commitments. The new arrangement will also strengthen political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests through ministerial engagement, liaison with international and regional organisations, and promotion of dialogue and policy.

Working with DfID and other Government Departments, the Forestry Commission believes the priority for the UNFF's work programme should be implementation. This would be best supported by focusing on:

- National forest programmes
- Monitoring and reporting on implementation
- Financing sustainable forest management

The programme of work adopted at the first session of UNFF (UNFF 1) in June 2001 provided the framework for sessions 2–5. Progress on implementation of the proposals for action will be considered at future sessions according to the grouping set out in the programme of work. Finance, technology transfer and capacity building, as they relate to the implementation of the proposals for action, will be considered at every session. UNFF 2 in March 2002 in New York, will focus on environmental aspects of sustainable forest management and will include a High-Level Ministerial Segment.

A plan for implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action was adopted by the forum and is to be endorsed by Ministers at UNFF 2. This provides a basis for assessing progress, highlighting best practice and identifying challenges to achieving sustainable forest management.

To support the work of the UNFF, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which consists of about 12 international forest-related organisations, institutions and instruments, was established in April 2001. This drew on the experience of the high-level informal Interagency Task Force on Forests (ITFF) which supported the work of the IPF/IFF.

### Convention on Biological Diversity

Approximately 70% of the earth's terrestrial biodiversity is contained in forests, making them among the world's richest and most diverse ecosystems. Global recognition of the loss and degradation of biodiversity at UNCED resulted in the establishment of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). At the 6th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the convention, in 2002, forests will be one of the key subjects. The status and trends of forest biological diversity will be reviewed and options to support its conservation and sustainable use considered.

### Framework Convention on Climate Change

The principal influence of climate change on forestry policy is the recognition of the importance of forests to global carbon cycles. International agreement to mitigate climate change under the Kyoto Protocol includes measures to increase carbon storage in forest 'sinks' as well as commitments to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. The latter also have implications for forest management because they include the possibility of substitution of fossil fuels by renewable energy sources such as woodfuel.

### Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Forestry has been part of FAO's mandate since its establishment in 1945, and is specifically included in the global goals of the organisation because of its contribution to economic and social progress, to environmental stabilisation and to the conservation, improvement and sustainable utilisation of natural resources. The FAO is currently the lead agency for forests in the UN. The European Forestry Commission is one of FAO's six regional forestry commissions that meet prior to the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO). COFO itself meets every 2 years and provides an opportunity to exchange expertise on forest policy issues, to contribute to the formulation of FAO programmes and promote sustainable forest management at the pan-European and global levels.

There is strong international support for the availability of comprehensive, timely and reliable information on forest resources. As part of the Global Forest Resource Assessment, the UN-ECE/FAO undertook the Temperate and Boreal Forest Resource Assessment (TBFRA 2000), and published the main TBFRA report in 2000.

## Linking Global processes to European and National processes

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### GLOBAL

<b>United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: Rio de Janeiro</b> Agenda 21 Forest Principles	1992
<b>United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity</b>	1992
<b>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</b> and Kyoto Protocol	1992
<b>United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification</b>	1994
<b>United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development</b> Review of Forest Principles and Agenda 21	1995
<b>UN Intergovernmental Panel on Forests</b> Proposals for Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implementation of Forest-Related UNCED Decisions at National and International Levels</li><li>• International Co-operation in Financial Assistance and Technology Transfer</li><li>• Scientific Research, Forest Assessment and the Development of Criteria and Indicators for sustainable forest management</li><li>• Trade and Environment in relation to Forest products and services</li><li>• International Organisations and Multilateral Institutions and Instruments including appropriate legal mechanisms</li></ul>	1995–1997
<b>UN Intergovernmental Forum on Forests</b> Proposals for Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promoting and Facilitating Implementation</li><li>• Monitoring Progress in Implementation</li><li>• Need for Financial Resources</li><li>• Trade and Environment</li><li>• Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technology to support Sustainable Forest Management</li><li>• Underlying Causes of Deforestation</li><li>• Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge</li><li>• Forest Conservation and Protected Areas</li><li>• Forest Research</li><li>• Valuation of Forest Goods and Services</li><li>• Economic Instruments, Tax Policies and Land Tenure</li><li>• Future Supply and Demand for Wood and Non-Wood Forest Products and Services</li><li>• Assessment, Monitoring and Rehabilitation of Forest Cover in Environmentally Critical Areas</li><li>• Forest-related Work of International and Regional Organisations and under Existing Instruments</li><li>• International Arrangements and Mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests</li></ul>	1997–2000
<b>United Nations Forum on Forests</b>	2001
<b>International Tropical Timber Agreement</b>	1994

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### EUROPEAN

<b>1st Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe: Strasbourg</b> Six Resolutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>S1</b> European Network of Permanent Sample Plots for Monitoring of Forest Ecosystems</li><li><b>S2</b> Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources</li><li><b>S3</b> Decentralised European Data Bank on Forest Fires</li><li><b>S4</b> Adapting the Management of Mountain Forests to New Environmental Conditions</li><li><b>S5</b> Expansion of the EUROSILVA Network of Research on Tree Physiology</li><li><b>S6</b> European Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems</li></ul>	1990
<b>2nd Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe: Helsinki</b> Four Resolutions – Focus on the Economic and Environmental Elements of Sustainable Forest Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>H1</b> General Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe</li><li><b>H2</b> General Guidelines for the Conservation of the Biodiversity of European Forests</li></ul>	1993



- H3 Forestry Co-operation with Countries with Economics in Transition
- H4 Strategies for a Process of Long-term Adaptation of Forests in Europe to Climate Change

### 3rd Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe: Lisbon 1998

Two Resolutions – Focus on the Socio-Economic Elements of Sustainable Forest Management:

- L1 People, Forests and Forestry – Enhancement of Socio-Economic Aspects of Sustainable Forest Management
- L2 Pan-European Criteria and Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management

### EU Forest Strategy 1998

Builds on the recommendations of the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe:

- Implement international commitments;
- Improve co-ordination, communication and co-operation in all policy areas;
- Protect forests, develop and maintain rural areas;
- Promote the use of wood and non-wood forest products from sustainably managed forests.

Regulations:

- 1257/99 Rural Development Regulation. Supports forestry by co-financing the payment of woodland grants.
- 3528/86 Protection of the Community's forests against atmospheric pollution.
- 2158/92 Protection of the Community's forests against fire.

Directives:

- 105/99 Marketing of Forest Reproductive Material.
- 77/93 (revised 2000/29) Measures to Protect Plant Health.

### 4th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe: Vienna 2003

## NATIONAL

Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy	1994
Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan	1994
Sustainable Forestry: The UK Programme	1994
Climate Change: The UK Programme	1994, 1997, 2000
A Better Quality of Life: A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK	1999
UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS)	1999
The UK Forestry Standard	1998
Forests & Water Guidelines	1988, 1991, 2000
Forest Landscape Design Guidelines	1989, 1994
Forest Nature Conservation Guidelines	1990
Community Woodland Design Guidelines	1991
Lowland Landscape Design Guidelines	1992
Forest Recreation Guidelines	1992
Forests & Archaeology Guidelines	1995
Forests and Soil Conservation Guidelines	1998
A New Focus for England's Woodlands – Strategic Priorities and Programmes	1998
Forests for Scotland – The Scottish Forestry Strategy	2000
Woodlands for Wales – The Wales Woodland Strategy	2001
FASTCo (Forestry and Arboriculture Safety and Training Council) Safety Guides	
Conservation Guidelines	1987
Afforestation – the DANI Statement on Environmental Policy	1993
Environmental Guidelines for Timber Harvesting (Forest Service)	1999
Woodland Grant Scheme	
Farm Woodland Premium Scheme	
Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations	
Felling Licences	

## International Tropical Timber Organisation

The International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) brings together producer and consumer countries to facilitate discussion and international co-operation on the international trade and utilisation of tropical timber and on the sustainable management of its resource base. The International Tropical Timber Agreement is unusual among other commodity agreements since it has a sustainable development mandate and an active project portfolio to support sustainable forest management. The 1994 Agreement has recently been renewed to cover the period 2001–2003.

## G8

The G8 is an informal group of the eight leading industrialised democracies (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, UK, USA). Although initially established to discuss economic issues, the agenda for the annual meeting, or Summit, has been broadened to include a wide range of issues.

At the Denver Summit (1997), Heads of State agreed to develop a programme of action on forests. This was launched at the Birmingham Summit (1998). The G8 Action Programme on Forests addresses monitoring and assessment, protected areas, support to the private sector, national forest programmes and illegal logging. It focuses on domestic actions in member countries and issues that can be advanced through their bilateral assistance programmes and support for international processes. A report on implementation was made to the Okinawa Summit (2000), and the UK continues to implement the programme, both nationally and internationally, and also contributes to collaborative action with other member countries.

## United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is one of the UN's five regional commissions. Its main goal is to encourage greater economic co-operation among its member states, and its activities include policy analysis, development of conventions, regulations and standards, and technical assistance. The UNECE Timber Committee provides a forum for co-operation and consultation on issues related to forestry, industries and products.

## Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

Concerns over the health of European forests in the late 1980s led to the first Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), in Strasbourg (1990). Ministers agreed six resolutions focused on technical and scientific co-operation to address common concerns regarding the health and vitality of European forests. These Resolutions initiated co-operation throughout Europe and were an important step in the beginning of a political process for the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe.

The second and third Ministerial Conferences were held in Helsinki (1993) and Lisbon (1998). They followed the spirit of Strasbourg by adopting six Resolutions in total. These Resolutions demonstrate Europe's intention to apply the Forest Principles and other international commitments at the regional and national level. The Lisbon Resolutions and General Declaration reaffirmed the need to achieve a balance between the economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainable forest management.

The Lisbon Declaration also called for an 'action orientated work programme' to implement the decisions of the Conference and to reinforce the implementation of previous commitments at Strasbourg and Helsinki. The *Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe* was published in 2000. Implementation of the Work Programme will be an important element of the next Ministerial Conference, which is due to take place in Vienna in April 2003.

## European Union

Although there is no common European forest policy, Member States have entered into a number of commitments at the EU level. These take the form of EU legislation, such as the Rural Development Regulation and environmental directives, and shared international commitments.

In order to bring some order to the variety of activities related to forestry in the EU, a Resolution on a Forestry Strategy was agreed in December 1998. At the heart of the Strategy is a commitment to promote sustainable forest management through co-operative action between Member States and the institutions of the EU.

The Rural Development Regulation has been introduced as part of the recent reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and includes a range of measures intended to promote forestry, good farming practices, care for the environment and diversification. As the EU moves away from direct support for agricultural products, there will be more opportunities for forestry to benefit.

In 2001 the European Commission published its proposal for the renewal of forestry legislation, for monitoring the effects of atmospheric pollution and forest fires. Given the changed political landscape since these Regulations were last agreed (1996), this proposal provides a useful opportunity to consider how best the EU and Member States can work together in the coming years.

# • Cross-cutting Areas and Commitments •

This section summarises the commitments for the three cross-cutting areas: national forest programmes, criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management and forest research.

The commitments under the three elements of sustainable forest management: economic, environmental and social are covered in separate sections that follow. References following each commitment relate to the source(s) of the commitment:

<b>FP</b> Forest Principles	<b>S,H,L</b> Strasbourg, Helsinki and Lisbon Resolutions or General Declarations
<b>IPF</b> Intergovernmental Panel on Forests	
<b>IFF</b> Intergovernmental Forum on Forests	<b>CBD</b> Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>G8</b> G8 Action Programme on Forests	<b>EU</b> European Union legislation

Superscripts indicate the element/section of the relevant reports/programmes/resolutions.

Full references to the relevant documents are listed in the References section.

## National Forest Programmes

National forest programmes have been promoted internationally as fundamental tools that provide a policy and planning framework for translating the principles of sustainable forest management into domestic action.

The key programmes and actions for delivering sustainable forest management in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are set down in individual country strategies.

The UK has agreed to:

- Develop and adopt a national forest programme, which integrates the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources with national, and local policies within the context of the UK's socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental circumstances. **FP<sup>3</sup>, IPF<sup>17</sup>, H<sup>1</sup>, EU<sup>RDR</sup>**
- Improve institutional structures and communication to ensure effective participation of all stakeholders in working towards sustainable forest management. **FP<sup>2</sup>, FP<sup>5</sup>, IPF<sup>17</sup>, IPF<sup>40</sup>, IPF<sup>77</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the national forest programmes through the use of 'criteria and indicators' for sustainable forest management (see below). **IPF<sup>17</sup>, IPF<sup>71</sup>, L<sup>2</sup>, G8<sup>II</sup>, G8<sup>III</sup>**
- Promote an integrated approach to sustainable forest management by involving other land based interests in the development of the national forest programme. **IFF<sup>A</sup>, H<sup>1</sup>**
- Encourage political commitment to sustainable forest management and the participation of the private sector in its aims and standards. **IFF<sup>A</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Share experience with partner countries and encourage them, as well as support development of the national forest programmes and share our experience of developing and implementing such programmes. **G8<sup>III</sup>**
- Plant new forests and rehabilitate degraded forests by using the social, cultural, environmental and economic standards set by the national forest programmes. **IFF<sup>F8</sup>**

## Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

The use of 'criteria and indicators' has become widespread in government as a means to help monitor, evaluate and develop policies. Sustainable forest management was at the forefront of the development of this tool and a number of regionally agreed criteria and indicators exist. Criteria define the essential elements of sustainable forest management, while indicators provide a basis for assessing the state of forests and change through time.

The UK has helped to formulate the Pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and we have also been developing our own set as a framework for the UK Forestry Standard.

The UK has agreed to:

- Adopt the six Pan-European (PE) Criteria for sustainable forest management. **L<sup>2</sup>**
- Use the PE indicators as a basis for developing and reporting national indicators. **L<sup>2</sup>**
- Use the PE criteria and indicators as models and involve a wide range of stakeholders to formulate a set of criteria and indicators that are appropriate to our national circumstances. **L<sup>2</sup>**
- Build our criteria and indicators into our national forest programmes. **IPF<sup>17</sup>, IPF<sup>89</sup>, IPF<sup>115</sup>, L<sup>2</sup>**
- Review and improve criteria and indicators and use this process to identify topics for research. **L<sup>2</sup>, G8<sup>11</sup>**
- Use indicators to assess national progress in achieving sustainable forest management and as a basis for reporting. **L<sup>2</sup>, G8<sup>11</sup>**
- Take part in international and regional initiatives. **IFF<sup>8</sup>, IFF<sup>9</sup>, L<sup>2</sup>**
  - To harmonise concepts and definitions related to criteria and indicators.
  - To enhance comparability of national data collection systems.
  - To improve the quality of national data collection systems.

## Forest Research

The international forestry community recognises the value of research and information systems in helping to develop policy and achieve national objectives. It also plays a vital role in enabling forestry practitioners to improve outcomes.

The UK has agreed to:

- Identify research priorities through the national forest programme. **IFF<sup>4</sup>**
- Include public and private sectors in research ventures. **FP<sup>12</sup>, IFF<sup>4</sup>**
- Strengthen and make more effective the means to transfer knowledge from researchers to foresters, policy makers and the public. **FP<sup>12</sup>, IFF<sup>4</sup>**

- Consider new ways to secure/obtain research funding. **IFF<sup>d</sup>**
- Involve all interested parties in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national research programmes. **FP<sup>12</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Extend research into the social aspects of forestry, forest inventory, monitoring, and the valuation of forest goods and services. **FP<sup>12</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Seek and utilise local knowledge, recognise, respect, record, develop and include appropriate indigenous capacity. **FP<sup>12</sup>, IFF<sup>f2</sup>**
- Participate in the scientific and technical exchange of data necessary for the implementation of the Strasbourg Resolutions. **S<sup>1</sup>, S<sup>2</sup>, S<sup>3</sup>, S<sup>5</sup>, S<sup>6</sup>**
- Participate in international collaborative research into climate change and its impacts on European forest ecosystems. **H<sup>4</sup>**
- Assess technological requirements necessary to achieve sustainable forest management. **IPF<sup>77</sup>, IFF<sup>e</sup>**
- Promote and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and environmentally sound technologies through bilateral and multilateral contacts and joint research projects. **IFF<sup>e</sup>, H<sup>2</sup>**
- Contribute national data to the FAO Temperate and Boreal Forest Resource Assessment 2000 and contribute to the development of future Forest Resource Assessments. **IPF<sup>89</sup>, IFF<sup>8</sup>, IFF<sup>f</sup>**

The issues covered by the economic dimension of sustainable forest management include finance, valuation of the benefits and functions performed by forests and trade in forest products and services.

Under prevailing international policy and market circumstances, sustainable forest management is less profitable than unsustainable forest exploitation, particularly in the short term. Sustainable forest management can be best achieved through a combination of public and private investments and effective public and private partnerships. Investments in sustainable forest management differ from most other sectors because of the multi-functional and long-term nature of forestry.

Sustainable forest management contributes to social and environmental goals, but the provision of such public goods and services is rarely recognised by markets. It is important therefore to look more widely and to capture external costs and benefits, such as those from carbon sequestration and storage, biodiversity and water supply.

Multilateral trade negotiations have made progress in improving market access for forest products, especially in terms of reducing tariffs. However, it is often difficult to resolve conflicts between trade liberalisation and domestic environmental and health standards.

Certification is recognised as one means to promote sustainable forest management. As a market-based mechanism it can usefully complement Government action as long as it is open to all and is not implemented as a barrier to trade.

The UK has agreed to:

- **Encourage marketing of products from sustainably managed forests**
  - Promote trade in wood and non-wood products and services from sustainably managed forests and develop measures that favour the production, use and marketing of products from sustainably managed forests. [FP<sup>7</sup>](#), [IFF<sup>9</sup>](#)
  - Improve market transparency, taking into account the role of the private sector, to help promote responsible producer and consumer choices. [IFF<sup>9</sup>](#)
  - Examine the relationships between sustainable forest management, trade and voluntary certification and labelling schemes. [IFF<sup>9</sup>](#), [L<sup>1</sup>](#)
  - Encourage the private industries to develop and apply voluntary, market-based mechanisms and codes of conduct that support sustainable forest management. [G8<sup>v</sup>](#)
  - Promote education and training to enable exploitation of new opportunities and techniques for the production of goods and services from sustainably managed forests. [L<sup>1</sup>](#)
  - Develop appropriate policy guidelines, regulations and economic frameworks to enable forest owners to practise sustainable forest management and to make long-term investments in forestry. [L<sup>1</sup>](#)

- **Develop a better understanding of the ‘value’ of forestry**
  - Review policies that have a direct effect on the price of forest products and substitutes. **IFF<sup>F7</sup>**
  - Initiate studies on market behaviour and recognise that appropriate prices can encourage and support sustainable forest management. **IFF<sup>F7</sup>**
  - Assess the long term trends in the supply and demand at the national level for wood and promote sustainability of supply. **IPF<sup>28</sup>**
  - Assess the economic and non-economic values of forest goods and services. Develop low cost valuation methods. **IFF<sup>F5</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
  - Develop databases to cover the full range of forests goods and services; use them in national economic and natural resource accounting systems. **IFF<sup>F5</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
  - Consider the values of all forest goods and services, including environmental and social values, in forest policy decision processes. **IFF<sup>F5</sup>**
- **Provide and facilitate direct assistance for sustainable forest management**
  - Strengthen institutions involved in forest management, including plantations. **FP<sup>6</sup>**
  - Increase and improve the effectiveness of the financial resources available for sustainable forest management. **IFF<sup>C</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
  - Use economic instruments and tax policies (including collecting revenue from timber extraction) to promote sustainable forest management. **IFF<sup>F6</sup>**
  - Introduce positive incentives in the forest and non-forest sectors which help promote sustainable forest management. **IFF<sup>F6</sup>**
  - Develop strategies that combine public and private investments and recognise the role of partnerships. **G8<sup>V</sup>**
  - Encourage reinvestment of income from forest goods and services into sustainable forest management. **IFF<sup>C</sup>**
  - Incorporate the utilisation of fuelwood and efficient wood energy technologies into policy and planning exercises and promote the utilisation of wood as a renewable energy source. **FP<sup>6</sup>, IFF<sup>F7</sup>**
  - Discourage overuse, waste, excess and inefficient manufacturing. **IFF<sup>F7</sup>**
  - Analyse the environmental impacts of forest products and their substitutes. **IFF<sup>P</sup>**



# • Environmental Commitments •

Forests and woodlands provide a rich and diverse habitat for wildlife. The conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is an essential operational consideration when managing forests. Where components of the ecosystem are not sufficiently protected through existing management measures, special measures such as protected forest areas may have to be considered.

Protected forest areas are an integral part of both sustainable forest management and national strategies on protected areas in general. Greater awareness of the social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits of forest conservation and protected forest areas can help to generate public support and resources for forest conservation.

The UK has agreed to:

- **Protect forests and forest heritage**

- Conserve forest genetic resources. **H<sup>2</sup>**
- Establish, at national and/ or regional level, a coherent ecological network of climax, primary and other special forests to re-establish ecosystems that are representative or threatened. **H<sup>2</sup>**
- Protect all types of forests, in line with policies that link forest conservation and sustainable development. **H<sup>2</sup>, IFF<sup>F3</sup>**
- Develop methods to assess the conditions of, and management effectiveness in, protected areas. **IFF<sup>F3</sup>**
- Help develop guidelines for consistent interpretation and use of IUCN categories. **IFF<sup>F3</sup>, G8<sup>IV</sup>**
- Investigate management requirements for the protection of rare and endangered species. **H<sup>2</sup>**
- Enable forest owners, private sector, and local communities to participate in forest conservation initiatives, and in planning and managing protected areas. **IFF<sup>F3</sup>**
- Develop and implement mechanisms for financing and encouraging forest conservation. **IFF<sup>F8</sup>**
- Co-ordinate forestry activities in environmentally critical areas. **IFF<sup>F8</sup>**
- Encourage a global assessment of the effectiveness of protected areas in maintaining forest biodiversity and ecological values. **G8<sup>IV</sup>**
- Develop national methods to assess and monitor impacts of air pollution. **FP<sup>2</sup>, FP<sup>15</sup>, H<sup>4</sup>, EU Regulation**
- Adopt a preventative approach to reduce damaging air pollution. **FP<sup>2</sup>, FP<sup>15</sup>, H<sup>4</sup>**
- Carry out Environmental Impact Assessments. **FP<sup>8</sup>, EU Directive**

- **Aid better understanding of biodiversity in forests**

- Establish educational and public awareness programmes emphasising the importance of how the sustainable management of forests contributes to the conservation of biodiversity. **H<sup>2</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Assist the conservation of biodiversity in forests through the production of national or regional guidelines. **H<sup>2</sup>**
- Study ecosystem functions and services. **H<sup>2</sup>**
- Monitor and evaluate the consequences for biodiversity of forest management methods. **H<sup>2</sup>**
- Give the Convention on Biological Diversity details of the:
  - status of forest biological diversity;
  - trends of forest biological diversity;
  - options for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity.  
**CBD**
- Develop a set of national and/or regional indicators to measure biodiversity. **H<sup>1</sup>**
- Raise awareness of the ecological, social, cultural and economic roles of forests, and use planted forests and native species, where appropriate, to rehabilitate degraded lands and to re-establish native forests. **IFF<sup>F8</sup>**

There is growing recognition of the potential contribution by the forest sector to sustainable development, through its role in rural areas, employment, the provision of renewable resources and the protection of local and global environments.

This has led to an increasing focus on ways to enhance the social and economic benefits of sustainable forest management, with commitments, particularly at the European level, to strengthen the links and effective partnerships between society and the forest sector. A wide range of bodies involved in the debate on sustainable forest management recognises the role of forests as a key renewable resource and the responsibility of forest owners for their sustainable management.

For example, a wide range of bodies contributes to the formulation and delivery of forest policy in the UK. They include central and local government, wildlife and countryside agencies, non-governmental organisations, trade associations, rural communities, researchers, voluntary bodies and the forest industry.

The UK has well-developed consultation mechanisms – both formal and informal – that encourage communication between different interest groups and enable stakeholders to become actively involved in forestry issues. As well as exchanges of written or electronic information, regular meetings take place where stakeholders can engage in live debate with woodland managers, policy makers and officials. It is likely that development and refinement of mechanisms to achieve consensus will continue to be a growth area.

The UK has agreed to:

- **Engage society and recognise ‘special’ interests**

- Increase awareness of the benefits of sustainable forestry for society **L1**
- Enable relevant stakeholders to participate in the development of forest policies and programmes, taking advantage of complementary activities in other sectors such as agriculture, tourism, environment, energy and industry. **FP<sup>5</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Promote the participation of all stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities, forest dwellers and women in formulating, implementing and planning national forest policies in developing countries. Recognise and support their identity, culture and rights. **IPF<sup>17</sup>, IPF<sup>40</sup>, IPF<sup>46</sup>, IPF<sup>27</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
- Develop and implement policies and mechanisms to secure land tenure and to promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits from forest goods and services. **IPF<sup>29</sup>, IPF<sup>40</sup>, IFF<sup>F2</sup>**
- Support land tenure policies that recognise legitimate access and use and property rights to support sustainable forest management. **IFF<sup>F1</sup>, IFF<sup>F6</sup>**

- **Recognise the importance of those who work in the forests**
  - Adopt education and training systems to secure a highly skilled workforce. **L<sup>1</sup>**
  - Promote and improve health and safety standards and practices. **L<sup>1</sup>**
- **Encourage equal opportunities for women**
  - Enhance the involvement of women in forestry. **FP<sup>5</sup>, L<sup>1</sup>**
  - Encourage studies on gender aspects of forest policy and practice. **L<sup>1</sup>**

Department of Environment (1994)  
*Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy*

Department of Environment (1994)  
*Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan*

Department of Environment (1994)  
*Sustainable Forestry: The UK Programme*

Department of Environment (2000)  
*Climate Change: The UK Programme*

DETR (1999)  
*A Better Quality of Life: A Strategy for sustainable Development for the UK.*

Forestry Commission (1998)  
*The UK Forestry Standard*

UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) (2000)  
*Certification Standard for the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme*

UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) (2000)  
*Introduction to the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme*

UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) (2000)  
*The UK Woodland Assurance Scheme Guide to Certification*

Forestry Commission (2000)  
*Forests & Water Guidelines (3rd edition)*

Forestry Commission (1994)  
*Forest Landscape Design Guidelines (2nd edition)*

Forestry Commission (1990)  
*Forest Nature Conservation Guidelines*

Forestry Commission (1991)  
*Community Woodland Design Guidelines*

Forestry Commission (1992)  
*Lowland Landscape Design Guidelines*

Forestry Commission (1992)  
*Forest Recreation Guidelines*

Forestry Commission (1995)  
*Forests & Archaeology Guidelines*

Forestry Commission (1998)  
*Forests and Soil Conservation Guidelines*

Forestry Commission (1998)  
*A New Focus for England's Woodlands – Strategic Priorities and Programmes*

Forestry Commission (2000)  
*Forests for Scotland – The Scottish Forestry Strategy*

Forestry Commission (2001)  
*Woodlands for Wales – The Wales Woodland Strategy*

FASTCo (Forestry and Arboriculture Safety and Training Council) Safety Guides

Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland (1987)  
*Conservation Guidelines*

Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland (1993)  
*Afforestation – the DANI Statement on Environmental Policy*

Northern Ireland Forest Service (1999)  
*Environmental Guidelines for Timber Harvesting*

## • Further Reading •

Statement of Forest Principles – Earth Summit Agenda 21 (Programme of Action from the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, June 1992)  
[www.igc.apc.org/habitat/agenda21/forest](http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/agenda21/forest)

Report of the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, 11–21 February 1997  
[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/ipf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/ipf)  
[www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn17/ipf/1997/ecn17ipf1997-12](http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn17/ipf/1997/ecn17ipf1997-12)

Report adopted at the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, 31 January–11 February 2000  
[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/docsiff4](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/docsiff4)  
[www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn17/2000ecn172000](http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn17/2000ecn172000)

G8 Action Programme on Forests, 9 May 1998  
[www.birmingham.g8summit.gov.uk/formin/forests](http://www.birmingham.g8summit.gov.uk/formin/forests)

General Declaration and Resolutions adopted at the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe: Strasbourg (1990), Helsinki (1993), Lisbon (1998)  
[www.minconf-forests.net](http://www.minconf-forests.net)

EU Regulation on Atmospheric Pollution (EEC No 3528/86)

EU Directive on Environmental Impact Assessments (85/337/EC)

EU Rural Development Regulation (EC/1257/99)

Convention on Biological Diversity  
[www.biodiv.org](http://www.biodiv.org)

Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol  
[www.unfccc.de](http://www.unfccc.de)

UN-ECE/FAO Study on the Temperate and Boreal Forest Resources Assessment (TBFRA-2000)  
[www.unece.org/trade/timber/fra/welcome](http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/fra/welcome)

Forestry Commission  
[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

- A New Focus for England's Woodlands – Strategic Priorities and Programmes
- Forests for Scotland – The Scottish Forestry Strategy
- Woodlands for Wales – The Wales Woodlands Strategy

The UK Forestry Standard  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/publications](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/publications)

The UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS)  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/ukwas](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukwas)

Department for International Development (DfID)  
[www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk)

- Forests Matter – The DfID Approach to Forests
- The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
- The Environment Sustainability and Poverty Elimination Target Strategy paper
- DfID Funding for Forest Projects



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