

1 **Forestry and Heritage Review: draft recommendations for feedback**

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Sasha Bosbeer and review team
Forest Management Group, GMIT
Sasha.Bosbeer@gmit.ie

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- Forest policy, legislation, certification and incentives
- Species and site suitability
- Biodiversity
- Recreation
- Silvicultural systems
- Protection of water and soil
- Climate change
- International trends and markets
- National trends and future forestry potential
- Forestry and the landscape
- Public perception and attitudes toward forestry
- Training and research needs

3 **Structure of presentation**

- Review process
- Recommendations

4 **Objective of this meeting**

- Feedback – for you to have a say!
- Useful debate
- *Only about 2/3 of the way through our review*

5 **Policy is...**

- "...A deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s)." (Wikipedia)
- Most recent forest policy in Ireland is 1996.

6 **Review**

- 1999: Heritage Council published 'Policy Paper on Forestry and the National Heritage'
- Many changes in forestry since then

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- 2007: wide-ranging review of forestry issues
 - To inform Heritage Council forest policy
 - Embracing social, environmental and economic aspects
 - Managed by Woodlands of Ireland

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Considering all wooded areas

Landscape and biodiversity major parts of heritage
so broad approach

“ try to point the way forward for forest owners to have profitable and sustainable forest enterprises based on ecologically sound forests”

9 **Process**

- Literature review
- Public consultation
- Consultation with key groups and professions
- Team meetings to draft and discuss recommendations
- This public meeting to present ideas and *draft* recommendations

10

- 45 written public consultation submissions received to date.
- Analysed with regard to content for team discussion.
- Will be summarised for Appendix.

- Additional or follow-up consultations with professional groups such as NPWS, Forest Service, Society of Irish Foresters, research ecologists, etc.

11 **International context**

- EU:
 - Halting loss of biodiversity by 2010
 - Water Framework Directive
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive
 - Forthcoming Soils Directive
 - European Landscape Convention
- Climate change
 - Ecology modified
 - Increasing fuel prices

12 **Inter-/National context**

- Demand for wood products
- Invasive species
- Urbanisation of population

13 **Context: New value systems for forests**

‘Intangibles’
/ ecosystem services
/ functions of forests
= landscape, recreation, conservation, timber, etc.

14 **Product**

Vision
and a map of how to get there

- 15 **Not itself policy**
- Recommendations to the Heritage Council
 - Who will develop own policy
 - Which may feed into national forest policy

16 ***Work in progress***

- 17 **Feedback after this meeting**
- Discussion now
 - www.forestryheritagereview.com
 - 4 weeks for additional comments

18 **Structure of recommendations**

19 **Consider the contributions of forests to Irish society**

- 1
1. Timber / pulp / paper
 2. Fuel
 3. Non-timber products
 4. Carbon
 5. Protection of water
 - Hydrological cycling
 6. Protection of soil
 - Nutrient cycling
 7. Future use (genetics, medicines, etc.)
- 2
8. Biodiversity and / or conservation
 - Landscape connectivity
 9. Landscape aesthetics
 10. Recreation
 - Physical health
 - Psychological / Stress
 11. Intrinsic value / Cultural heritage

20 **Forests are multifunctional**

- “What are our forests for?”

Is it ethical, or reasonable in terms of fuel costs, to get our wood from somewhere else?

21 **Recommendations**

Functions
Threats
Species
Management
Governance and policies
Education and research

22 **Multi-functional forestry**

- Forests should be managed for multiple objectives:
 - Environmental and social benefits equally valued with timber

- Incorporate valuation of non-timber benefits to ensure multiple benefits of forests and woodlands.
 - Annual reporting

23 **New national forestry policy**

- *Growing for the Future* (1996)
- Time to develop broadleaf industry **as well as** current industry built around conifers
 - Variety of forests, species, and objectives
- Incorporating a landscape approach
 - Possible with GIS (IFS)
 - All functions of forests considered
 - Defragmentation
 - Transport
- Multifunctional

24 **Timber**

- Encourage range of species and silvicultural systems
- Add value:
 - Management best practice (thinning and pruning),
 - innovative processing, and
 - bigger timber w/ greater proportion of heartwood (CCF)
- Local market because of increasing fuel prices

25 **Fuel**

- Strategy to protect forests from over-exploitation with rising fuel costs.
 - Protect certain forests from any exploitation.
- Small plots on farms for individual fuel production.
 - Log boilers
- Wood energy from timber products and co-products such as sawdust.

26 **Carbon**

- Support continued increase in tree cover but for reasons other than carbon sequestration.
- Other functions will be important in a warmer, possibly drier Ireland:
 - soil stability
 - hydrology
 - habitats
 - wood and non-wood products

27 **Buffer zones in protecting water quality**

- Need detailed research on buffers:
 - Width depending on soil, slope, & water course.
 - Species, spacing, structure, protection.
- Holistic, catchment-based management planning
 - May contribute to habitat defragmentation.
- Research tree species' impact on acid-sensitive streams.

28 **Protection of soils**

- FS Best Practice for machine operations

- Research contribution of forests on upland mineral soils to water cycling and prevention of landslides

29 **Landscape**

1. Aesthetics
 - Sense of place
2. Connectivity
 - Species dispersal
 - Enrichment
 - Protection from extinction
3. Low-impact recreation

30 **Landscape aesthetics**

- Include landscape design in felling and afforestation plans.
- Simplify the Forest Service landscape guidelines.
- Use GIS to create models of future landscape and 'fly-throughs' to check proposed plans.
- Research.

31 **Landscape connectivity**

- Prevent dissection of existing patches
 - Incorporate behavioural economics and non-market values into economic model
- Link corridors to access, so recreationists have forest on one side and a view to open land on the other.

32 **Landscape connectivity (cont.)**

- Potential land use modelling to pinpoint areas for NWS, retention as open habitats, etc.
 - Ecological networks
 - Tie patches of forest together.
- Mechanisms to increase proportion of broadleaves:
 - How to get better land
 - How to target ecologically appropriate land

33 **Conservation and biodiversity**

- Plan for future climate change
- Reduce attrition of patches
- Encourage development of all native woodland types in suitable areas (Juniper scrub on mountaintops)
- Existing native woodlands on private lands: provide protection/management
- Not all interesting habitats have trees!
 - Inherited landscape deforested

34 **Conservation and restoration**

- Under discussion: New large national reserves of native woodland
- Restoration of peatlands

35 **Recreation**

- Variety of activities possible

- Walking
- Valuation of service
- Local forests
 - Ideal = many 3 ha+ woodlands ‘close-to-home’
 - w/o Gortex
- Involve health promotion agencies and others (i.e. Comhairle na Tuaithe) in recreation planning.

36 **Recreation (cont.)**

- Plan for quality of recreational experience, including visual and auditory experiences.
 - Expert planning
 - Public and stakeholder consultation
 - Ongoing (events)
- Car parks
- Forest structure and accessibility
- Outreach: showcase for good forestry
- Support for private landowners.

37 **Threats**

- Concerted action on invasive plants
- Monitoring and immediate action for emergent or invasive diseases and pests
- Storms
- Diversification of age structure
- Integrated, collaborative deer management strategy
- Grey squirrel management strategy

38 **Broadleaves**

- Target broadleaves to site and objective
 - 3 pillars: commercial, environmental, and landscape broadleaves
- Development of a national broadleaf strategy (IFS)
 - Mechanisms to ensure delivery of increased appropriate broadleaf planting
 - Ensure management achieves objective

39 **Management**

- Multi-resource management plans for all forests
- Thinning
- Support and increased knowledge base for:
 - Irregular stand yield tables
 - Non-clearfell systems among contractors, etc.
 - Use of understorey

40 **Governance of forestry**

- FS re-organised into 2 divisions:
 - Forestry Sector Development
 - Forestry Administration and Regulation
- Licensing system for foresters
 - CPD requirement and penalty points
 - Forester responsible for gaining consents and consulting on site

- Agreed management / operational plan with application to FS

41 **Policies**

Increase uptake of schemes, e.g.:

- Improve administrative systems
- Incentives track inflation
- Continuity of programmes and funding (multi-annual)
- Build confidence in continuity
- Public education
- Demonstration NWS areas

42 **Policies (cont.)**

- Provide incentives for the conservation of non-designated habitats within and outside of REPS.
- Broaden scope of NWS to allow strategic targeting of certain woodlands
 - development of a strong native woodland matrix across the country.
- Promote NWS through professional network
 - county official going to landowners through structured programme

43 **Policies (cont.)**

- Increased input of ecologists:
 - Enhancement module of FEPS etc.
- More ecological expertise within FS.
 - No afforestation of sites of conservation interest.
- Consultation
 - “Who knows about this site?”
- Act on recommendations of NPWS and LAs.

44 **Policies (cont.)**

- Forest Service annual report
- Felling license system overhauled:
 - Not for thinning
 - Management plan by licensed forester
 - No replanting required for areas better unplanted for economic or environmental reasons

45 **Coillte**

- (Special case as public land)
- Removal of pressure to maximize profit at expense of delivery of public goods.
 - Mechanism to support Coillte in actively providing services other than timber.
- Irish people should retain woodland heritage in public ownership:
 - Coillte not to be privatised.
 - Sale of land to fund company’s current account should cease.

46 **Training for professionals**

- Forest health assessment: urgent.
- CCF and coppice.
- Greater awareness and implementation of later forest management.
- Ecological skills.
- Forestry contractors and operators : training in best practice.

- Woodland owners:
 - Grazing, protection of existing woodlands, thinning.

47 **Research**

- CCF / Close-to-nature
- Public surveys:
 - Percent wooded landscape preferred
 - Forest structure preferred
 - Obstacles to increased recreational use.
- Landscape connectivity
- Climate change
 - Provenance and species
 - Biodiversity
 - ...

48 **Outreach**

- Social involvement
- Heritage use of woodlands
- Wood: where it comes from
- Forestry museum

49 **Outreach**

- The cultural resistance to growing trees on 'good land' needs to be addressed highlighting the aesthetic, wildlife, recreational and environmental benefits of well managed forests in accessible areas.

50 **Future steps**

- Feedback in this meeting and by e-mail up to 4 weeks (Friday 7 Dec 2007).
 - Leave Post-it notes with suggestions by door
- Draft report presented to Woodlands of Ireland January 2008.
- Final draft then to Heritage Council.

51 **Discussion and queries?**