



Forestry and Heritage Review: draft recommendations for feedback

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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



Structure of presentation

- Review process
- Recommendations

Objective of this meeting

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



Policy is...



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

Review

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





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

Considering all wooded areas
Landscape and biodiversity major parts
of heritage

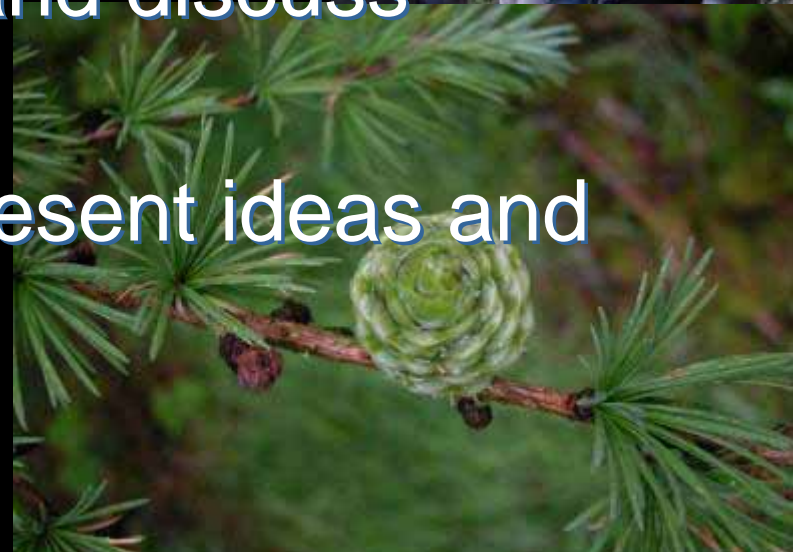
so broad approach

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



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





- 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.

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



Inter-/National context

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



Context: New value systems for forests

'Intangibles'

/ ecosystem services

/ functions of forests

= landscape, recreation, conservation,
timber, etc.



Product

Vision
and a map of how to get there



Not itself policy

- Recommendations to the Heritage Council
- Who will develop own policy
- Which may feed into national forest policy





***Work in
progress***

Feedback after this meeting

- Discussion now
- www.forestryheritagereview.com
- 4 weeks for additional comments



Structure of recommendations



Consider the contributions of forests to Irish society

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.)
8. Biodiversity and / or conservation
 - Landscape connectivity
9. Landscape aesthetics
10. Recreation
 - Physical health
 - Psychological / Stress
11. Intrinsic value / Cultural heritage

A close-up photograph of several yellow flowers, possibly daisies, with a soft, out-of-focus background. The flowers are in the foreground, and their petals are clearly visible. The background is a mix of green and yellow, suggesting a natural setting.

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?



Recommendations

Functions

Threats

Species

Management

Governance and policies

Education and research



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

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



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





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.

Carbon

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



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.



Protection of soils

- FS Best Practice for machine operations
- Research contribution of forests on upland mineral soils to water cycling and prevention of landslides





Landscape

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



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.

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.





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



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

Conservation and restoration

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





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.

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.





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



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

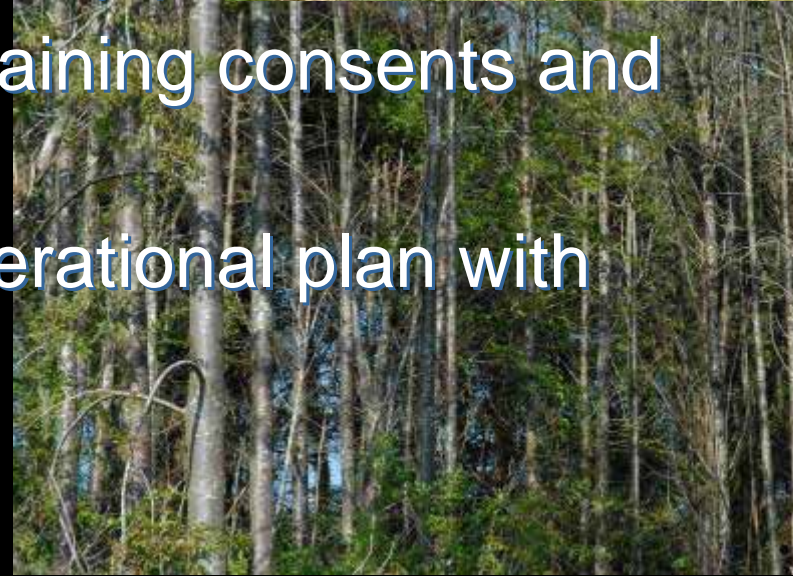
Management

- 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



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





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



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

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.



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





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.

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.



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
 - ...



Outreach

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



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.



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.



A photograph of a forest stream. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding trees and foliage. The trees have thick, moss-covered trunks. The ground is covered with fallen leaves and some green plants. The overall scene is a dense, natural forest environment.

Discussion and queries?