

Confor response to Highland Forest and Woodland Strategy

Confor: Promoting forestry and wood (www.confor.org.uk) is a not-for-profit membership organisation which represents 1500 sustainable forestry and wood using businesses across the UK. Confor represents the whole forestry and wood supply chain and focuses on strategic issues vital to the success and sustainable future of the sector.

Confor welcomes the commitment to the expansion of woodland and the development of its economic potential in the draft strategy, within a framework of environmental and social enhancement.

As the Scottish Forestry Strategy is in preparation and should be published in the next few months, we suggest The Highland Council delay publishing this one until it is available.

p.6 Insert: 'Around 75% of the timber harvested in Scotland comes from forests that are independently audited to international sustainability standards.'

p.6 3.7 It would be worth referring here to the % of non-forest land which is suitable for trees.

p.24 There should be an objective relating to filling the 'timber gap' discussed on pp.12-13. Our suggestion is to include an objective for the creation of short-rotation (SRF) forestry, which will deliver significant quantities of material to the chip and biomass markets in from 20 years from planting, in time to 'plug the gap'.

p.25 The strategy should join Confor in calling for strategic investment by central government to overcome the inherent timber transport restrictions in many parts of the Highlands.

p.26 Objective 7 on LISS might be better worded, 'Monitor the effectiveness of carbon sequestration by different woodland management techniques, taking Harvested Wood Products (HWP) into account as per the Scottish Greenhouse Gas inventory calculations'.

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