



Scotland's Forestry Strategy

» 2019–2029



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Scotland's Forestry Strategy

» 2019–2029 overview

VISION

» In 2070, Scotland will have more forests and woodlands, sustainably managed and better integrated with other land uses. These will provide a more resilient, adaptable resource, with greater natural capital value, that supports a strong economy, a thriving environment, and healthy and flourishing communities.

OBJECTIVES

» Increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth

» Improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment

» Increase the use of Scotland's forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances

PRIORITIES

» Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed

» Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands

» Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives

» Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands

» Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets

» Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands

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Foreword

As Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy, I have a clear ambition for forestry. I want Scotland to have more trees and woodlands. Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019–2029, with a 10-year framework and a 50-year vision, sets out how we will achieve this. I am grateful to everyone who contributed their views, knowledge and expertise to help develop its contents.

This Strategy also signals the start of a new era for forestry in Scotland. It is a keystone of the new statutory and administrative arrangements under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018.

We build on the success of over 100 years of effective stewardship and growth in forestry and woodlands. The UK Forestry Act 1919 laid the foundations for the thriving Scottish forest and woodland sector that we enjoy today. Forests and woodlands now cover nearly 19% of our land; we plant more trees in Scotland than anywhere else in the UK, and our forests and woodlands deliver a rich mixture of benefits, including an economic contribution of £1 billion, and the provision of over 25 000 jobs.

We now look to the next century, with forestry fully devolved.

Growing trees is a long-term business, so a clear and robust framework with strong and far-sighted objectives is needed. I want forestry in Scotland to play a significant role in driving forward our rural economy and also our ambitions to make Scotland a low carbon economy and a world leader in dealing with the threat of climate change. Crucially, our forests and woodlands can help deliver health and social benefits for future generations and communities.

If Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019–2029 is to succeed, planting trees and maintaining and investing in forests and woodlands must become a shared national endeavour. I look forward to continuing to work collaboratively across all sectors to realise our vision and achieve our ambitions.

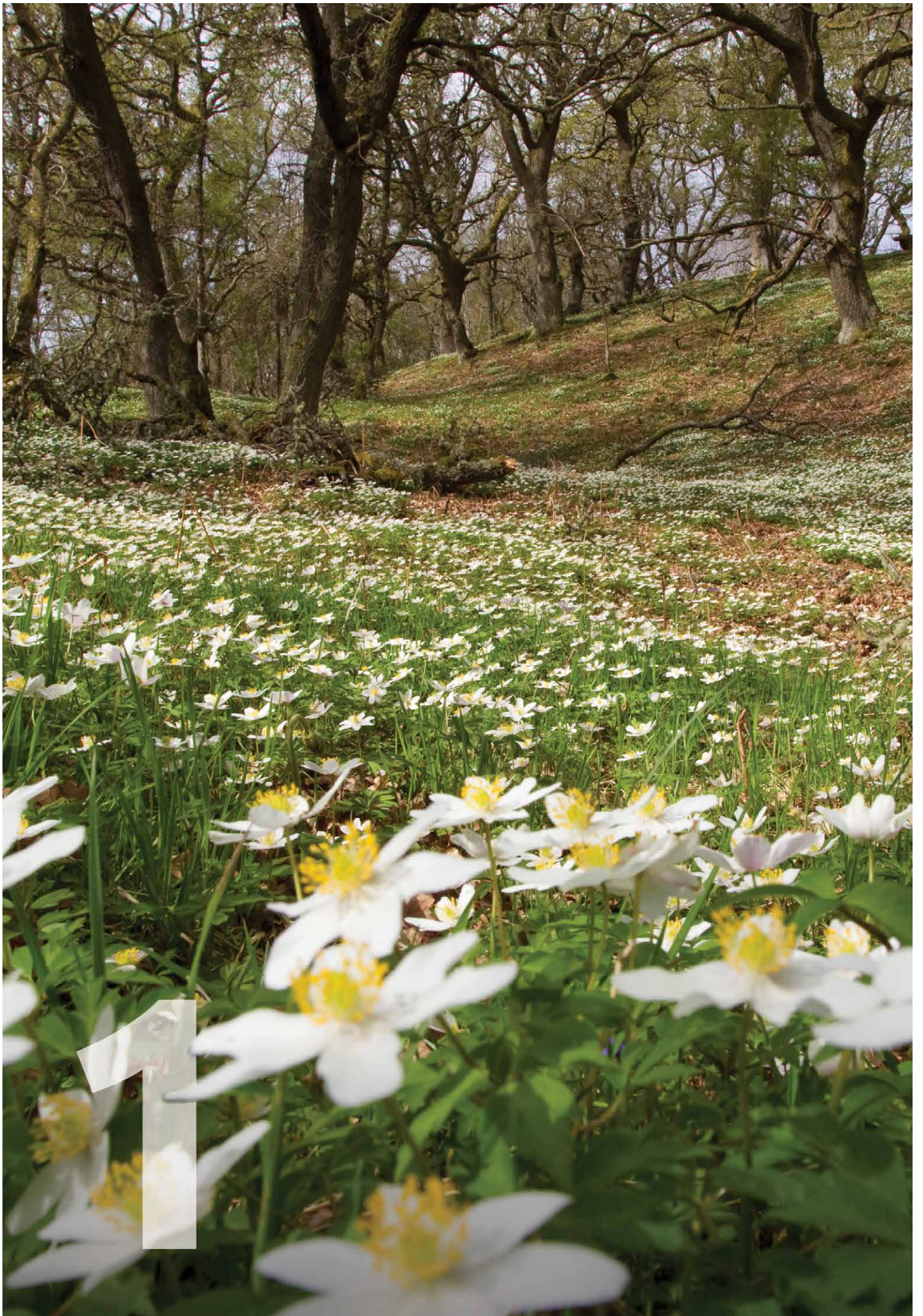
Fergus Ewing MSP
Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy



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Introduction

This Strategy provides an overview of contemporary Scottish forestry, presents our 50-year vision for Scotland's forests and woodlands, and sets out a 10-year framework for action.

It places forestry policy at the heart of government, helping to deliver the aims of the National Performance Framework¹ (Figure 1), supporting the vision, objectives and principles of the Land Use Strategy², and building on the achievements of the previous strategy.

The Strategy is a keystone of our ambition for forestry in Scotland, underpinned by new legislation and new organisational arrangements which build on the 100-year legacy of the work of the Forestry Commission in Scotland. It balances the need for long-term continuity and the need for flexibility when responding to emerging issues and opportunities. It embraces our existing commitments (Box 1) as well as providing strategic direction for the future.

The Strategy has the principles of sustainable forest management at its core, including an adherence to the principle of 'the right tree, in the right place, for the right purpose'. In addition, by implementing the Strategy, it is vital that we recognise the need for better integration of forestry with other land uses and businesses. This approach will enable forestry in Scotland to continue to deliver an extensive and expanding range of economic, environmental and social benefits, now and in the future.

The scope of this Strategy covers forestry as, 'the art and science of managing woods and forests'³, therefore, this document focuses on forests and woodlands management and uses these two terms interchangeably to include all types of woodland, from small pockets of native woodland and shelter-belts through to extensive areas of tree cover, such as those seen in

the Cairngorms or Argyll. However, it also recognises the important contribution that individual trees outside of forests and woodlands make to enhancing Scotland's rural and urban landscapes, their role in addressing air pollution, and their biodiversity and cultural value.

The Strategy has been prepared in line with the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act (FLM(S)A) 2018 (Annex A).

» BOX 1 – FORESTRY COMMITMENTS

Increase forest and woodland creation target⁴

10 000 ha in 2018

12 000 ha per year from 2020/21

14 000 ha per year from 2022/23

15 000 ha per year from 2024/25

Increase forest and woodland cover to

21%

of the **total area** of Scotland by 2032

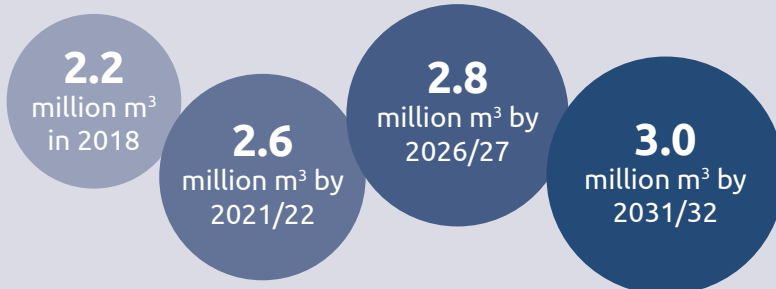
Native woodlands⁵

Increase the amount of native woodland in **good condition**

Create 3000–5000 ha of new native woodland per year

Restore approximately 10 000 ha of new native woodland into satisfactory condition in partnership with private woodland owners through Deer Management Plans

Increase use of Scottish wood products in construction⁴



Bonn Challenge⁶

Scotland has signed up to the challenge that aims to **regenerate**

150 million ha of **deforested and degraded landscapes** across the world by 2020 and 350 million ha by 2030⁶

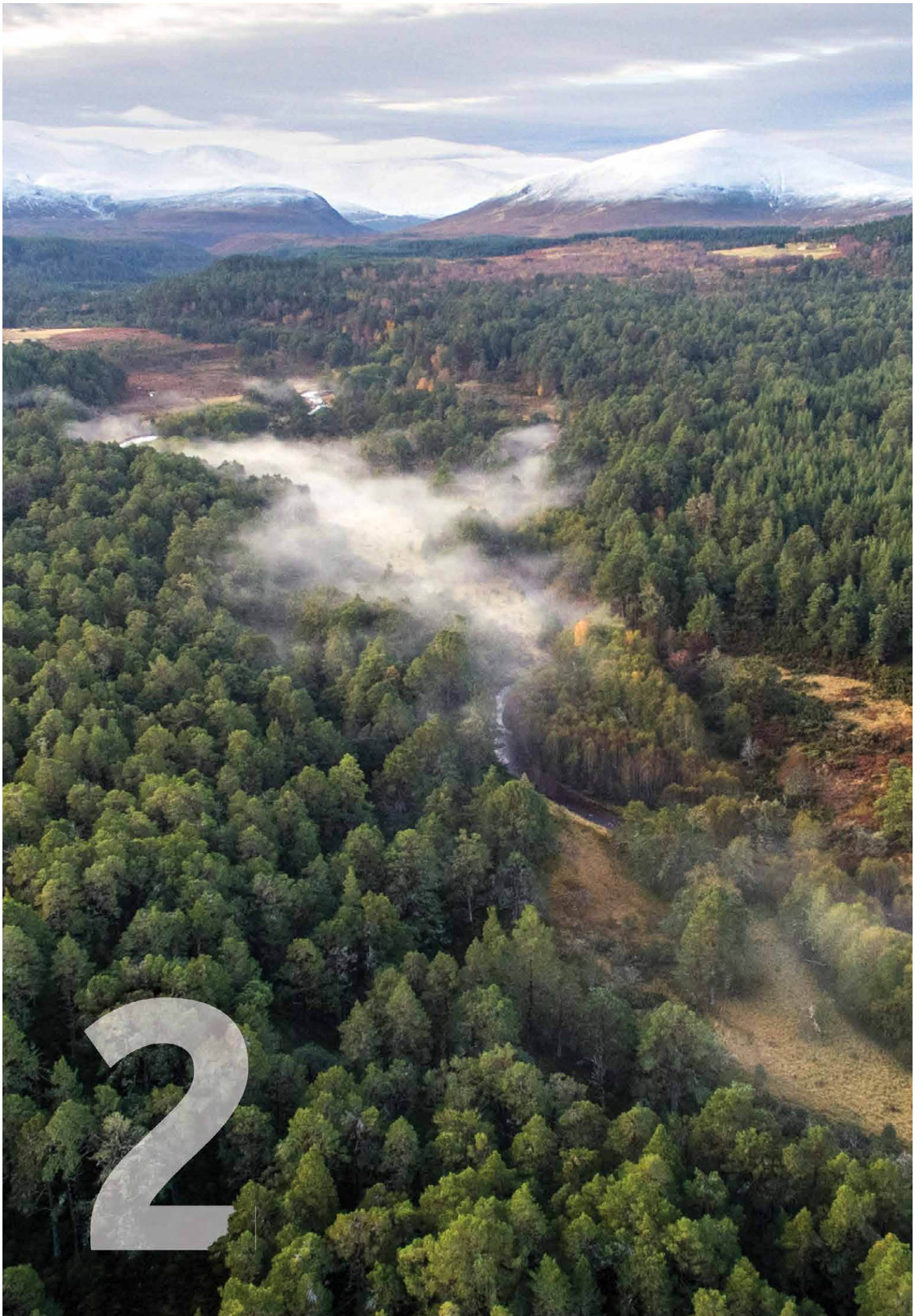
Protected sites⁵

Ensure protected sites are under

good conservation management

FIGURE 1 Scottish Government National Performance Framework.





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Scotland's forests and woodlands

Scotland spans both the temperate and boreal forest zones. Scotland's forest types are typical of those found in northern latitudes, including countries such as Canada and Finland, as well as parts of the USA, Russia and China.

Without human intervention, it is likely that much of Scotland would be covered by tree species of a range of types, including Scots pine and birch in the north and east, and oakwoods in the warm and wetter west.

Ever since the first foresters entered Scotland's ancient wildwood over 6000 years ago, Scotland's trees and woodlands have been felled and harvested. As our population grew, more wood from forests was harvested and many forests disappeared, making space for agriculture, people's homes and infrastructure. By the early 20th century, forest cover in Scotland, as well as in the rest of the UK, was reduced to around 5%. This chronic lack of trees and timber was recognised as a strategic problem for the country, and so the Forestry Act of 1919 was introduced to address the issue.

Given this strategic need to grow more timber, the forests planted in Scotland during the subsequent 100 years were primarily, but not exclusively, designed to optimise timber production, using species from around the world that could thrive in Scotland's relatively favourable growing conditions.

As understanding of the environment and these new forests has developed, so has the practice of modern Scottish forestry. In particular, over the second half of the 20th century, it became clear that the industrial, intensive, single-purpose forestry that dominated the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s was not sustainable, and an approach was required to embrace environmental and wider societal interests. This change of focus for forestry policy resulted in the development of comprehensive standards for forest management in the 1990s, drawing on international initiatives stemming from the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

SCOTTISH FORESTRY TODAY

Since the late 1980s, close working relationships among government, the forestry sector, and environmental and community groups have resulted in the development of a strong consensus around the need to promote and follow the internationally recognised principles of sustainable forest management. These are the principles upon which Scotland's modern forestry legislation, practice and related policies are based.

Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

At the second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in 1993, sustainable forest management was defined as:

» The stewardship and use of forest lands that maintains biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and 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.

The Scottish and other governments in the UK have adopted this definition and support and promote the stewardship and use of forests and woodlands through legislation and other good practice, brought together in the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS).

The UK Forestry Standard – the benchmark for sustainable practice

The UKFS³ (Box 2) defines the agreed approach to sustainable forest management across all four administrations of the UK. It is reviewed every five years with the input of the forestry sector and environmental stakeholders. The UKFS sets out the regulatory requirements for forestry and is the basis for assessing felling licences and forest plans. In addition, government grants for woodland creation and forest management are conditional on meeting the UKFS requirements. Guidelines covering general forestry practice and the different elements of sustainable forest management are listed to the right.

UKFS guidelines:

- » Biodiversity
- » Climate change
- » Historic environment
- » Landscape
- » People
- » Soil
- » Water

The Scottish Government remains committed to the use of the UKFS to help inform forest planning decisions relating to all forests and woodlands and to ensure that international agreements and conventions are applied.

» BOX 2 – INDEPENDENT CERTIFICATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) is the independent certification standard and audit protocol for verifying sustainable woodland management in Scotland and the rest of the UK. UKWAS combines the government requirements set out in the UKFS with those of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the two independent internationally recognised voluntary certification schemes operating in the UK.

In 2018

58%

of Scotland's forests were UKWAS certified

SCOTLAND'S FOREST AND WOODLAND RESOURCE

In the last 100 years, forest and woodland cover in Scotland has increased from around 5% to 18.5%; this percentage is higher than the rest of the UK but is still well below the European Union (EU) average of 43% (Figure 2).

Scotland's forest and woodland area now covers more than 1.4 million hectares (ha), one third of which is owned by Scottish Ministers, on behalf of the nation, as part of the National Forest Estate. Over 975 000 ha is privately or community owned.

Scotland's forests consist of different woodland types and tree species, ranging from the highly productive forests of the Galloway and Tay Forest Parks to traditional mixed Highland estates, and from urban forests in and around our cities to the Atlantic oakwoods in Argyll and the native Caledonian pinewoods in the Highlands (Figure 3).

FIGURE 2 Forest and woodland cover in Europe.

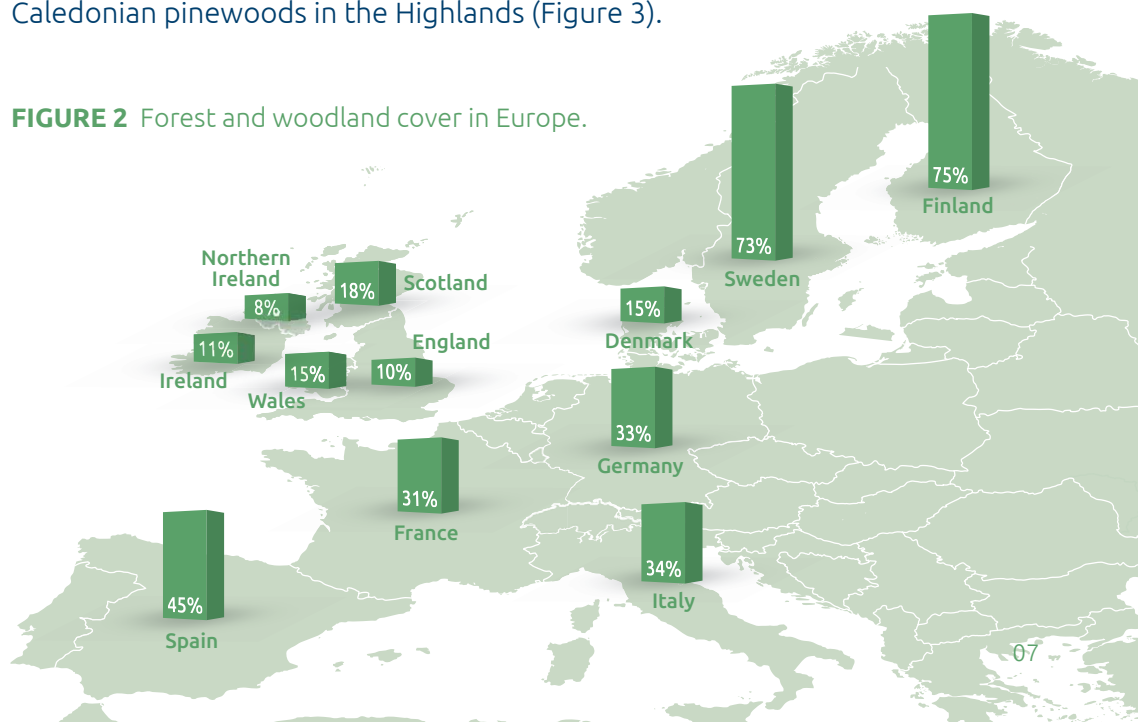
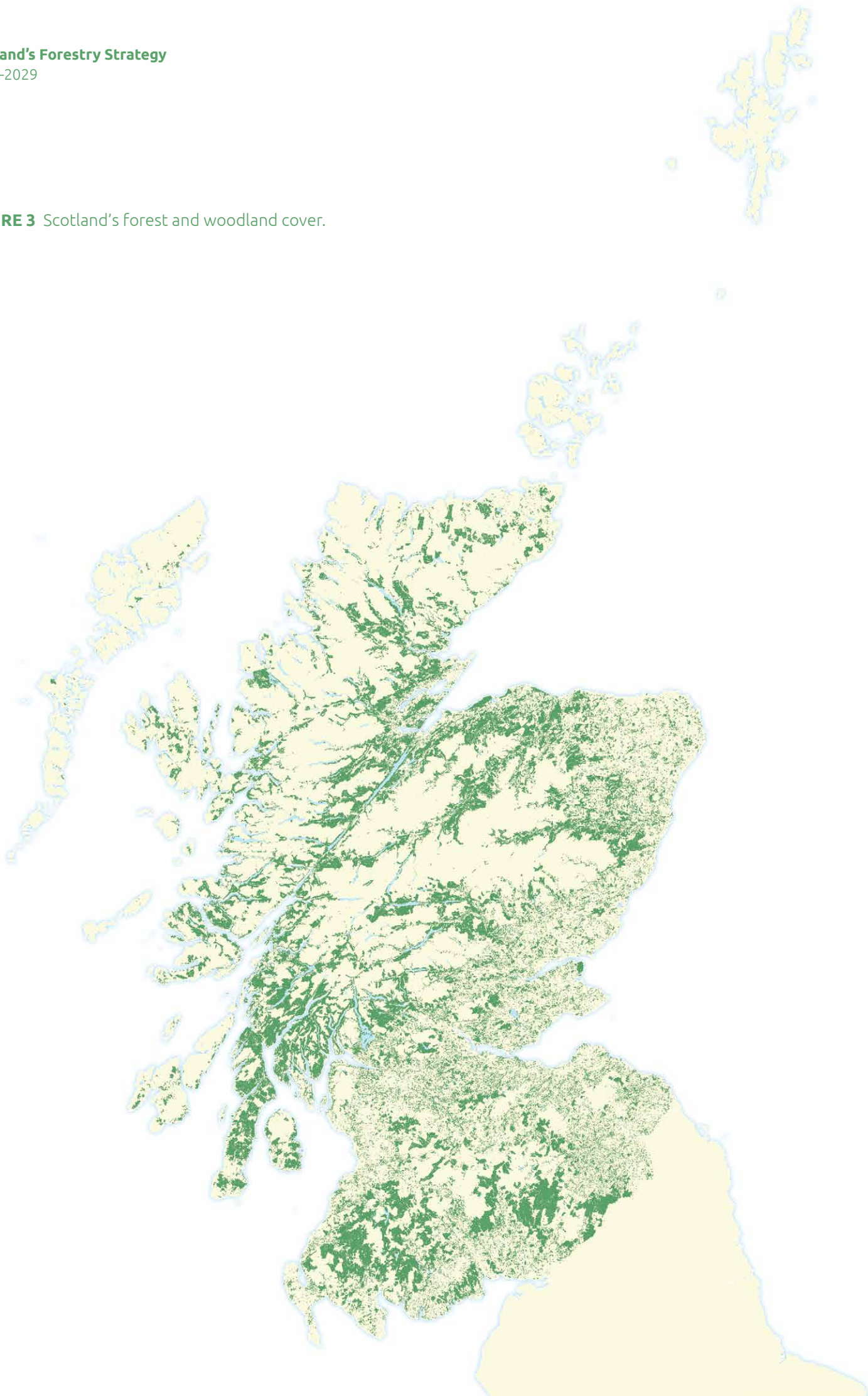


FIGURE 3 Scotland's forest and woodland cover.



The contribution of Scotland's forests and woodlands

Diverse and versatile forests and woodlands are located across Scotland and serve both Scotland's rural and urban communities. When managed appropriately they can provide considerable economic and environmental benefits, as well as helping to improve people's quality of life.

SUPPORTING THE ECONOMY

Forestry makes a substantial contribution to the economy at both national and local levels. The key economic activities are through the production of timber and other wood fibre, and through the provision of recreation and tourism assets. The majority of economic activities associated with woodland creation, management, harvesting and transportation, as well as a significant part of the processing of wood products, takes place in rural areas. The forestry sector is therefore particularly important for these communities.

The forestry and timber sector comprises tree nurseries and businesses focused on planting, managing and harvesting forests and woodlands, as well as wood processors producing a range of wood products, including sawn timber, composite boards, paper, pallets, biomass and bark. Businesses range in scale from artisan furniture-makers, family-owned contracting micro-businesses and community-based biomass enterprises, to UK-wide woodland management companies and multi-million pound panel, pulp, paper and sawmills operating internationally.

Scotland has good growing conditions for productive timber species, and a highly efficient timber-processing sector. Most of the wood produced in Scotland for downstream processing and manufacture is softwood from fast-growing conifer species. Hardwood from slower growing broadleaved species makes up a much smaller proportion of the overall harvest, but provides an important resource for the wood fuel market and high value artisan and niche construction sector products.



In addition to the production and processing of timber and wood fibre, forest-related recreation and tourism also makes a significant contribution to the rural economy (estimated at £183 million in 2015). Scotland's forests and woodlands help attract visitors through the unique contribution they make to iconic Scottish landscapes, and they also provide valuable venues for revenue-creating activities such as mountain bike hire and tree-top aerial adventure courses.

ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

Scotland's forests and woodlands are an important resource of natural capital providing us with a range of environmental benefits which contribute to improvements in people's quality of life such as clear air, water, timber and renewable energy (Box 3).

» BOX 3 – SCOTLAND'S NATURAL CAPITAL

Scotland's rich and diverse forests and woodlands are important natural assets and their continuing health and improvement is vital to sustainable economic growth, not least because of their role in protecting and enhancing natural capital.

Natural capital includes stocks of air, land, water, soil, biodiversity and geological resources. It supports sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism and renewables, but it is also fundamental to a healthy and resilient economy because economic growth is not sustainable if it comes at an irrecoverable cost to the natural environment.

Communities across Scotland benefit from the goods and services that flow from natural capital, including timber, food, renewable energy, water purification, flood mitigation and cultural, recreational, educational and therapeutic experiences.

The concept of natural capital is embedded in Scotland's National Performance Framework¹, and Scotland was the first country in the world to develop a measure which tracks annual changes in natural capital stock. The Scottish Government continues to show leadership in using natural capital as an important tool for making better decisions that recognise the value of the environment.

In 2016, around
12 million tonnes
of CO₂ was removed
from the atmosphere
by Scotland's forests
and woodlands⁷

For example, forests and woodlands help mitigate the impact of climate change by absorbing substantial amounts of carbon. Many wood products also contribute to climate change mitigation by continuing to store captured carbon. Thus uniquely, the more economic activity in the sector, the more we can replenish and expand Scotland's forests, helping to slow the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The globally important environmental role of sustainably managed and appropriately planted forests has been recognised as important by international environmental organisations such as the WWF⁸, as they can help conserve biodiversity and meet human needs by relieving pressure on more fragile native ecosystems, while contributing to sustainable economic growth and local livelihoods.

Scotland's forests
and woodlands
are home to
172
protected species

Forests and woodlands support a diverse range of species and are rich in biodiversity; to date, researchers at Stirling University have recorded over 1000 species associated with Scottish forests⁹. These include 172 protected species, comprising some of Scotland's most charismatic and recognisable species, including the pine marten, twinflower, crested tit, Scottish Crossbill, black grouse, capercaillie, as well as an estimated 75% of the UK's red squirrel population¹⁰. Forests and woodlands also help to purify our water and air, reduce flood risks, improve slope and riverbank stability, and help to decontaminate soils on post-industrial sites. They are also a key part of Scotland's iconic landscapes, helping to frame views, adding colour and textures, and marking the passing of the seasons.

While sustainable forest management is widely seen as positive for the environment, it is recognised that there are associated risks if good practice is not followed, particularly during tree felling and ground cultivation activities. Modern forest practice has developed to mitigate environmental risks, and it is important that the sector maintains and develops these practices.

Species associated with Scottish forests⁹:



IMPROVING PEOPLE'S LIVES

Forests and woodlands provide opportunities for people to engage in healthy activities, to take more exercise and improve their physical health. There is also compelling evidence regarding the psychologically and physiologically restorative effects of greenspace¹²: even just seeing forests and woodlands can help people cope with stress and reduce anxiety¹³ (Box 4).

Access to greenspace, forests and woodlands for children, through outdoor play and learning, is positively associated with improved self-esteem, physical health, development of language skills, disposition to learning, and attainment levels. Direct childhood experiences of forests and woodlands tends to result in adults who not only are more likely to visit and use forests and woodlands as adults¹⁴, but who also better understand and appreciate the natural world and forestry.

The value of forests and woodlands for people's quality of life is reflected in the recent growth in community ownership. Part of the reason for the growth in community woodland groups is a recognition that Scotland's forests and woodlands can play an important role in galvanising and empowering communities: they can provide opportunities for the development of community-based enterprises and, through ownership and participation in management, can foster community cohesion and help people feel they have control over the decisions that shape their lives and the environment in which they live.

63%

of adults in Scotland visited a forest or woodland in 2014¹¹

Around

200

community groups own and manage forests and woodlands in Scotland¹⁵

» BOX 4 – URBAN FORESTRY

Scotland's forests and woodlands play an important role in enhancing the quality of life for people living and working in Scotland's towns and cities. They provide vital greenspace for people to enjoy and use, enhancing their physical health and mental well-being¹⁶.

Urban forestry plays a key role in maintaining and expanding green networks across Scotland's city regions, providing a landscape framework for sustainable urban development, making urban communities more attractive places for people to live and work in.

Our national forest and land assets

Approximately one third (470 000 ha) of Scotland's forests and woodlands are on public land, owned by Scottish Ministers on behalf of the nation. These forests and woodlands are part of the National Forest Estate, which also includes a substantial area of open ground. The Estate makes a significant contribution to Scotland's economic, social and environmental outcomes, including over £1 million per day Gross Value Added (GVA), supporting 11 000 FTEs, and welcoming 10 million visitors annually, as well as hosting nine starter farms and enough renewable energy infrastructure to produce over one billion watts of energy each year, sufficient to power 500 000 homes. In addition, the Estate is a valuable natural resource, home to thousands of species of plants and animals from the golden eagle and red deer to some of the rarest plant species in the UK, and helps to improve the physical, emotional and mental well-being of visitors.

£1 million

Gross Value Added per day

11 000

full-time equivalents

500 000

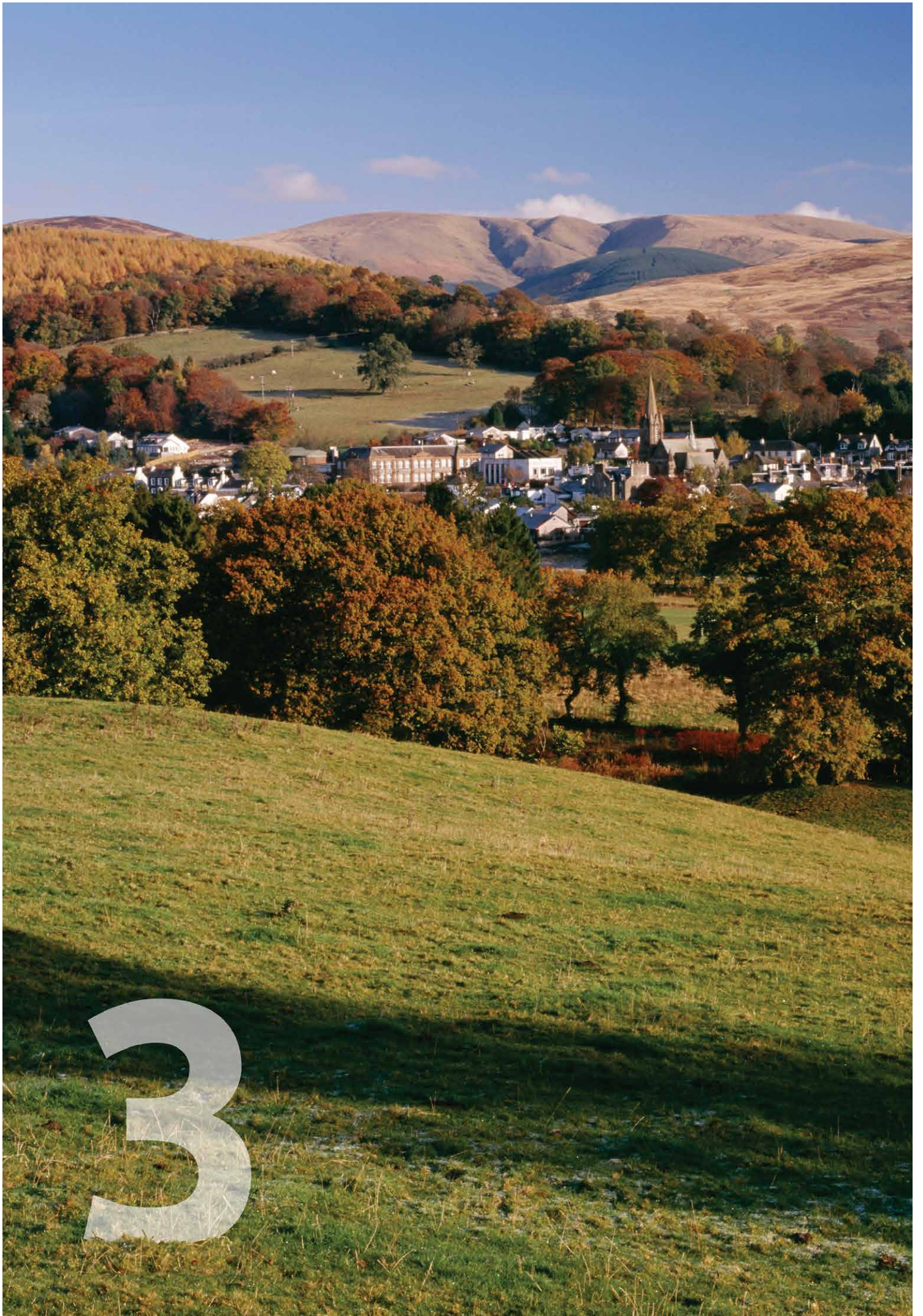
homes powered by renewable energy

10 million

annual visitors

9

starter farms



A vision for forestry in Scotland

In the last 100 years, Scotland's forest cover has increased from around 5% of the country's land cover to 18.5% in 2018. This greatly expanded and valuable resource needs careful and considered stewardship to ensure that we make the most use of it, and also enhance it for the future.

Considering that the productive lifespan of trees in Scotland generally ranges from 30–150 years, in this Strategy we take a long-term approach. We are setting out how we will grow trees now to meet the needs of Scotland's people and communities until 2070 and beyond. To steer our approach we have adopted an ambitious long-term vision to drive action across the public and private sectors, in a shared national endeavour, to deliver more from Scotland's forests and woodlands.

OUR 50-YEAR VISION FOR FORESTRY IN SCOTLAND

» In 2070, Scotland will have more forests and woodlands, sustainably managed and better integrated with other land uses. These will provide a more resilient, adaptable resource, with greater natural capital value, that supports a strong economy, a thriving environment, and healthy and flourishing communities.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

To support our 50-year vision, we have identified three objectives which this Strategy must deliver over the next 10 years.

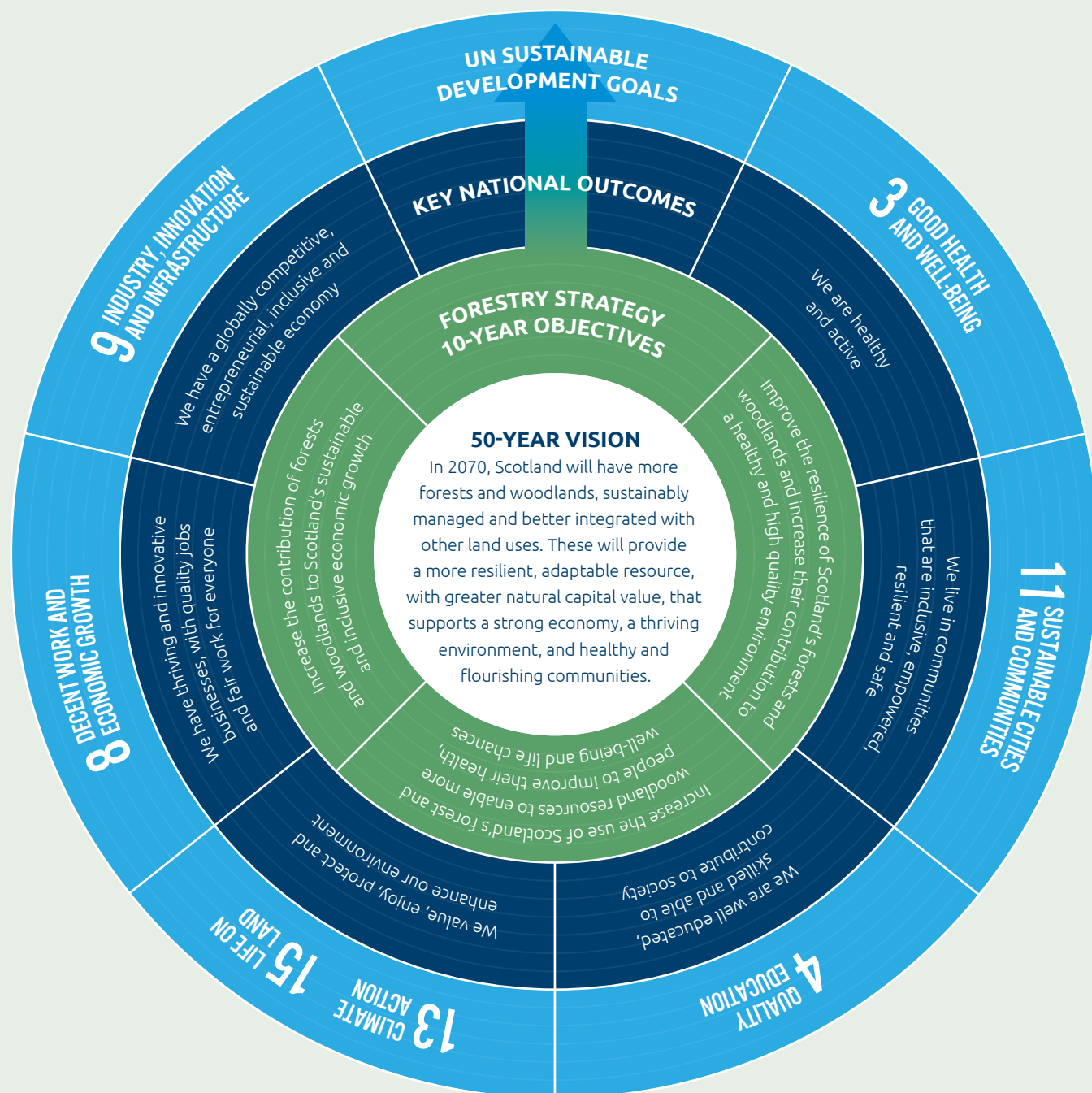
SCOTLAND'S FORESTRY OBJECTIVES

- » Increase the contribution of forests and woodlands to Scotland's sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- » Improve the resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands and increase their contribution to a healthy and high quality environment
- » Increase the use of Scotland's forest and woodland resources to enable more people to improve their health, well-being and life chances

To achieve this, forestry policies and practice will be developed and implemented as part of the integrated approach described in the Scottish Government's Land Use Strategy².

Figure 4 shows how our vision and objectives support the aims and objectives of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework¹.

FIGURE 4 The linkages between our vision and objectives for forestry, key Scottish Government National Outcomes, and the associated UN Sustainable Development Goals¹⁷.





Strategic drivers

The achievement of our objectives and realisation of the vision will be influenced by many factors. In consultation with others, we have identified key strategic drivers that will need to be considered if we are to succeed in realising our vision. Our response to these drivers is described in Section 5.

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND FORESTRY GOOD PRACTICE IN A SCOTTISH CONTEXT

The internationally recognised principles of sustainable forest management must underpin forestry policies and practice. In Scotland the commitment to these principles has been formalised under the Forest and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018, which places a duty on Scottish Ministers and Scottish public authorities to promote sustainable forest management. The key documents that explain what sustainable management means in practice are the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) and its supporting guidelines³. Meeting the requirements of the UKFS is a prerequisite for Scottish Government funding and approval for forest plans and forest operations.

A detailed understanding of the UKFS and its associated good practice is required for those working in forestry. It is also important that wider stakeholders and the general public understand the principles of the UKFS and how they are applied. It appears from the consultation on this Strategy and wider public discourse about forestry that there remains a wider lack of understanding about the value and benefits of sustainable forest and woodland creation and management, which can lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

» Wood and wood fibre supply and demand

The UK imports around 60% of its wood and wood products and this has been predicted to rise to 78% by 2050¹⁸. At the same time, demand for wood fibre is predicted to rise globally, which is likely to result in an increase in the cost of imports.

The main wood fibre produced in Scotland for downstream processing and manufacture is softwood from fast-growing, highly productive conifer species. An increasing proportion of this is being harvested from privately owned forests and woodland. Forecasts for 2030–50 predict that there will be a decline in softwood availability within Scotland¹⁹, mainly due to the decline in productive planting (since the 1980s), but also because of areas of woodland loss due to development²⁰. To support economic growth in the forestry and other land-based sectors by securing investor confidence, it will be important to address this forecasted future decline in softwood availability.

» Forecasts for 2030–50 predict that there will be a decline in softwood availability within Scotland.

Productive hardwood from Scotland's forests and woodlands is produced in much smaller volumes. However, there are opportunities to expand, and more sustainably managed broadleaved forests and woodlands will improve the supply and quality of hardwood timber.

Understanding and responding to the balance of supply and demand for Scottish wood fibre and products is fundamental to achieving sustainable economic growth in the sector, and supporting delivery of the aims and objectives of both Scotland's National Performance Framework¹ and the Scottish Forest Timber & Technologies Industry Leadership Group (ILG) strategy – Roots for Further Growth²¹. It is also important for delivery of the Scottish Energy Strategy²², due to the significance of biomass from woodland.

» Climate change mitigation

The Scottish Government recognises that climate change is one of the greatest global threats we face. Scotland is committed to playing its part in achieving the ambitions set out in the Paris Agreement, which provides a framework for delivering concerted global action to deal with the threat.

» The creation of new forests and woodlands is recognised as an important tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

For each new hectare of forest and woodland created, it is estimated that, on average, seven tonnes of CO₂ will be removed from the atmosphere each year. The creation of new forests and woodlands is therefore recognised as an important tool for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and helping to meet our statutory climate change targets. As such, the Climate Change Plan includes commitments to incrementally increase the annual woodland creation target from 10 000 to 15 000 ha per year by 2024/25⁴.

While the forest and woodland creation target will help deliver additional carbon reductions, the existing resource must also be managed sustainably to preserve Scotland's carbon sink and support the development of a low-carbon economy through the continued production of wood products, for other sectors such as construction or for fuel.

» Markets, value and efficiency

As well as actions to optimise the supply and demand of timber, and help achieve our ambition to have more thriving and innovative businesses¹, there are exciting opportunities to grow and expand existing businesses and markets, for example, through capitalising on the increasing demand for sustainable construction and infrastructure materials, as well as biomass.

There are also opportunities for new wood fibre markets and value-added products such as cellulosic plastics from biorefineries*, placing a greater emphasis on the need to maximise wood fibre recovery from Scotland's forests and woodlands.

» New technology, research and innovation offer great potential to help stimulate higher efficiency and productivity throughout the supply chain.

New technology, research and innovation also offer great potential to help stimulate higher efficiency and productivity throughout the supply chain, from forest nurseries through to wood fibre processing companies. For example, remote sensing could be used to monitor forests and provide significantly more data to support decision-making, and real-time information could be used to improve connectivity between the forest and the sawmill.

*Plastics based on cellulose derived from trees and other plants. Facilities that integrate biomass conversion processes and equipment to produce fuels, power, heat, and value-added chemicals from biomass.

» Adaptation and resilience

Forests and woodlands can also help us adapt to climate change by, for example, providing natural flood management and shelter for livestock. However, Scotland's forests and woodlands also need to adapt to a changing climate and become more resilient to the growing threats and challenges they face.

As a result of climate change, projections for Scotland show that over the next 50 years, tree growth rates are likely to increase because of longer, warmer growing seasons, particularly in cooler and wetter areas²³. At the same time, the threat to forests and woodlands from extreme weather events and wildfires is expected to rise.

Given the changing climate and greater globalisation of trade and travel, it is also anticipated that the threat to trees from pests and diseases will grow. This is supported by evidence showing that until the mid-1990s, significant tree pest and disease incursions in the UK were experienced once every decade, but since 2005 the pace and scale of these challenges has escalated considerably²⁴. The UK's withdrawal from the EU will introduce new plant health risks, given likely changes to previously common approaches to biosecurity.

While wild deer and other herbivores are a valuable part of forest and woodland ecosystems, high numbers of animals can damage trees. This can be a challenge to successful woodland establishment, as can the presence of invasive species such as *Rhododendron ponticum*. Invasive species and deer both restrict the natural regeneration of forests and woodlands and increase establishment and management costs^{25,26}. The Scottish Government supports the principles of the Wild Deer National Approach (WDNA)²⁷ and this Strategy will support the implementation of the WDNA.

The sustainable management of wild deer populations, the protection of trees from herbivore browsing and the control of invasive species are therefore important aspects of resilience and sustainable forest management.

» The threat to trees from pests and diseases is anticipated to grow due to a changing climate and greater globalisation of trade and travel.

» Integrated land use

Managing forests and woodlands without due consideration of how they interact with surrounding land uses has been a criticism of forestry in the past. In some instances, tensions have arisen due to a lack of understanding about the benefits of creating and managing forests and woodlands, and the opportunities they can provide. As a result, land use and management has sometimes been sub-optimal.

The Scottish Government's Land Use Strategy² provides the framework to address this issue, supporting better integration between forestry and other land uses to help us get the best from our land, now and in the future.

» Skills and workforce

» To meet future demands we need to address the skills development requirements of the existing workforce, as well as attract a more diverse range of talented people.

The forestry sector, with many family-owned, small and medium businesses, is growing and thereby increasing its demands for 'forest floor' jobs, as well as diversifying and requiring more varied skills. At the same time, in common with other land-based industries, forestry has an ageing workforce and is experiencing challenges in attracting and retaining young people²¹.

To meet future demands we need to address the skills development requirements of the existing workforce, as well as attract a more diverse range of talented people to work in the sector, and ensure that appropriate qualifications and training opportunities are available.

» Natural assets, environmental quality and biodiversity

The Scottish Government is committed to protecting, enhancing and valuing Scotland's environment¹ and increasing stocks of natural capital. Scotland's forests and woodlands can help to support delivery of our biodiversity strategy²⁸ as well as the Scottish Soil Framework²⁹ and our approach to River Basin Management Planning³⁰.

All Scotland's forests, woodlands and associated open ground habitats provide some biodiversity value. However, suitably managed native, and in particular ancient and semi-natural woodlands, including appropriately restored plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), will contribute the most. The area of Scotland's native forest is expanding and 46% of native forest area is in satisfactory condition for biodiversity. In March 2017, 68.1% of native woodland features in protected areas were in good condition³¹.

There are also opportunities to manage Scotland's forests and woodlands to enhance the environmental benefits they provide, including helping to manage water quantities in times of flood or water scarcity, protecting and improving water quality, helping to reduce soil erosion and improve slope stability.

Many of Scotland's existing forests and woodlands were planted before the formal concept of sustainable forest management was adopted, around 20 years ago. We are therefore still dealing with the impacts of some forestry practices carried out prior to this. These practices included the siting and design of forests and woodlands that did not reflect sensitive landscapes, take into account priority habitats and areas of deep peat, or appropriately consider other land-use objectives. These impacts are now being addressed when the forests and woodlands are harvested, so that their redesign and replanting meet the requirements of the UKFS.

» Forests and woodlands, maintained in good condition, will contribute the greatest biodiversity value.

» Sustaining thriving rural communities

» Scotland's forests and woodlands could help to create and sustain thriving rural communities by providing quality jobs and attractive environments.

Rural areas in Scotland are facing problems of depopulation³². Scotland's forests and woodlands can contribute to creating and sustaining thriving rural communities by providing quality jobs and attractive environments, and by supporting the provision of affordable rural housing.

Greater involvement of communities in decisions about forests and woodlands, as well as in direct management and ownership, also helps to increase communities' control and influence over their local environments, leading to greater empowerment. For example, Scotland has around 200 community groups that are involved in owning or managing forests and woodlands¹⁵, including nearly 7000 ha which has been transferred from the National Forest Estate.

Tourism is a significant economic sector across rural Scotland and around a fifth of the economic value generated by Scotland's forests and woodlands is derived from tourism (e.g. mountain biking and wildlife tourism). Enabling more local businesses and woodland owners and managers to benefit from this expanding market will help provide them with additional income streams and support local economies.

There is, however, a potential challenge, which is that as the economic contribution of Scotland's woodlands and forests grows, the risk of possible negative effects on local communities and their environments also increases. For example, greater visitor traffic and timber transportation could potentially impact on communities, particularly if the rural transport network is not adapted to accommodate these changes in use.

» Landscape quality and the historic environment

Scotland's forests and woodlands are recognised internationally for their contribution to Scotland's scenic beauty, and many of this country's highly regarded natural and cultural landscapes are a key reason why people visit and explore Scotland. They are also the location for a range of important historic monuments and features.

In the coming years we need to ensure that the stewardship and steady expansion of forests and woodlands continues to positively contribute to the quality of Scotland's landscapes, and that these practices protect and conserve important historic monuments and features.

» Health and well-being

People's well-being is a core element of the Scottish Government's Purpose and we are committed to ensuring that the people of Scotland are healthy, active and able to contribute to society¹. Forests and woodlands can help to achieve these ambitions by providing spaces for people to exercise, relax, play and learn.

Numerous studies have identified a positive relationship between greenspace (particularly greenspace that includes trees) and population health³³. Outdoor recreation can make an important contribution to helping improve the nation's health and enabling people to enjoy Scotland's environment. Forest and woodland managers can facilitate this by designing new forests and managing existing woodlands to complement local access networks or by creating visitor attractions within their forests and woodlands.

However, while we know that forests and woodlands can contribute to improved physical health, the evidence is particularly strong in terms of the restorative potential of forests and woodlands for people's mental well-being and quality of life¹²: not just by access and use, but also through their aesthetic contribution to the places where people live and the landscapes they enjoy³⁴.

Evidence also shows that for children who are given the opportunity to experience outdoor learning and play, often there are associated improvements in their physical, social and emotional development, as well as in their disposition to learning and their attainment levels³⁵.

» Urban forestry

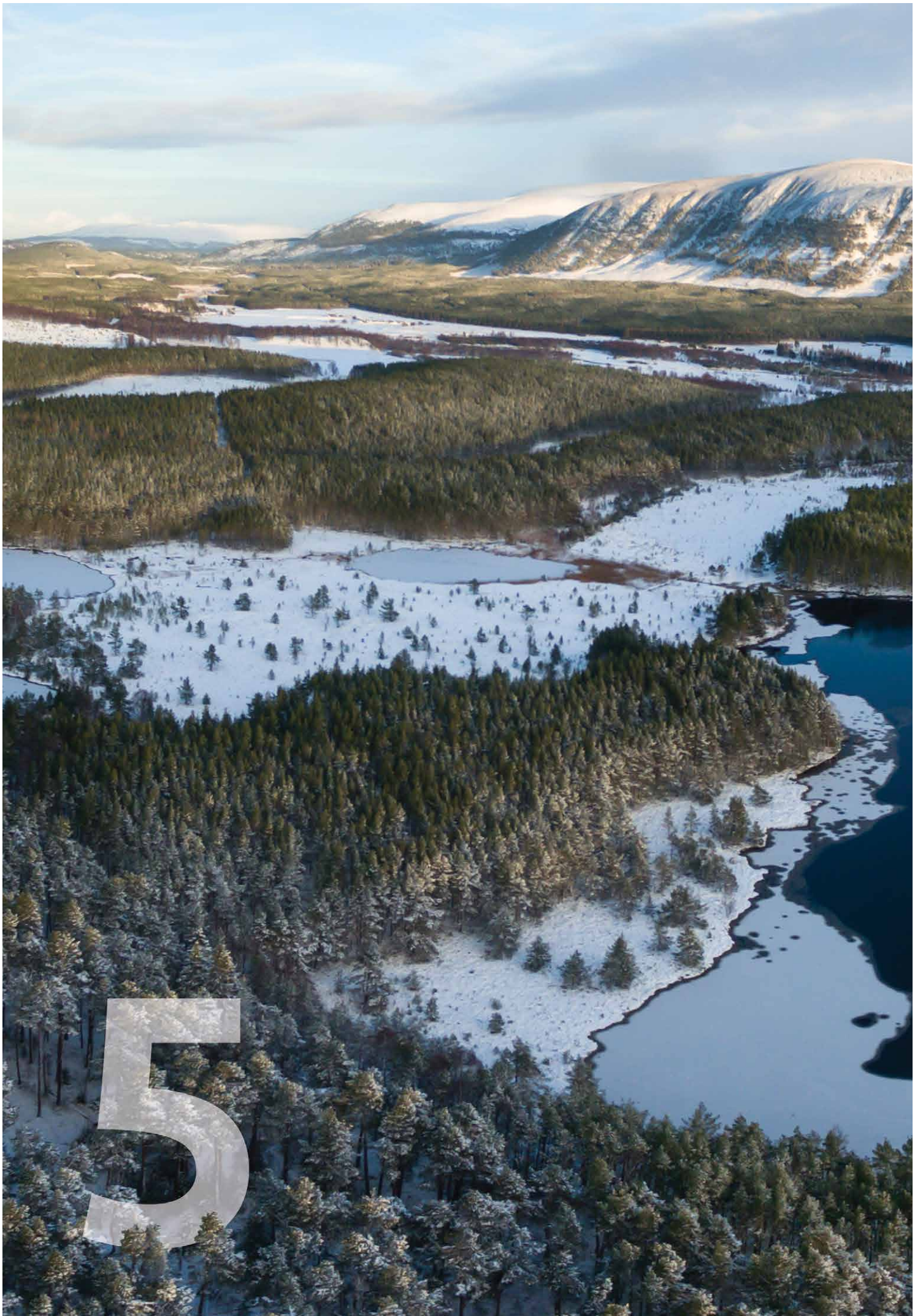
» We need to recognise the important role that urban forests and woodlands can play and the range of benefits that they can provide to urban populations.

Given that over two-thirds of the Scottish population live in urban settlements, to deliver our ambition to provide ‘...opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish...’¹, we need to recognise the important role that urban forests and woodlands can play and the range of benefits that they can provide to urban populations.

Urban forestry (Box 4) represents an opportunity to benefit a significant proportion of the Scottish population, providing accessible spaces for active travel, exercise and other forms of recreation, promoting physical and mental health and well-being, improving social inclusion and helping to reduce health inequalities¹⁵.

The National Planning Framework 3³⁶ and the Central Scotland Green Network³⁷ demonstrate how well-managed urban forestry can also make an important contribution to improving the physical quality of urban environments and to help mitigate the impacts of increasing urban development, for example, by improving air quality and reducing rainfall run-off intensity and flooding. It can also help to economically regenerate degraded urban landscapes, including vacant, derelict and contaminated sites.

In 2018, the Scottish Ministers signed a pledge, alongside other main political parties, that acknowledges the important role that urban woodlands, forests and trees play in Scotland’s towns and cities. It also recognises the need for continued partnership working among communities, public bodies, the private sector and individuals to sustain these benefits.



Priorities for action

Recognising the likely strategic drivers of change in forestry in Scotland, as well as our existing forestry commitments (Box 1), we have identified six priority areas for action over the next 10 years. These priority areas will form the framework for co-ordination of Government action and partnership working.

The priorities for action cover all types of forests and woodlands at local, regional and national scales. Given that the principles of multipurpose and integrated sustainable forest management are at the heart of this Strategy, each priority area takes account of more than one strategic driver and helps to deliver more than one objective.

For each priority area we have explained why it is important and described the types of activity that will be undertaken.

PRIORITIES

» Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed

» Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives

» Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets

» Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands

» Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands

» Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands

» Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed

As a cornerstone of activity under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act (2018), we will maintain and enhance Scotland's forest and woodland resources for the benefit of current and future generations. We will ensure that Scotland acts as a good 'global citizen' by upholding the international principles of sustainable forest management, ensuring harvested sites are replanted appropriately; preventing inappropriate woodland losses, particularly of ancient woodland; mitigating the risk of possible negative impacts from forestry activity; and protecting the credentials of Scottish timber as a sustainable product.

We will achieve this by:

- » Maintaining and promoting the UKFS as the benchmark of good forestry practice, and assessment of the quality of forest and woodland expansion proposals and forest management plans.
- » Further developing our shared understanding of the application of sustainable forest management principles in a Scottish context.

» **Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives**

We will ensure that, across Scotland, more new forests and woodlands are established. In doing so, we will help to: reduce Scotland's GHG emissions; drive sustainable, inclusive economic growth in the forestry and other land-use sectors; help sustain wood fibre availability; enhance Scotland's biodiversity; and increase the positive contribution that urban forests and woodlands make in Scotland's towns and cities.

We will achieve this by:

- » Supporting the creation of a range of types and scales of new forests and woodlands using native and other tree species for a range of purposes, including production of timber.
- » Ensuring an integrated approach to land-use policy that seeks to maximise the synergies and reduce the potential conflicts between different land uses.
- » Improving our understanding of appropriate forest establishment and maintenance techniques in Scottish conditions.
- » Encouraging an increase in tree canopy cover in urban areas.

» Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets

We will support sustainable and inclusive economic growth by encouraging the development and expansion of markets (including wood fibre products and forest-based recreation and tourism), and promoting efficiency, safety and productivity improvements throughout the wood fibre supply chain. In doing so, we will support safe and quality employment opportunities, to support forestry-related businesses in Scotland, particularly in rural areas.

We will achieve this by:

- » Supporting the ambitions of the Forest and Timber Technologies sector, as set out in their strategy, *Roots for Further Growth*²¹.
- » Encouraging and supporting innovation, research and development, and the adoption of new technologies and practices throughout the wood fibre supply chain.
- » Ensuring wood fibre availability from Scotland's forests and woodlands is predictable and increases over time.
- » Supporting businesses of different types and scales to develop and grow markets for value-added wood products and forest tourism and recreation opportunities.
- » Attracting new and more diverse talent to the forestry sector and improving the capacity, capabilities and safety of the existing workforce.
- » Supporting efforts to enable the sustainable transport of timber and mitigate risks of potential negative impacts.

» Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands

We must safeguard the ability of Scotland's forests and woodlands to provide a wide range of benefits to current and future generations. Given the degree of uncertainty about future environmental, ecological, economic and social conditions, relative to the lifespan of our trees, our approach will be to support and enable improvements to the adaptability and resilience of Scotland's forests and woodlands.

We will achieve this by:

- » Improving the understanding of the threats to Scotland's forests and woodlands and potential mitigating actions, through education, research, surveillance and the development of new technologies.
- » Managing for, and mitigating against, the threats posed by tree pests and diseases through biosecurity measures and contingency planning.
- » Supporting forest design and silvicultural actions which increase the capacity of forests and woodlands to adapt to, and thrive in, a changing climate.
- » Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, in particular by using the recruitment of natural regeneration and improving mitigation of the risks posed by invasive non-native species, deer and other herbivores.

» Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands

We will increase the environmental benefits derived from Scotland's forest and woodland resource, in particular focusing on protecting and enhancing associated biodiversity. To do this we will promote design and management practices which further these ambitions and help deliver greater environmental benefits.

We will achieve this by:

- » Supporting and enabling design and management of forests and woodlands to increase their positive impacts on air, water, soils, biodiversity and landscapes.
- » Safeguarding priority habitats and species.
- » Identifying and managing the cultural and historic value associated with our forests and woodlands.
- » Supporting activity to improve the ecological condition and habitat quality of native forests and woodlands, including PAWS.
- » Supporting the management of forests and woodlands to provide natural flood management and shelter for livestock.

» Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands

We will ensure that more people benefit directly or indirectly from Scotland's forests and woodlands, through improvements to health, well-being, quality of life and life chances, or economic returns. To do this we will focus on: supporting more people to use their local forests and woodlands for recreation, play and education; encouraging more communities to participate in their management; increasing the diversity of those working in and benefiting from Scottish forests and woodlands; and achieving greater integration between forestry and other land-based businesses (in particular crofting, farming and estate management).

We will achieve this by:

- » Improving people's understanding of the practice and value of forestry and the wider benefit it provides (e.g. for livestock husbandry, flood management or health and well-being).
- » Supporting the provision of more opportunities for children to play and learn in forests and woodlands, particularly in urban areas.
- » Increasing the use of forests and woodlands to improve people's health and well-being.
- » Providing more opportunities for urban and rural communities to influence the decisions affecting their local forests and woodlands, including through increased community ownership.
- » Supporting the provision of appropriate education and skills training to encourage wider participation in forest- and woodland-related employment.
- » Encouraging a more diverse range of people to value and use forests and woodlands, particularly those close to where they live.



Delivery, monitoring and review

In this section we describe the tools we will use to deliver our priorities, objectives and vision. This will require action on many fronts across the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. It is therefore vital that the Scottish Government continues to work closely with our many partners.

There is a long history of government intervention in forestry, and building on this experience we have identified the following delivery policies that could be used to support the delivery of this Strategy.

DELIVERY POLICIES

Effective and proportionate incentives and regulation

The forestry sector receives direct financial incentive from the Scottish Government to plant new forests and woodland. The sector has shown itself to be responsive to this type of incentive, with long-term evidence showing clear responses in the sector to changes in the direct support regime, particularly for woodland creation. The main financial incentive for the sustainable creation and management of forests and woodlands is currently available under the Scotland Rural Development Programme Forestry Grant Scheme 2014–20. Future incentives will be determined in the context of wider support for land use following the UK's exit from the EU.

Other financial incentives currently provided from the Scottish Government budget are also available to support delivery, for example, the Strategic Timber Transport Fund. These incentives are likely to continue to play an important role in the delivery of this Strategy.

There are also a number of favourable fiscal arrangements for forestry, the control of which is reserved to the UK Government*.

Following the commencement of the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018, felling and restocking will be regulated by Scottish Forestry (Box 5). Scottish Forestry will also regulate forest and woodland expansion proposals and forest management plans in accordance with the UKFS. Other relevant regulations include Environmental Impact Assessment³⁸, Health and Safety³⁹, and the Water Framework Directive⁴⁰.

» **BOX 5 – SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FORESTRY AGENCIES**

Two new forestry agencies will be established within Scottish Government by April 2019:

Scottish Forestry

Regulatory, policy, support and grant-giving functions will transfer from Forestry Commission Scotland.

Forestry and Land Scotland

Management of the Scottish Ministers' National Forest Estate will transfer from Forest Enterprise Scotland, an agency of the Forestry Commissioners.

Partnership working

Critical to the successful delivery of this Strategy is the continued work Scottish Government will undertake with a range of private, public and third sector partners. Examples of current partnerships include the Scottish Forest & Timber Technologies Industry Leadership Group, the Central Scotland Green Network Trust, and the Forest Industry Safety Accord. Our approach

* Income from timber sales in the UK is free of income and corporation tax and growing timber is exempt from capital gains tax. After two years of ownership, commercial woodlands qualify for 100% business property relief from inheritance tax.

to collaboration goes beyond our own borders and includes joint working with the UK Government and other UK devolved administrations on a number of areas of common interest that require co-operation such as plant health. Scotland will lead on the co-ordination of a number of these areas, including the UKFS, Woodland Carbon Code and forest economics advice.

There are other funding partners that will support delivery, including non-governmental funders such as the Lotteries, Trusts and Foundations, which are vitally important through their support of a vast range of forestry-related initiatives and projects.

A key approach to progressing our ambition for better integration of land-use objectives has been our encouragement of, and support for greater collaboration between local landowners, and we will continue to provide this support. This joined-up approach will also be supported in the implementation of the existing regulatory and policy framework covering trees, woodlands and forests requiring co-operation among a wide range of partners (Annex B).

Management of forests and land by Scottish Ministers

The forested and non-forested land owned by Scottish Ministers and managed under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 (FLM(S)A 2018) is Scotland's largest forest and land resource, and will remain as a national asset. The principles for its management are outlined in Box 6. Scottish Ministers will be a leader in sustainable forest management and sustainable development through their stewardship of these assets, harnessing innovation and working in partnership with others.

Following its establishment, Forestry and Land Scotland will set out more detailed plans for the sustainable management and stewardship of these assets in its Corporate Plan.

Wider public sector action

The delivery of this Strategy will require action across Scottish Government, its agencies and by other public authorities, through creating and managing forest and woodland assets, the promotion of sustainable forest management, and by direct and indirect support for sustainable forest management objectives. In particular, the activities of the two forestry agencies – Scottish Forestry and Forestry and Land Scotland – will be aligned and focused on the implementation and delivery of this Strategy.

» **BOX 6 – MANAGING LAND UNDER THE FORESTRY AND LAND MANAGEMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2018**

Scottish Ministers have a duty to sustainably manage forests and land assets they own and manage under the FLM(S)A 2018. They are committed to using these assets to deliver the Scottish Government's international commitments and National Performance Framework objectives¹. These assets will also be managed to contribute to the delivery of the priorities outlined in this Strategy. These holdings are comprised of both land that is forested and land that is not. The Act sets out the principles as to how these different categories of land are to be managed:

» **Forested land**

Managed to promote sustainable forest management.

» **Non-forested land**

Managed in order to further the achievement of sustainable development. The UN defines this as: '...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.¹⁷

ACQUISITION AND DISPOSALS

Scottish Ministers have the ability to acquire and dispose of land to support the delivery of these principles, and the objectives and priorities of this Strategy. Any funds received as a result of disposing of land will be used solely for the purpose of carrying out Scottish Ministers' functions under the FLM(S)A 2018.

FORESTRY AND LAND SCOTLAND CORPORATE PLAN

Once established, Forestry and Land Scotland will publish a Corporate Plan that will provide details of how these management principles will be delivered on behalf of Scottish Ministers, outline specific actions for supporting the delivery of this Strategy, and also describe how these assets will be used to support wider Scottish Government priorities, such as growing a sustainable and inclusive rural economy.

Scotland's planning authorities are also critical in delivering this Strategy through their role in the planning system and the implementation of the supportive framework for trees, forests and woodlands, including the development of local Forestry and Woodland Strategies (Annex B).

Integrated policy-making

This Strategy complements and supports the delivery of existing Scottish Government policies such as the Land Use Strategy², the Economic Strategy⁴¹ and Economic Action Plan⁴², Biodiversity Strategy²⁸, Climate Change Adaptation Programme⁴³ and the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement⁴⁴ (Annex A).

In the development of future relevant policies, the Scottish Government will identify opportunities for supportive actions to aid the delivery of Scottish Ministers' forestry ambitions, and also to identify where forestry can contribute to the aims and objectives of other policies.

Monitoring, research and advice

The Scottish Government will work with the UK Government and other devolved administrations, as well as with the forestry sector, to ensure that appropriate surveillance and monitoring of Scotland's forests and woodlands continues. This will inform decision-making on the expansion, protection, use and management of the resource. This support also includes working closely with the internationally recognised expertise we have in Scotland on forest and land use-related research to inform future policy and practice, such as the University of Edinburgh, Forest Research, the James Hutton Institute and the University of the Highlands and Islands.

We will continue to invest in forest research and science, collaborating with the UK Government and other UK devolved administrations to further knowledge and understanding in areas such as tree pests and diseases, tree breeding, wood properties and forest resilience.

We also recognise the importance of supporting the provision of relevant technical advice (e.g. the role of woodland in natural flood management), information (e.g. inventory and forecasting data) and guidance (e.g. guidance produced under the Forestry & Water Scotland initiative), and will ensure where necessary that it is co-ordinated with other information provided to landowners and managers.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The Scottish Government will support the implementation of this Strategy. Implementation will need to be co-ordinated with other Scottish Government plans and strategies and incorporated into public bodies' operational plans, such as the corporate plans of Scottish Forestry and Forestry and Land Scotland. Scottish Forestry will lead on the co-ordination of the delivery, monitoring and reporting.

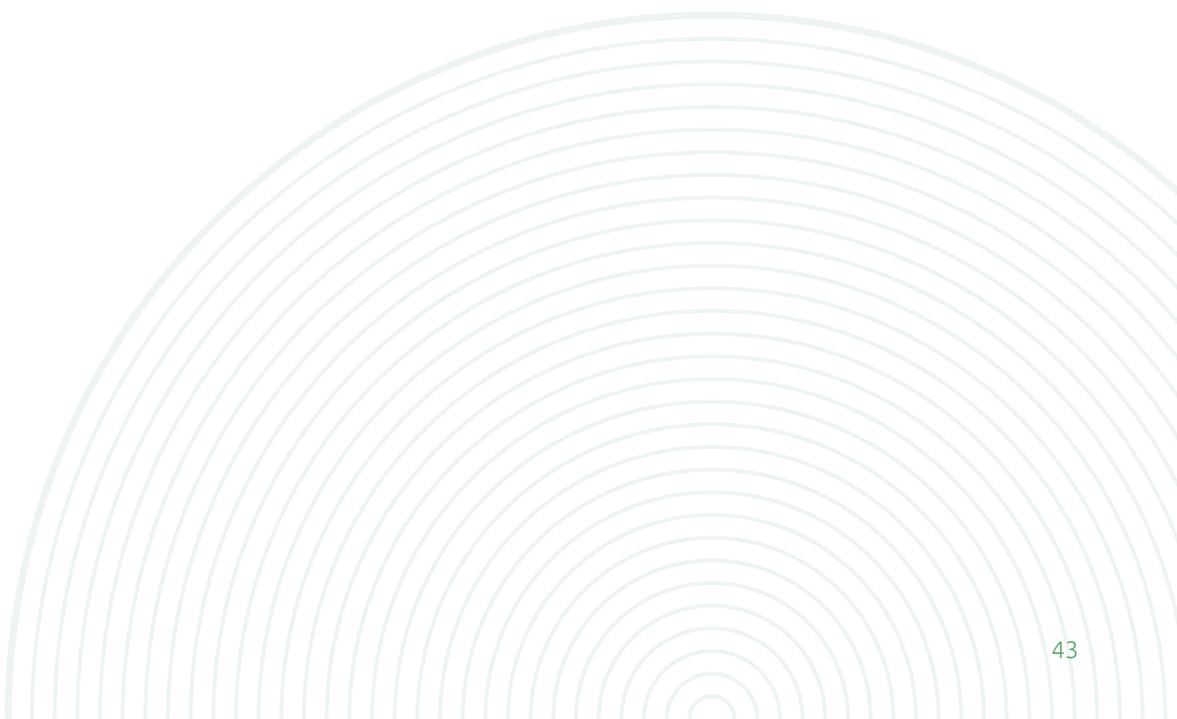
Within 12 months of laying this Strategy before the Scottish Parliament the Scottish Government will publish a more detailed implementation, monitoring and reporting framework. This framework will include:

- » Key delivery milestones.
- » A set of indicators to enable us to monitor the delivery of the Strategy's objectives.
- » A reporting schedule that includes the publication dates of the statutorily required three-yearly progress reports.

We will also establish a national stakeholder group to advise on, and support the implementation of the Forestry Strategy.

REVIEWING THE STRATEGY

Scottish Ministers are required to keep this Strategy under review, and if they have not revised it within the period of nine years of its publication, they must then do so. An update on reviewing the Strategy will be included in the planned reporting process (see above).



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Annexes

Annex A:

Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 – sections on forestry strategy

3 Duty to prepare a Forestry Strategy

- (1) The Scottish Ministers must prepare a Forestry Strategy.
- (2) The Forestry Strategy—
 - (a) must set out a vision for forestry in Scotland,
 - (b) must set out the Scottish Ministers' objectives, priorities and policies with respect to the promotion of sustainable forest management, and
 - (c) may set out other matters with respect to the promotion of sustainable forest management.
- (3) The Forestry Strategy must include the Scottish Ministers' objectives, priorities and policies with respect to—
 - (a) the creation of woodland,
 - (b) the economic development of forestry,
 - (c) targets for the planting of trees,
 - (d) the conservation and enhancement of the environment by means of sustainable forest management,
 - (e) the realisation of the social benefits of forestry,
 - (f) the acquisition and disposal of land under sections 15 to 17,
 - (g) the production and supply of timber and other forest products.
- (4) The Scottish Ministers—
 - (a) must keep the forestry strategy under review, and
 - (b) may, if they consider it appropriate to do so, revise the strategy.
- (5) If the Scottish Ministers have not revised the forestry strategy under subsection (4)(b) within the period of 9 years beginning with the day on which the strategy was last published, they must revise the strategy.

4 Preparation and revision of the Forestry Strategy

- (1) In preparing or revising the Forestry Strategy, the Scottish Ministers must—
 - (a) publish a draft of the strategy and consult with such bodies as they consider appropriate and also with the general public,
 - (b) have regard to—

- (i) the land use strategy (prepared under section 57 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009), and
 - (ii) the land rights and responsibilities statement (prepared under section 1 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016),
 - (iii) Article 2 of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,
 - (iv) the code of practice on deer management (drawn up under section 5A of the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996),
 - (v) the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (prepared under section 2 of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004).
- (2) The forestry strategy must be prepared and revised with a view to achieving consistency, so far as practicable, between the objectives, priorities and policies set out in the strategy and the Scottish Ministers' other functions.

5 Publication of the Forestry Strategy

- (1) The Scottish Ministers must publish the Forestry Strategy and each revision of it.
- (2) The Scottish Ministers must lay a copy of the Forestry Strategy and each revision of it before the Scottish Parliament.
- (3) When complying with subsection (1), the Scottish Ministers must also publish a report setting out—
 - (a) the consultation process undertaken in order to comply with section 4(1)(a), and
 - (b) the ways in which views expressed during that process have been taken account of in preparing or revising the Forestry Strategy.
- (4) The Scottish Ministers must lay a copy of a report under subsection (3) before the Scottish Parliament.

6 Duty to have regard to the Forestry Strategy

The Scottish Ministers must have regard to the Forestry Strategy when –

- (a) complying with their duty to promote sustainable forest management,
- (b) exercising any of their tree health and silvicultural material testing functions under the Plant Varieties and Seeds Act 1964 and the Plant Health Act 1967 (see Chapter 2),
- (c) managing forested land in accordance with section 11,
- (d) acquiring land under section 18(1) or 19(1),
- (e) disposing of forested land under section 20(1),
- (f) exercising any of the following functions for the purposes of or in connection with the carrying out of a function mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (e) –
 - (i) section 69 (information, research and education etc.)
 - (ii) section 70 (power to form companies etc.),
 - (iii) section 71 (financial assistance),
 - (iv) section 72 (charging).

Annex B:

The regulatory and planning policy framework covering trees, woodlands and forests

Scottish Planning Policy and its associated regulatory framework supports the delivery of this Strategy and the provision for the protection, planting and enhancement of trees, woodlands and forests with high nature conservation or landscape value, requiring planning authorities to take particular account of the following when considering the future of trees, woodlands and forests locally:

- » Section 159 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended, places a duty on planning authorities to ensure that, whenever appropriate, planning permissions make adequate provision for the preservation or planting of trees.
- » The third National Planning Framework (NPF3) highlights trees, woodlands and forests as economic resources as well as environmental assets.
- » In addition, NPF3 reiterates the aim for expansion of woodland over the next 10 years to support emissions reduction targets and wider land-use objectives.
- » Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) outlines that protection from the adverse impacts of development should be afforded to trees, woodlands and forests (including ancient semi-natural woodland, hedgerows and individual trees) with high nature conservation or landscape value. It also sets out the need for plans to include measures to enhance their condition and resilience to climate change.
- » Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be made to protect individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands considered important for amenity or because of their cultural or historic interest. A TPO is made by the

Planning Authority, under Section 160 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended, and within the procedures set out in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010.

- » SPP also outlines the presumption in favour of protecting woodland and that removal should only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits. The criteria for determining the acceptability of woodland removal and further information on the implementation of the policy are explained in the Control of Woodland Removal Policy*.
- » SPP promotes the use of heat mapping to identify the potential for co-locating developments with a high heat demand with sources of heat supply. It includes harvestable woodlands and sawmills producing biomass as examples of heat supply sources.
- » SPP suggests that planning authorities should consider the preparation of local forestry and woodland strategies as supplementary guidance to inform the development and expansion of forests and woodland in their area, pointing to Scottish Government advice set out in The Right Tree in the Right Place†.

* [The Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal](#) (2009).
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† [The right tree in the right place. Planning for forestry & woodlands](#) (2010).
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