

**National Report to the Fourth Session of the
United Nations Forum on Forests**

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

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II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action

General

The UK is committed to sustainable forest management and we recognise the important contribution that international discussions can make to the development of both policy and practice. Although our forests cover only about 12% of the land, we aim to share our experience and make a practical contribution. Forestry is a devolved matter in the UK and forest policy is developed and implemented independently by the countries which make up the UK (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.) Following the Forest Devolution Review, a committee involving Ministers from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was established to discuss international issues and any cross-cutting issues where collaboration would be advantageous.

The UK Government's involvement in international forestry developments is led by the Forestry Commission (FC) and the Department for International Development (DFID) and is co-ordinated through the International Forestry Group. This group comprises representatives from the FC, DFID, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Cabinet Office, Treasury, the Prime Minister's Office, the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Our international involvement has three aims:

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

International discussions on forests and forestry, and their conclusions, provide a framework for national action. UK forestry has gained greatly from the international processes in which we have taken part although, in common with other countries around the world, we choose national priorities to reflect national circumstances. In this context, it has been a valuable lesson for us that the issues discussed in the international and regional fora often parallel important domestic concerns. For this reason, the FC is committed to continuing participation in international discussions as the best means to achieve a balance between international commitments and developments in policy and practice in Britain. At the UK level we are helped by our colleagues in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Forestry policy in the UK is the responsibility of devolved administrations. The key programmes and actions for delivering sustainable forest management are set down in individual country strategies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Among the individual key programmes and priorities for action, the Strategies have a number of common themes including:

- effective exchange of information,
- improving the environment,
- promoting wood as a renewable resource,
- recreation and tourism, and
- empowering communities.

The Strategies will help to ensure that we continue to honour our commitments under international agreements related to forests and, together with the UK Forestry Standard, they constitute the UK's National Forest Programme, which was formally launched in February 2003.

Wide-ranging consultation exercises were carried out in preparing each of the Strategies so that they reflect the views of the wider community and gain public support for well-managed forests and woodland. Action to implement the Strategies is determined by each country's own priorities and programmes. These include direct action through regulation and the targeting of incentives, as well as the management of the public forest estate. Successful delivery of the Strategies will also depend on the development of effective partnerships to bring different skills and resources to the various initiatives.

The FC in England, Scotland and Wales have established Woodland/Forestry Forums to help underpin the implementation of the Strategies. These Forums are made up of a wide range of interested stakeholders responsible for implementation from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Although each Forum has different modes of working, all are concerned with helping to devise and agree outcomes by which implementation can be judged. The Forums have been chaired by the relevant Forestry Minister, which has helped to give them a powerful mandate in Government.

The UK Forest Partnership for Action, launched in October 2002, brings together government, the forest industry and environmental groups to promote sustainable development in the forest sector, both in the UK and internationally. Partners are continuing to work together, meeting three or four times a year, and focussing on four priority issues: forest certification, forest restoration and protection, illegal logging and timber procurement. A seminar on responsible timber purchasing took place in December 2003, and events on sustainable construction and forest restoration are planned from 2004.

Further information is available:

- UK National reports prepared for UNFF2 and UNFF3 (www.un.org/esa)
- www.forestry.gov.uk
- www.ukforestpartnership.org.uk

International Development Assistance

Forests play a major role in the livelihoods of poor people and the economies of many poor countries. Ensuring that forests are managed and developed in ways that support sustainable development and poverty eradication has been a key focus of the UK's international development programme for many years.

Over time, the nature of this support has changed, reflecting an improved understanding of the challenges involved in ensuring that forests play a role in poverty reduction. Primary attention is now given to addressing the policy, institutional, legal and governance issues that dictate how the sector is managed in many countries.

In undertaking this work the UK, primarily through the Department for International Development, works closely with a number of developing countries around the world and in partnership with other development agencies, both bilateral and multilateral.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4:

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF FORESTS

Cultural Heritage

The UK has a rich cultural heritage and we have undertaken research into the impacts of tree growth and forest operations on sites of archaeological importance so that long-term conservation can be properly managed. This work will help devise more-specific guidance on site management and advice on the potential implications of woodland establishment for archaeological remains. Particular attention has been paid to energy forestry crops and to understanding the links between woodland history and ecology.

The FC is committed to increasing the resources it applies to understanding the benefits that forests bring to society, and has undertaken work in the area of social forestry and heritage, recognising the need to take into account attitudes, perceptions and aspirations of stakeholders in forest policy and practice. Such work, combined with research and knowledge of the economic and environmental contributions of forestry, will help provide a better understanding of how to achieve sustainable forest management. Other examples of research and studies that have taken place include:

- Research into the place of forestry in contemporary culture, revealing that people in towns and cities see trees and forest as icons for the natural world and while people may not think about trees and forests every day, they are aware of the quality they add to life and of the continuity their long lifespans bring to the world;
- Research into the delivery of sustainable forest management through land-use planning and the development of a prototype decision framework for public involvement in forest design planning;
- Research into the use of the internet for gathering the views of local communities to help design more effective ways to collect the views of stakeholders;
- Study of the values that society places on forests;
- Research on the contribution of forests to the quality of life;
- Studies on access and social exclusion in the Welsh Valleys and Central Scotland;
- Study of how forestry can make a stronger contribution to the delivery of the Government's policies for public health and well-being.

At the 4th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in Vienna in April 2003, the UK signed the Vienna Declaration and five Resolutions, including Resolution V3 - *Preserving and Enhancing the Social and Cultural Dimensions of Sustainable Forest Management in Europe*. These commitments will now be implemented at regional, sub-regional, national and local level.

Intellectual Property Rights

We follow Government guidelines on Intellectual Property Rights, set out at www.hmsso.gov.uk

Forest Genetic Resources

A new EC Directive on the marketing of forest reproductive material came into force in January 2003, aiming to ensure that forest reproductive material is clearly labelled and identified, genetically and phenotypically adapted to the site, and of high quality. The FC and the Forest Research Agency (FRA) have worked to implement the new regulations, including consultation with other Government departments, the forestry industry and other interests.

They have also worked with EUFORGEN, for example, attending the first EUFORGEN meeting on Social Broadleaves in Bordeaux in 1997, and with the International Plant Genetic Resource Institute in Rome.

Strengthening the Role of Women

The UK Government commissioned a senior human resources adviser to examine the recruitment, selection and advancement of women professional foresters. The findings indicated that young women were not being attracted into further education in forestry, largely because of competition from alternative career opportunities. This reflected trends in other traditional and industrial sectors. Women foresters tended to concentrate on environmental and public sector organisations, citing lifestyle needs as an important factor in career choice. Women foresters in mid career reported past examples of gender-based discrimination, although younger women did not report any direct discrimination.

The Government is currently implementing a number of the recommendations from the study and the FC has since approached the providers of further education in forestry to discuss a strategy for promoting forestry to young women. Similarly, a co-ordinated approach to recruitment (for both men and women) has been initiated between the FC, other employers, trade bodies and universities. There has been significant interest from within the industry and from across the world since the report was published and the key findings have been presented to a number of international forestry meetings, including a Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee seminar on “Women in Forestry” which took place in April 2001 in Lisbon. The UK plans to support the forthcoming FAO/ECE/ILO Team of Specialists on “Gender in Forestry”, and has nominated a consultant to participate in the team.

The FC has adopted explicit policies to encourage diversity and inclusion among its staff, and has achieved *Investors in People* status. This national standard provides a framework for improving business performance and competitiveness, through a planned approach to setting and communicating business objectives and developing people to meet these objectives. For full details, see www.iipuk.co.uk

Promoting public participation

The promotion of public participation in the UK is a cross-cutting policy area that applies to many parts of public policy, linking to rural development and to policies on social inclusion, rural governance, environmental justice and community development. It also applies to broader aspects such as devolution, regional and local approaches to policy development and the development of participatory democratic processes. Since 1992 the UK has developed a programme of research into the governance of forestry, training for the forestry sector on engaging with communities, formal procedures for engaging local communities in forest planning and design and has published policies for working with local people. The research programme has examined the way in which forestry institutions relate to local people. A current theme is to develop ways in which socially valuable outcomes from forest management can be identified, monitored and evaluated.

The FC’s Forestry Training Services have introduced a training course for all staff who have a role in involving, consulting or informing communities. The course covers stakeholder analysis, levels of engagement, and practical techniques and tools available for engaging communities in forestry.

In December 2000, the FC held a seminar on social forestry to discuss key issues in relation to people and woodlands, such as social sustainability, stakeholder analysis and quality of life. The outputs emphasised the importance of the social dimension of forestry, the need to involve the public in decision-making and to better understand the core values of stakeholders, the need for strong partnerships and to enthuse the younger generation to woodlands, and for the FC to adopt a socially-inclusive approach.

In June 2001, a conference took place on social science research into woodlands and the natural environment, with the proceedings published in March 2002 as “Trees are Company”.

In January 2002, the FRA established a Social Research Unit to develop research projects to increase the understanding of the social aspects of sustainable forest management. Work is underway to look at:

- Culture, values and meanings of woodlands and trees;
- Monitoring and modelling approaches to forest management and sustainability; and
- Community involvement in decision-making and forest planning

Other ongoing work includes a study of the social value of woodlands in England, a project to develop qualitative assessments of public participatory processes in forestry, and a trial of a decision framework for public involvement in forest planning. This is proving useful in the development of consultation procedures for the Woodland Grant Scheme.

In England, the Northwest Development Agency and the FC have developed Newlands, a unique £23 million scheme to reclaim large areas of derelict, underused and neglected land and transform them into thriving and durable community woodlands. Newlands is about new life and new environments and aims to deliver new recreational areas, benefits for business, a boost to healthy living and a significant increase in woodland cover in the Northwest of England.

The development of the UK positions for key international forest meetings and events is based upon the existing policies that have already been the subject of some form of consultative process. These positions are developed and elaborated across Government within the International Forestry Group. Currently the Policy Working Group of the Tropical Forest Forum (TFF) is used to involve wider civil society groups interested in the ongoing international forest dialogue. The TFF is open to all UK-based governmental, non-governmental, public and private organisations, companies and individuals with an interest in the sustainable utilisation and conservation of tropical forests, and aims to strengthen the coherence and effectiveness of UK-based actions in support of the sustainable use and conservation of forests and forest lands, for the benefit of their peoples, and for the forest’s global environmental values. Further information is on www.forestforum.org.uk

The UK Government holds regular consultation meetings with civil society on illegal logging to provide updates on developments in the debate. The Government also funds a website (www.illegal-logging.info) which provides a central point of information about efforts to stem illegal forest practices and the associated trade in forest products.

The UK Government has published guidance on consultation by Departments and Agencies, with a checklist to promote good practice. A code of practice on access to government information has also been published with a register of current consultations available at www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/guidanceconsult/index.asp

A range of other consultation arrangements exist for domestic issues and policy, from those at local level through country level to the Great Britain level, for example through quinquennial reviews required by Government of the FC’s agencies - Forest Enterprise (FE) and Forest Research (FRA).

A workshop took place in February 2003 under the auspices of the TFF to consider current practices and the outcomes have been helpful to understand more clearly how stakeholders can contribute to and influence the UK’s position for the various international forestry dialogues.

Another important element of stakeholder involvement is the inclusion of representatives of non-governmental organisations on the UK delegation to major international meetings and events. Such involvement in recent years prior to, during and following the events, has provided valuable perspectives, a useful resource and links to broader interests.

A further potential for involvement is the UK Forest Partnership for Action, whose members include the forest and wood processing industries, Government departments, devolved administrations and environmental NGOs. The Partnership is the main platform for taking forward WSSD commitments on forestry, as far as the UK is concerned (www.ukforestpartnership.org.uk)

Forest Enterprise (FE), the Executive Agency managing the FC's forests, has been developing and expanding its community involvement, both in towns and in the countryside. In July 1999, it set out a blueprint for staff and local communities "*Working with Communities in Britain: how to get involved*".

All over Britain, FE is engaged in an increasing number of partnerships involving local communities and other stakeholders in a wide range of innovative projects, in addition to the more routine aspects of forest planning and operational activities.

FE's partnership with Community Forests in England was boosted by a Government award of £9 million of new investment from the Treasury's Capital Modernisation Fund to acquire land, establish mixed woodlands and develop access and environmental benefits for local people in the Red Rose, Mersey and Thames Chase Community Forests.

In Scotland, the Minister launched a strategy for involving communities in the management of the public forests in the care of the FC in Scotland, as part of the Scottish Executive's programme of land reform measures.

In Wales, the Minister launched a consultation exercise on the future management of the public forests in the care of the FC in the South Wales valleys.

In Northern Ireland, following public endorsement of the initiative, new consultation arrangements to facilitate improved public input into the management of state forests were put in place in January 2003.

The FC is undertaking a fundamental restructuring and repositioning of its forestry incentives packages. The two main drivers have been the modernising Government agenda in terms of customer service and use of information technology, as well as repositioning the incentives to bring them into line with the country Strategies. This means that grants will differ from country to country and will seek to "buy" the public benefits identified in the Strategies from the management of non-FC woodlands. In Wales, this has taken the form of mandatory Management Planning, which will bring the added benefit of streamlining certification assessment, thereby further enhancing customer service.

A practical example of forestry working in partnership to benefit urban society is the Land Regeneration Unit established by the FC to help restore landscapes in the English Midlands damaged by mining, waste tipping and heavy industry. The unit is supported by a partnership of central, regional and local Government departments and agencies, and works closely with local communities and businesses to design new landscapes that meet local aspirations, for example by providing an environmentally attractive setting for new businesses or by designing new green spaces for local recreation. It has a special mandate to improve the environment surrounding disadvantaged communities. The unit draws on the operational and land management skills of the forestry sector supported by technical and research specialists such as soil scientists, legal experts, land agents and financial advisers from within the partnership. Over a six-year period, the Unit has restored over 2,500 hectares of coal tips, mineral workings and damaged land in Central and Northwest England.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting on social data

In addition to developing sectoral criteria and indicators, the UK is also researching ways of combining qualitative and quantitative data within evaluative frameworks. Qualitative approaches include systems

for self-monitoring and self-assessment by communities, and techniques for giving a voice to young people and children.

TRADITIONAL FOREST-RELATED KNOWLEDGE

The UK does not have a strong, recent forestry culture. However, cultural landscapes and historic sites are highly valued by the public and are an economic as well as a cultural resource. The Government has published guidance on forestry in cultural and historic landscapes, supported research and publications on the social history of forestry and also commissioned research into the place of forestry in contemporary culture. Research into the value and importance to local communities of non-timber forest products is underway in Scotland, and an oral history of forestry in South Scotland, where new planting was most active in the last century, is planned for 2004.

SCIENTIFIC FOREST-RELATED KNOWLEDGE

Research is essential to inform future development of forest policy and practice, and the FC supports a wide range of programmes covering economic, environmental and social issues – examples of the last category have been given above. These research programmes will continue to be updated to provide long-term support for sustainable forestry policy and practice. The FC's Research Strategy sets out how the research programmes will be determined, linking them to departmental objectives and to the individual country forestry strategies.

Although many bodies in the UK fund or carry out forest-related research, the FC in the UK has prime responsibility in this area, providing high-quality research and development to support and enhance forestry and its role in sustainable development. Since 1997 the FC has completely reorganised its procedures for commissioning and carrying out research, and has reviewed procedures for transferring the knowledge gained from research to practitioners and the public.

These changes have been driven by the UK Government's commitment to sustainable development and, as part of this, the commitment of UK forestry authorities to sustainable forest management. In parallel, the UK Government has reviewed the performance of its science base as a major engine of innovation and provider of the evidence on which policy is based. The review culminated in the 2001 White Paper *Excellence and Opportunity*.

In forestry, the Government produced in 1998 the *UK Forestry Standard*, which sets out the UK's approach to sustainable forest management and details the underpinning evidence base in research reports and technical publications. This process has provided a framework for binding research to the delivery of sustainable forest management. The preparation of the *UK Forestry Standard* also revealed the areas where knowledge was poor or where, although researchers had knowledge, it was not available as published guidance on best practice.

The production of the *UK Forestry Standard* stimulated a reappraisal by the Forestry Commission of the types of technical publication it produced. This process started in 1998 and continues to make scientific and technical information more accessible to practitioners and the public. One major innovation has been use of the internet. This was barely used before 1997 but is now well established as a means of transmitting information on UK forestry research. The expansion of web-based information will continue.

In 1998 the FC produced its first Research Strategy. This has been expanded and elaborated in subsequent versions, with the latest published in 2001. A revision is under way for publication in 2004/05. The Research Strategy principally aims to support the delivery of sustainable forest

management and to monitor the relevance and utility of the *UK Forestry Standard*. One of the earliest strategic objectives adopted (and subsequently achieved) was to increase the amount of research devoted to the social and cultural functions of forests. In addition to identifying and addressing knowledge gaps of relevance to sustainable forest management, the Research Strategy also covers issues of importance to the UK Government's science agenda. Several such issues are parallel or common to the UNFF actions. Examples are linkage to policy, consultation, and technology transfer.

The UK Government places a high priority on forging close links between science and policy and has produced guidelines for Government Departments. See www.ost.gov.uk for more detail. The FC's Research Strategy sets out how these will be implemented. It also lays down procedures for consulting on the aims, products and outputs of forestry research. Implementation has proved difficult in some of these areas and a recent review has identified them as priorities for improvement.

The most important examples of policy development based on scientific evidence in UK forestry since 1998 have been in relation to climate change, impact on water resources and public participation in forestry management. The last of these has been described above. The impact of climate change on UK forests has been a long-standing topic of research that culminated in a major publication in 2002, *Climate Change: Impacts on UK Forests*. Future focus will be on applying the lessons of research to policies and measures for adaptation. The inter-relationships between forests and water are complex and in the UK context of an expanding forest area, have demanded a continuous programme of research to understand the impacts of afforestation and plantation management on the water environment. The research has led to a series of guidelines on best practice (the latest in 2003). Both the research and the guidelines have been major influences in shaping forestry policy.

The Forestry Research Co-ordination Committee is a non-statutory committee, with representatives from a range of organisations and Government departments. It was set up to increase benefits from forestry research in Britain by facilitating collaboration among funders, by avoiding duplication and by disseminating information on forestry and tree-related research. For more detail, see www.frcc.forestry.gov.uk

Of the many areas of UK forestry research that are directed at achieving sustainability in practice, two are worthy of note for having come to fruition through the production of decision support software for managers:

- **“ForestGALES”**: (The Geographical Analysis of the Losses and Effects of Storms in Forestry) is the result of 30 years of research into wind damage which is a major threat to economic management of forests in upland Britain. It is a computer-based model replacing earlier hazard classification systems and allowing forest managers to assess the probable timing and magnitude of wind damage to forests in Great Britain. ForestGALES draws together the knowledge derived from many years of work and was released in 2000 to provide a user-friendly decision support tool for forest managers and was the first model of its kind in the world.
- The first step towards sustainable forest management is to ensure that the tree species used are suited to site conditions. Commercial considerations dominated forestry practice in the UK in the mid/late 20th century, with forest managers tending to select from a short list of species and adjusting site conditions to ensure optimal growth. Experience in matching species to site type declined. **“Ecological Site Classification”** (ESC) is a decision support system, developed to rekindle these skills and has been designed in a similar way to forest classification systems used in other countries. It brings together site-related information in a format for forest managers to use in deciding species choice, and to assist the development of a woodland management plan.

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING, CONCEPTS, TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

The National Inventory of Woodlands and Trees, completed in 2002, provides reliable information about the size, distribution, type, general condition and treatment of our forests and woodlands. Pilot work for the next Inventory had investigated the collection of detailed information on woodland and forest condition for assessing delivery of biodiversity action plan targets.

The range of annual statistical publications has been extended, adding new publications “British Timber Statistics” and a compendium “Forestry Statistics” to the existing booklet “Forestry Facts and Figures”. These all gained National Statistics status in 2001, as a sign of quality assurance, confirmed by a quality review in 2002.

The UK puts particular priority on the issue of monitoring, assessment and reporting and has been actively involved in a number of international discussions and expert meetings on the issue. For example:

- November 2000 - International Expert Consultation meetings on criteria and indicators at FAO, Rome
- January 2002 - MAR Expert meeting on harmonising forest-related definitions
- July 2002 - International Conference on Criteria and Indicators in Guatemala
- September 2002 - Expert meeting on harmonising forest-related definitions
- March 2003 - International Expert meeting on lessons learned in Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action in Viterbo, Italy
- May 2000, May 2002 and September 2003 - FRA meetings of Team of Specialists
- November 2003 - FRA meeting of national correspondents
- December 2003 - UNFF expert group on MAR

The UK has also published a range of publications and participates in technical bodies of the EU and UN/ECE/FAO that are concerned with monitoring, assessment and reporting at the international level, for example: EU programme of level I and II (intensive monitoring) and Regulations (EEC3528/86), Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, International Co-operative Programme on Assessments and Monitoring of Forests (ICP Forests of UN-ECE), Forest Focus, Forest Resources Assessment.

The UK considers appraisal, monitoring and evaluation as key management activities leading to organisational learning and efficient and effective delivery of forest goods and services. The FC is working with others to develop evaluative frameworks to consider social, economic and environmental aspects of initiatives in the land-based sector, and also to develop ways to compare qualitative and quantitative outputs from forests. In the social sphere, the FC is working with the New Economics Foundation to develop systems of self-appraisal to give a voice in forest planning to children.

CRITERIA AND INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

The FC, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Forest Service, developed a set of UK Indicators of Sustainable Forestry, covering the economic, environmental and social aspects of forestry as well as traditional statistics on forestry land use and timber production and these were published in October 2002. These national-level indicators are linked to the UK Forestry Standard and the international criteria and indicator processes. They were developed through two rounds of consultation in 2001 and 2002.

In total, there are 40 indicators, grouped under six themes: woodland, biodiversity, condition of forest and environment, timber and other forest products, people and forests, and economic aspects. These provide information about the current state, and trends over time, of woodlands and their management, monitoring forestry's contribution to sustainable development. They will enable us to track the contribution that our forests make to our quality of life, although it must be acknowledged that some indicators still lack adequate datasets in order to track year to year, or even decade to decade changes.

The set of indicators also provides a comparable overview by giving information for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that can be supplemented by indicators linked to the special objectives and actions in each country's Forestry Strategy. The publication of the indicators was the culmination of a long consultative process to which many people contributed. This indicator set is the start of a journey, not the end, and the indicators will be refined and developed as understanding grows.

These UK indicators of sustainable forestry represent the UK's national incorporation of the pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management adopted at the third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in Lisbon in 1998. The MCPFE began work on reviewing and updating the indicators in advance of the fourth MCPFE in Vienna in 2003. The review was completed and the *Improved Pan-European Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management* were adopted in October 2002 and endorsed by Ministers in Vienna in April 2003. The UK was actively involved throughout the review.

III. Preparation of the Report

The guidance and format developed by the UNFF Secretariat in collaboration with members of the Bureau and of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests were useful. The FC was tasked to compile the report on behalf of the UK and it was certainly helpful to have a basic format to follow with some clear questions to address.

Unfortunately, although the documents were dated 8 August 2003, we did not receive them in time to start work on the report until 9 September. With a deadline of 8 November, this did not leave a great deal of time to contact experts to seek their input, consult a range of national reports to gather information and example, compile a draft report, and then consult a wide range of stakeholders.

Our first step was to write round the membership of the International Forestry Group, and a number of special advisers within the FC, setting out some context, and inviting input to the report, either generally, or on the implementation of specific proposals for action. To our letter, we attached the outline format, and drew attention to the full text of the relevant IPF/IFF proposals for action.

As we were keen to incorporate contributions from other stakeholders, and to make the process as participatory as possible, we also wrote round in the same way to a wide range of stakeholders and partners in the UK Forest Partnership for Action, to enable them to make an input on any issues they wished to see reflected in the UK's report. Ideally, it would have been preferable to allow more time and consult a wider range of stakeholders, but in the end, given the time constraint, we decided that it was best to compile the report centrally, based on readily-available information, and then to use existing consultation mechanisms.

Once the various contributions were received and incorporated, the report was tidied up and checked for consistency in terms of content and style, and then forwarded to the UNFF Secretariat in January 2004. At the same time, the report was submitted to Forestry Ministers for their information.

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