Forestry Practice Publications

INFORMATION NOTE

INTRODUCTION

In view of the changes to the structure of the Forestry Commission, it is timely for us to review the types of forestry practice publications, to clarify their purpose and to standardise their format. This should set them more precisely in the context of other Forestry Commission titles.

AN INTEGRATED STRUCTURE OF FORESTRY PRACTICE PUBLICATIONS

Common use of the new term 'Sustainable Forestry' has led to considerable effort to define its meaning. One consequence has been greater emphasis on the many benefits derived from forests. Advice for practitioners must now encompass everything from the detail of how to competently fell a tree to the broadest environmental issues. The introduction of the UK Forestry Standard provides a basis for a rational structure to our publication series.

The UK Forestry Standard relies on a suite of Guidelines to support it. In turn the Guidelines are supported by Guides, Field Books and Forestry & Arboriculture Safety Guides which explain the detail of management and operational practice. Currently the latest information on a wide range of topics is published by Forestry Commission researchers in the form of Research Information Notes (RINs), while documents taking stock on particular topics have been produced in the form of Bulletins and Handbooks. Technical Papers have been used to provide more information than could be covered by a RIN.

THE NEW STRUCTURE

◻ The UK Forestry Standard

This document brings together information from Guidelines and other sources for the practice of sustainable forestry in the UK and also provides references to those sources. It describes the criteria and indicators for UK forests collectively and for individual forests and the process for reaching a balance between the various requirements.

◻ Guidelines

This series was begun in the 1988 with the Forests and Water Guidelines. Guidelines are seen as giving practice guidance on single aspects that are crucial to sustainable forestry. In addition to Forests and Water we have published Guidelines on Landscape (3), Nature Conservation, Archaeology and Recreation. Some of these will undergo revision in the next two years. Soil Conservation Guidelines should be published soon and two more dealing with forest productivity and the interaction between people and forests are planned.

◻ Forestry Practice Guides

The purpose of these documents will be to draw together, in detail, matters relating to particular topics. Background information to aid decision making by managers will be included. They will not discuss policy issues except as background. Practices relating to the selected topics are likely to have wide-ranging effects and so the Guides will, in consequence, be referred to in more than one Guidelines document.
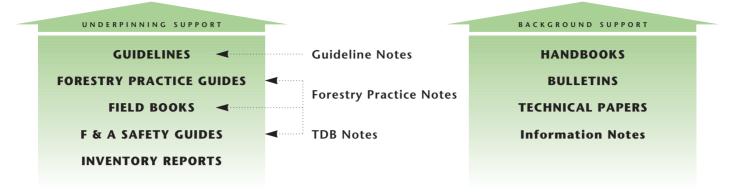
◻ Field Books

These will be task related. Their format will remain variable to accommodate a range of purposes. They will present the essential information for carrying out a task with a minimum of supporting background information. Field Books are likely to be referred to by both Guidelines and Forestry Practice Guides.

◻ Forestry & Arboriculture (F&A) Safety Guides

The format and purpose of these will be unchanged. They remain important documents to support competent operational activities in forestry and arboriculture. They have a place in providing evidence of good practice in legal disputes.

THE UK FORESTRY STANDARD

UNDERPINNING SUPPORT

BACKGROUND SUPPORT

GUIDELINES	◄	Guideline Notes		HANDBOOKS
FORESTRY PRACTICE GUIDES	◄			BULLETINS
FIELD BOOKS	◄	Forestry Practice Notes		TECHNICAL PAPERS
F & A SAFETY GUIDES	◄	TDB Notes		Information Notes
INVENTORY REPORTS				

◻ *Inventory Reports*

These will give results of surveys made to indicate the condition of British forests. The first reports concern the results of woodland inventory work for some parts of Scotland.

◻ *Technical Development Branch (TDB) Notes*

These are intended to put the very latest technical data rapidly into the hands of practitioners. For the present their format will remain unchanged.

◻ *Handbooks, Bulletins and Technical Papers*

There will be no change to the format and purpose of these documents.

- *Handbooks*
  will cover practical subjects for an audience extending beyond professional foresters, arboriculturists and environmentalists.

- *Bulletins*
  will focus on a particular topic and will provide full background information and summaries of research results together with interpretations suitable for forestry audiences.

- *Technical Papers*
  will continue to be used to provide the forest industry with information from research and other studies more detailed than that in Information Notes, but not so comprehensive as that in Bulletins.

◻ *Notes*

A new format is proposed which is suitable for free distribution through the Internet. There will be three types, of which the Information Notes and Forestry Practice Notes are seen as successors to the Research Information Notes:

- *Guideline Notes*
  will update Guidelines between revisions;

- *Forestry Practice Notes*
  will update Forestry Practice Guides & Field Books;

- *Information Notes*
  will provide information that does not have an immediate impact on Guidelines, Forestry Practice Guides or Field Books.

DISTRIBUTION

While we aim to recover as much of the production and distribution costs as possible by charging we recognise that this is often impracticable when the audience is small. We have a responsibility to ensure, not only that information is transferred to where it can be effectively used, but also that resources are not wasted by indiscriminate distribution of unwanted documents.

We believe we can go some way toward resolving this difficulty by making much of the information available in an electronic form. This would entail distribution on computer discs or through the Internet. We intend to design most publications so that as much as possible of their text can be accessed on the Internet and downloaded from it. This Information Note is available on the Forestry Commission's Internet site at http://www.forestry.gov.uk

Despite our commitment to make information available cheaply, there will still be a need to produce 'bookshelf' versions of many documents. In most cases these will be priced publications.