

Woodland Carbon Code Statistics

Data to March 2018

Release date: 19 April 2018

Coverage: United Kingdom

Geographical breakdown: Country

Issued by: IFOS-Statistics, Forest Research,
231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT

Enquiries: Jackie Watson 0300 067 5238
statistics@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Statistician: Sheila Ward 0300 067 5236

Website: www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics

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Introduction

The Woodland Carbon Code is a voluntary standard, initiated in July 2011, for woodland creation projects that make claims about the carbon they sequester (take out of the atmosphere).

All projects must be placed on the Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects. Their claims about potential carbon sequestration are validated by an independent certification body. Validated projects are then verified on a regular basis to confirm the progress of carbon sequestration. The figures presented here exclude projects that have been removed from the register.

Woodland Carbon Code Statistics are released on a quarterly basis. Figures to March 2018 are published for the first time in this release. Figures for earlier periods have not been revised from those previously published. For further details, see the Revisions section of the Annex.

The frequency of releases will change from quarterly to annual after this release. Further details are provided in the Annex.

Please refer to the Annex for a glossary of terms used in this release.

Key findings

The main findings are:

- A total of 156 projects had been validated to the Woodland Carbon Code at 31 March 2018, covering almost 5,300 hectares and projected to sequester 2.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over their lifetime¹.
- Of the validated projects, 37 projects were also verified by the end of March 2018. These projects cover almost 1,600 hectares and are projected to sequester 713 thousand tonnes of carbon dioxide over their lifetime.
- Together, all validated (including verified) projects were predicted to sequester 792 thousand tonnes of carbon dioxide in England, 1,531 thousand tonnes in Scotland, 177 thousand tonnes in Wales and 3 thousand tonnes in Northern Ireland over their lifetime.
- A total of 239 projects were registered by the end of March 2018, covering over 16,100 hectares of woodland and projected to sequester 5.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over their lifetime.

¹ Figures for carbon sequestration indicate the total projected sequestration of the projects over their lifetime of up to 100 years, and include the amount claimable by a project plus the amount allocated to a shared "buffer" in case of unanticipated losses.

Woodland Carbon Code data at March 2018

A total of 156 projects were validated at 31 March 2018 and are projected to sequester 2.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over their lifetime (Table 1). Of these projects, 37 were also verified by the end of March 2018 and are projected to sequester 713 thousand tonnes of carbon dioxide over their lifetime. Most of the validated (including verified) projects were in Scotland (74) and England (68); 13 were in Wales and 1 in Northern Ireland.

A total of 239 projects were registered under the Woodland Carbon Code by the end of March 2018, covering over 16,100 hectares of woodland and projected to sequester 5.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide over their life time of up to 100 years.

Table 1: Woodland Carbon Code projects in the UK at 31 March 2018

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	UK
Number of projects¹					
Awaiting validation	18	37	27	1	83
Validated only	50	57	11	1	119
Verified	18	17	2	0	37
Total validated	68	74	13	1	156
All projects	86	111	40	2	239
Area of woodland (hectares)					
Awaiting validation	143	10,553	165	7	10,868
Validated only	1,216	2,155	301	9	3,680
Verified	183	1,358	37	0	1,578
Total validated	1,399	3,513	338	9	5,257
All projects	1,542	14,065	503	15	16,125
Projected carbon sequestration² (thousand tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)					
Awaiting validation	60	3,148	76	1	3,285
Validated only	686	948	152	3	1,790
Verified	106	583	24	0	713
Total validated	792	1,531	177	3	2,503
All projects	853	4,679	252	4	5,788

Source: Forestry Commission.

Note:

- (1) Projects can be validated/verified individually or as part of a group. The statistics presented here show the number of projects validated or verified whether they were administered individually or as part of a group.
- (2) Figures for carbon sequestration indicate the total projected sequestration of the projects over their lifetime of up to 100 years, and include the amount claimable by a project plus the amount allocated to a shared "buffer" in case of unanticipated losses.
- (3) **Awaiting validation:** is when a project or group is undergoing assessment by a certification body.
- (4) **Validated:** is the initial evaluation of a project or group against the requirements of the Woodland Carbon Code. Upon completion a project/group will receive a 'Validation Opinion Statement'. The project/group will then be certified for a period of up to 5 years.
- (5) **Verified:** Verification is the evaluation of a project as it progresses to confirm the amount of CO₂ sequestered to date as well as that it continues to meet the requirements of the Code.

Woodland Carbon Code projects in the UK

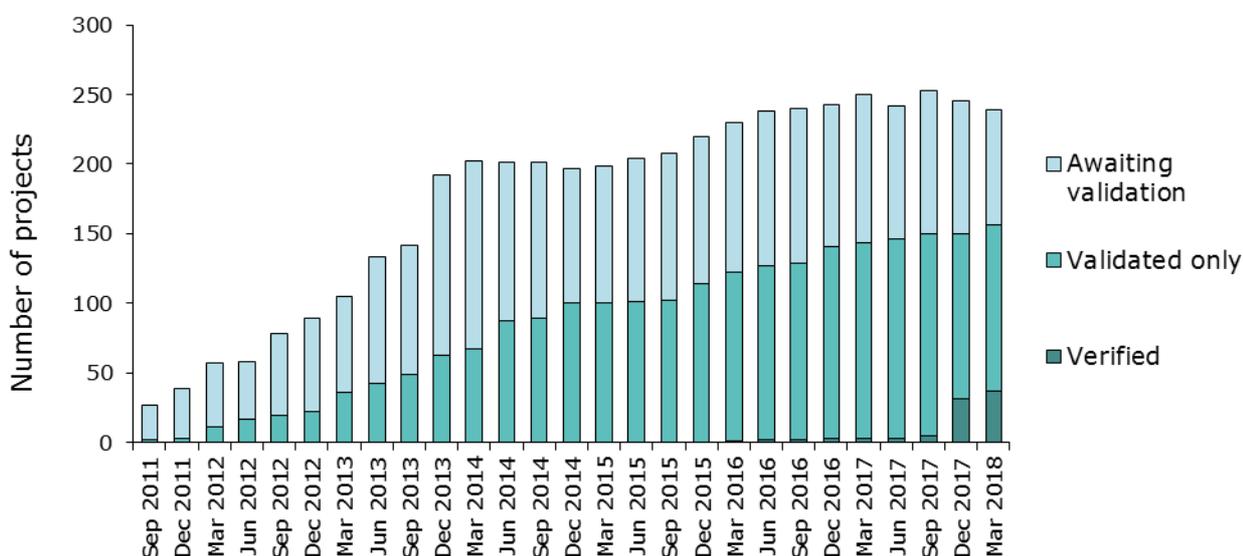
The figures presented here report net changes in projects (i.e. additions less deletions). Projects can be removed from the register if they do not meet the Code’s standards, planned woodland creation projects do not go ahead, or the landowner no longer wishes to claim the carbon benefit of the project.

The number of validated projects (including those also verified) has risen consistently since the Woodland Carbon Code was launched in 2011 (Figure 1). The number of projects validated (including those verified) at March 2018 is 4% higher than the level in the previous quarter and is 9% higher than at March 2017.

The first projects were verified in 2016. The number of projects verified at March 2018 has risen by 6 in the previous quarter and by 34 in the last year since March 2017.

There were 6 new projects registered over the past quarter, but 12 registered projects were removed from the registry, meaning the net number of projects has decreased by 6 projects (or 2%) since December 2017. Over the past year, the total number of projects has shown an overall decrease of 4%.

Figure 1: Number of Woodland Carbon Code projects in the UK¹



Source: Forestry Commission.

Note:

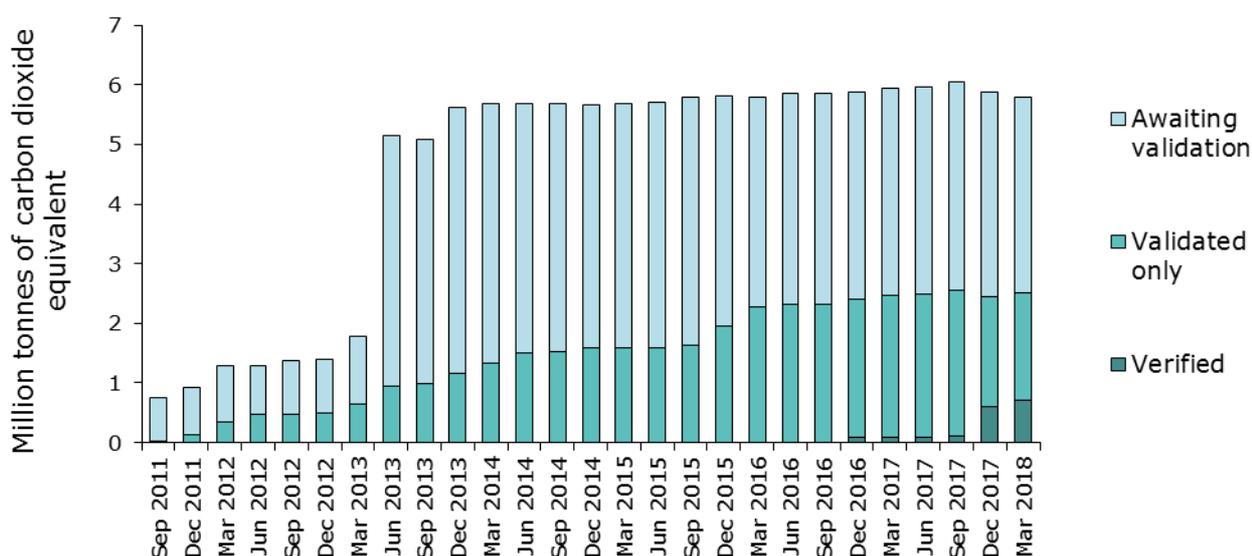
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There has been a 3% increase in projected carbon sequestration for validated projects (including those verified) in the latest quarter, and an overall 2% increase in the year since March 2017 (Figure 2).

Total projected carbon sequestration for all projects registered (including those awaiting validation) has decreased by 1% since the previous quarter, in line with the net reduction in number of projects, and is down 3% in the year since March 2017.

Figure 2: Projected carbon sequestration by Woodland Carbon Code projects in the UK¹



Source: Forestry Commission.

Note:

- (1) Figures for carbon sequestration indicate the total projected sequestration of the projects over their lifetime of up to 100 years, and include the amount claimable by a project plus the amount allocated to a shared "buffer" in case of unanticipated losses.
- (2) **Awaiting validation:** is when a project or group is undergoing assessment by a certification body.
- (3) **Validated:** is the initial evaluation of a project or group against the requirements of the Woodland Carbon Code. Upon completion a project/group will receive a 'Validation Opinion Statement'. The project/group will then be certified for a period of up to 5 years.
- (4) **Verified:** Verification is the evaluation of a project as it progresses to confirm the amount of CO₂ sequestered to date as well as that it continues to meet the requirements of the Code.

Annex

Introduction

This annex provides background information on the Woodland Carbon Code statistics presented in this release. It covers the data sources and methodology used to produce the statistics, information on quality measures and on any revisions to historic data and links to further information.

Glossary

Awaiting validation When a project or group is undergoing assessment by a certification body.

Forest In the United Kingdom, there is no formal definition of "forest"; the term is often used for large woodland areas (especially conifers) or for old Royal hunting preserves such as the New Forest or the Forest of Dean.

Forestry Commission (FC) The government department responsible for forestry matters in England, Scotland and (until March 2013) Wales. The Forestry Commission's functions in Wales transferred to the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales on 1 April 2013. The responsibility for forestry is devolved.

Hectare (ha) Unit of area defined as 10,000 square metres (100 m by 100 m), approximately equivalent to 2.47 acres.

Tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) Emissions and sequestration can be presented as tonnes carbon or tonnes carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent. To convert from tonnes CO₂ to tonnes carbon multiply by 12/44.

United Kingdom (UK) England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Validated The initial evaluation of a WCC project or group against the requirements of the Woodland Carbon Code. Upon completion a project/group will receive a 'Validation Opinion Statement'. The project/group will then be certified for a period of up to 5 years.

Verified Verification is the evaluation of a project as it progresses to confirm the amount of CO₂ sequestered to date as well as that it continues to meet the requirements of the Code.

Woodland Land under stands of trees with a canopy cover of at least 20% (25% in Northern Ireland), or having the potential to achieve this, including integral open space, and including felled areas that are awaiting restocking.

Woodland Carbon Code Statistics

Data sources and methodology

Information about Woodland Carbon Code projects comes from the UK Woodland Carbon Registry, housed on the Markit Environmental Registry (www.markit.com/product/registry). The register is a live database and summary data are extracted on a quarterly basis.

Further information on administrative sources can be found at:
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-832ey5

Quality

Detailed information on the quality of the statistics presented in this publication is available in the *Quality Report: Woodland Carbon Code Statistics* at:
[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/wccqrpt.pdf/\\$FILE/wccqrpt.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/wccqrpt.pdf/$FILE/wccqrpt.pdf)

Further quality information on FC Official Statistics is available at:
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-7zhk85

Revisions

Figures at March 2018 are published for the first time in this release.

Figures for earlier periods have not been revised from those previously published in Woodland Carbon Code Statistics: data to December 2017.

The Forestry Commission's revisions policy sets out how revisions and errors to these statistics are dealt with, and can be found at:
[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCrevisions.pdf/\\$FILE/FCrevisions.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCrevisions.pdf/$FILE/FCrevisions.pdf).

Further information

Figures in tables have been independently rounded, so may not add to the totals shown.

Supplementary data are available in the accompanying spreadsheet at:
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-93yjte.

Further information on the Woodland Carbon Code is available at:
www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode.

More statistics on UK forests and climate change can be found in *Forestry Statistics 2017*:
www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-7aqdgc.

Woodland Carbon Code Statistics

Release schedule

To date, Woodland Carbon Code statistics have been published quarterly, in the month after each quarter ends. Now that the statistics are well established, the statistics will move to an annual release and will be included in the output currently titled “Woodland Area, Planting and Publicly Funded Restocking” that is released each June.

The next release of statistics on the Woodland Carbon Code, covering data to March 2019, is therefore expected in June 2019.

Summary results are also published in September in Forestry Statistics, available from the [Forestry Commission website](#).

Official Statistics

This is an Official Statistics publication. For more information about Official Statistics and the UK Statistics Authority visit www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk.