Forestry Commission



Environmental Management System

The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for protecting and expanding Britain's forests and woodlands. We manage over a million hectares of forests and woodlands in Britain, all of which are certified under the UK Woodland Assurance Standard – the independent certification standard for verifying sustainable woodland management in the UK. We are also the regulatory body for woodland grants and licences, home to Forest Research, and the largest provider of outdoor recreation in Great Britain. To manage this extensive operation we employ more than 3000 staff, and manage more than a thousand buildings, including offices, workshops and visitor centres. As part of our ongoing commitment to sustainability we are developing an Environmental Management System (EMS) which addresses all of the aspects of our business which have an impact on the environment. Our EMS has been externally assessed for compliance with ISO 14001, as demonstrable evidence that the Forestry Commission intends to deliver its business activities across the whole organisation in a sustainable way, and it was approved for certification in June 2010 for the main office in Edinburgh and two research stations – Alice Holt in southeast England and Northern Research Station in Scotland.



'We are implementing an Environmental Management System to address all aspects of our business and demonstrate our commitment to sustainability'

We have set ourselves a number of key objectives to help us improve our environmental performance and meet Government targets for carbon reduction. These are set out in our Environmental Policy Statement. Specifically we will:

- Comply with relevant environmental legislation and regulations.
- Adopt and maintain the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.
- Implement ISO 14001 Environmental Management System in all parts of our business.
- Monitor and reduce our consumption of energy and finite natural resources such as water.
- Reduce our production of waste and promote recycling and recovery.
- Reduce our business travel and promote alternative means of communication.
- Reduce our use of harmful materials, and prevent pollution.
- Where practical, buy goods and services from sustainable sources and encourage our suppliers and contractors to improve their environmental performance.
- Promote environmental awareness in our staff and stakeholders through the development of training and communications programmes.
- Monitor and review progress against internal and Government targets and pursue continuous improvement through audits and management reviews.

We are putting robust systems in place to capture data, monitor performance, and to provide information and guidance for staff.

Actions

The development of our Environmental Management System involved:

- Identifying and evaluating significant aspects of our activities that impact on the environment.
- Taking actions to reduce environmental impacts, and monitoring the results.
- Publishing an environmental policy which sets out our key targets (see opposite).
- Establishing and maintaining an environmental programme to achieve targets including operational control, documentation and procedures.
- Raising environmental awareness through internal (and external) communications, identifying key roles and responsibilities and developing a staff training programme.
- Identifying the legal and other requirements with which we must comply.

✓ Achievements

- The publication of Operational Guidance Booklets on business sustainability and waste management.
- Delivery of a Business Sustainability training programme to every department manager and other key staff.
- Establishment of local Business Sustainability Teams responsible for developing local improvement plans.
- Training of internal audit teams to carry out site audits identifying potential areas of improvement.
- Carrying out of Environmental Reviews at all sites across the Forestry Commission estate.
- Creation of an Intranet site to communicate EMS information to all staff.

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