

United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard

UKWAS

Dear Consultee

Proposals for making the UKWAS standard more accessible for managers of small and / or low intensity managed (SLIM) woodlands

Those charged with drawing up the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) have always been conscious that the certification presents a particular challenge for owners and managers of smaller woodlands.

With almost half of the UK forest area and around 80% of the wood produced now certified, it is clear that forest certification is a mainstream activity but a large proportion of small, privately owned woodlands is not certified and this is a major concern for our Steering Group.

Having concluded the first full revision of the UKWAS standard in November 2006 the UKWAS Steering Group decided to see what more might be done for smaller owners. A Small Woods Task Group (SWTG) was established to take forward this work. Their final report, *UKWAS for Smaller Woods*, is available on the UKWAS website; it concluded that the Steering Group could contribute most effectively to reducing cost and complexity for smaller owners through:

- Making changes to the text of the UKWAS standard
- Providing more comprehensive advice and guidance on certification.

The Steering Group accepted the report's recommendations.

The accompanying consultation paper seeks your views on the Steering Group's proposals; the deadline for responses is July 4th 2008.

The UKWAS Steering Group is mindful that it can only play a limited role in developing solutions for smaller owners; other parties play important roles in the certification process too. The Steering Group therefore commissioned an independent report from ProForest Ltd to recommend additional actions that others might take to support smaller woodland owners. The report, *Maintaining and extending Market Access for UK Timber from Small and/or Low Intensity Managed (SLIM) Woodlands*, is also available on the UKWAS website.

Yours faithfully

Peter Wilson
Executive Chairman

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