

# Press release: 'Forgotten lands' to receive forestry boost

A new project to help landowners create vital new woodland and unlock the economic benefits of forestry has been launched in Cumbria's 'forgotten lands'.

The government's Tree Champion Sir William Worsley today visited forestry project Snowdon Close in the area to launch the pilot Forestry Investment Zone.

With Cumbria's 'forgotten lands' not traditionally seen as ripe for tree planting, the government will trial a new approach and work to encourage investment in the zone through measures such as the existing Countryside Stewardship and Woodland Carbon Fund grant schemes. A Forestry Investment Zone officer will also offer tailored support to businesses.

Government will also work with the forestry and timber processing industry to accelerate planting as new approaches to rural funding and payment for public goods are developed.

The pilot launch comes during Green GB Week, an annual week dedicated to highlighting the opportunities clean growth offers the UK – and raise understanding of how business and the public can contribute to tackling climate change.

Forestry Minister David Rutley said:

Planting more trees is central to our ambition to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.

This innovative new pilot project will not only help landowners realise the benefits of woodland creation, but also drive forward our commitment to plant 11 million trees.

The Cumbria pilot is the first of its kind, with the 'forgotten lands' being the perfect place to establish large-scale forestry projects in order to bring economic and environmental benefits to the area. The project will focus on productive forestry, landscape enhancement, farming and local employment.

During his visit to the north east, Tree Champion Sir William Worsley said:

It is wonderful to be in Cumbria today to see this exciting new pilot kick off and to witness what will hopefully be the beginning of widespread investment in the forestry sector.

By making it easier for this area to be used for woodland creation we are not only helping the environment, but also giving the region a valuable economic boost.

The Cumbria Forestry Investment Zone pilot is scheduled to run for two years, and will be used as a test-case for rolling out the initiative more widely around the country.

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## **[Open consultation: Renewable Heat Incentive: biomass combustion in urban areas](#)**

Defra's [Clean Air Strategy](#), published in May 2018, proposed that further support under the Renewable Heat Incentive should not be available for biomass installations in urban areas with access to the gas grid.

This consultation sets out details of the proposed restrictions and asks for views on the scope and nature of these changes to RHI eligibility.

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## **[National Statistics: Road fuel prices: 15 October 2018](#)**

Cost of unleaded petrol (ULSP) and unleaded diesel (ULSD) in the UK as at Monday 15 October 2018.

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## **[World news story: Guatemala joins the Americas to combat illegal wildlife trade](#)**

Representatives of Belize, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador,

Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and the US attended the meeting. Minor García, Deputy Director of the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP) represented Guatemala.

Deputy Director Garcia and other countries' delegates were hosted by Thérèse Coffey, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. According to official statistics, illegal wildlife trade is worth more than £17 billion a year, and is directly linked to transnational organized crime structures.

Participating countries recognised that Illegal Wildlife Trade is a major issue in the Americas, and that it should be treated as a serious and organised crime that affects the economy, security, indigenous communities and ecosystems in the region.

Representatives decided to work collaboratively to tackle the trafficking of flora and fauna, including poaching, on a regional and international scale. To affirm this intention, all delegations recognised the need for regional collaboration on this issue.

At the end of the meeting, delegations welcomed the announcement from Peru that it will hold a regional conference on IWT in Lima in 2019, building on the work undertaken at London 2018.

This special meeting took place in the margins of the global conference on illegal wildlife trade, which ended 12 October in London and was organized by the British Government. Politicians, entrepreneurs and civil society from around the world met to seek for medium and long term solutions to tackle this problem.

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## **[Press release: IWT conference 2018: new funding for counter-poaching training in Africa](#)**

On the first day of [the fourth international Illegal Wildlife Trade conference](#) in London (Thursday, 11 October 2018), £900,000 of new funding has been announced to develop a new British military counter-poaching taskforce.

The announcement builds on the significant success of, and lessons learned from, the UK's previous work to train rangers in Gabon and Malawi.

Operatives will be deployed to train African park rangers in more effective and safer counter-poaching techniques. The project aims to reduce the number of poaching incidents by catching poachers and bringing them to justice.

The UK will work in partnership with targeted countries to provide support for intelligence mapping, interception tracking tactics and operations management.

Training carried out by [the British Army](#) in Gabon and Malawi during 2018 has been well received with 84 Ecoguards being trained in Gabon, which will double by the end of the year, and 120 Rangers partnered in Malawi.

UK Environment Secretary, Michael Gove said:

The illegal wildlife trade is one of the most serious issues of organised crime facing the world. In the last year alone more than 100 rangers were killed on the front line of the fight against poachers – as an international community we must do everything we can to support their vital work. The ranger programme we are funding provides professional training and builds capability to tackle this crime across Africa.

This demonstrates the UK's global leadership and delivers our commitment in [the 25-Year Environment Plan](#).

UK Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson said:

The training we already provide has made a significant difference to the protection of some of the planet's most magnificent wildlife.

As the British Army now takes its world-renowned training further across Africa, those responsible for this abhorrent practice should be looking over their shoulders.

Maj James Cowen, who led the deployment in Malawi, said:

Having seen the beauty of these animals up close, and how at risk their survival is due to poaching, we are more determined than ever to stop these criminals in their tracks.

Planning is currently ongoing to identify countries and parks across the region with which the British Army will partner and assist over the next year.

Assistance can be tailored to the needs of the specific parks and consists of both base located training, such as command and control and paramedic, and a partnering model that sees UK soldiers living and operating with Rangers – helping Rangers to improve techniques and procedures whilst the UK soldiers have been able to improve their own skills in tracking and bush craft; a true partnership.

Environmental Crime, which includes the illegal wildlife trade and illegal logging, is the fifth most lucrative serious organised crime and is estimated to be worth up to £17 billion a year.

The two-day conference in London (11 to 12 October 2018) is bringing more than 80 nations together including international political leaders, conservation organisations and individuals interested in closing down the vile trade in wildlife.