

[Detailed guide: Cross-compliance for woodland owners and managers](#)

For clarification by the Forestry Commission on cross-compliance and how it affects you as a woodland owner or manager, read [Cross-compliance requirements for forests/woodland: operations note 38](#). This gives you information on:

- cross-compliance in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) programme 2014 to 2020 for woodland (forest)
- the two separate sets of standards – specific requirements relating to European Regulations, known as ‘Statutory Management Requirements’ (SMRs) and standards for ‘Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition’ (GAEC) of land
- when and how you need to comply with cross-compliance rules
- which woodland schemes and payments are affected
- breaches and sanctions
- exemptions and derogations

Read broader guidance for farmers and landowners on how you must [follow cross-compliance rules](#) from 1 January 2018 if you claim for the [Basic Payment Scheme \(BPS\)](#), a Countryside Stewardship scheme or the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS).

Find out more about about [Countryside Stewardship and woodland support](#).

[Detailed guide: The Woodland Carbon Code scheme for buyers and landowners](#)

Background

The Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) is the UK’s voluntary carbon standard for woodland creation projects. It provides reassurance about the carbon savings that woodland projects may realistically achieve. This government-led scheme provides:

- a high quality, robust voluntary carbon standard
- a transparent UK Woodland Carbon Registry
- robust science to predict and monitor carbon sequestration
- independent validation and verification of projects

This means that:

- carbon buyers have reassurance that they have invested in a responsible scheme and can see the benefits that will be provided
- project developers have recognised procedures and standards to work to, both in terms of woodland management and carbon accounting

Information if you're buying carbon

Woodland Carbon Units from verified WCC projects can help a company compensate for their unavoidable emissions. Projects provide a whole host of benefits for water, biodiversity, communities and the economy as well as sequestering carbon.

Read [WCC guidance](#) on:

- what are Woodland Carbon Units
- why buy WCC-verified carbon units
- where to buy WCC-verified carbon units
- what other companies say

See the [UK Government's Environmental Reporting Guidelines](#), which set out how a company should report their greenhouse gas emissions, and the pamphlet, [Woodland carbon units: buyer's guide](#).

(PDF, 1.89MB, 2 pages)

Case studies

See [examples of buyers who have purchased Woodland Carbon Units](#).

Information if you're a landowner

The WCC is the UK's voluntary carbon standard for woodland creation projects. If you demonstrate that you meet this standard, you can sell the carbon sequestered in your woodland in the form of Woodland Carbon Units.

See the pamphlet, [Woodland landowner's guide to the WCC](#).

(PDF, 225KB, 2 pages)

See [the steps involved if you are a landowner with a woodland creation project](#), including how to:

- find a project developer
- register your project
- get validated (have your project checked at the outset)
- stay verified (have your project checked to show progress)

The WCC and other grant and funding schemes

If you apply for registration with the WCC you are not excluded from applying

for Forestry Commission grant and funding schemes:

Find out about your eligibility for:

- [Woodland Carbon Fund](#)
- [Countryside Stewardship: woodland support](#)
- [Woodland Creation Planning Grants](#)
- [Woodland Research and Development Grant](#)
- HS2 Woodland Fund

Case studies

See [examples of WCC projects](#).

The UK Woodland Carbon Registry

The [UK Woodland Carbon Registry](#) holds details of WCC projects, and tracks the issuance, ownership and use of carbon credits. You can use it to look up a project or to see who has purchased carbon units from WCC projects.

Woodland Carbon Code contact details

Email enquiries: climatechange@forestry.gov.uk

Find [regional contact details for the WCC team](#), nationally and regionally.

[Detailed guide: Woodland Research and Development Grant](#)

Organisations and businesses intending to innovate and develop new processes or technologies for the forestry sector in England can apply to the Forestry Commission for this grant, which is part of the Forestry Innovation Fund, along with the [Woodland Creation Planning Grant \(WCPG\)](#).

The Research and Development Grant (RDG) is a one-off grant that funds a maximum of 6 projects up to a total cost of £50,000 each.

The RDG is now closed for new applications.

How it works

Stage 1

You need to submit an expression of interest containing details of your

proposed project, outlining:

- what's innovative about your project – this can be at the global level, so completely unique, or it can apply developments from a different sector or country to benefit UK forestry, and may include an element of original research
- how it fits with the objectives of the scheme (to target opportunities for significant changes in productivity and substantial potential to encourage growth in any part of the forestry sector)

The first stage will ensure proposals are eligible and within scope of the fund.

You can no longer submit an expression of interest for funding in 2018. If the Forestry Commission invited you to make a full application you must have done so by 1 June 2018.

Stage 2

When the Forestry Commission has assessed expressions of interest, it may invite you to submit a full application.

You need to outline the:

- need, challenge or opportunity behind your innovation
- approach you intend to take, including the focus of the innovation
- project team and their roles
- target market
- possible impact of the project outside the project team
- management plans
- main risks
- planned impact of an injection of public funding on the project
- costs and how the project represents value for money for the team and the taxpayer

You need to give full:

- project costs
- organisational details
- funding details for each organisation involved (if this applies)

You will have been notified of the RDG funding decision by 6 July 2018. If you were successful then you must complete the project within 9 months, and by 31 March 2019.

Payments and claim forms

If you're successful, you'll be sent a claim form with your agreement. Payments can be made in 2 instalments. You can claim the first instalment for

half of the funding when the project is at the halfway point. You can claim the second (final) instalment for the remaining half of the funding on completion.

You must submit the final claim before 31 March 2019 with evidence of expenditure, as set out on the claim form.

Contact the Forestry Commission

Contact the Forestry Innovation Fund team for more information:
rdg@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Find out how to make a [complaint or appeal](#).

Forest Research

The research agency of the Forestry Commission offers a range of services to [help with pest and disease control](#), and also offers resources such as [publications, statistics and datasets](#).

[Farmers urged to consider importance of biosecurity in cattle housing](#)

Biosecurity is a key consideration when it comes to housing beef cattle.

[Detailed guide: EIAs: notify the Forestry Commission, get an opinion or apply for consent](#)

You may have to notify the Forestry Commission or ask for it's opinion about environmental impact, depending on the scale and location of the forestry project you're proposing. Once you've had a Forestry Commission response you may have to apply for consent. These formal processes are written into the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations – see the [overview guidance for general information on EIAs](#)).

Notification

If your forestry project is for afforestation, small scale in nature and/or located within a low risk area you may simply be able to notify the Forestry Commission of your proposal, using the [EIA enquiry form](#), in order to get it's decision. Check the [afforestation thresholds table](#) to see if you're eligible for this process, and which notification procedure would apply.

If you're eligible for basic notification, the Forestry Commission will give its decision within 28 days, unless it asks you for more information.

If you're eligible for full notification, the Forestry Commission will give its decision within 42 days, unless it asks you for more information.

If the Forestry Commission asks for more information, you'll get a request in writing and the decision period will be restarted once you've provided the requested information.

Opinion

For all other eligible forestry projects, the Forestry Commission will give an opinion on whether or not you, the applicant, must apply for consent to carry out any work. Below is the process for getting it's opinion.

1. Bring your proposal together

When planning your project, you should use your own forestry experience or seek advice from a professional forestry agent, and should engage with local and statutory stakeholders who may have an interest in the land on which your project will lie, as required.

Gather information from on the site and from as many other sources as possible and use that information to design a [UK Forestry Standard](#) compliant forestry project. You should consider liaising with Natural England and the Environment Agency at this stage, and submit their comments along with your EIA enquiry application.

2. Complete an EIA enquiry form

Once your project proposal has been drawn together, complete the relevant EIA enquiry for your project(s).

- Download the EIA enquiry form to [create new woodland](#).
- Download the EIA enquiry form for [deforestation](#).
- Download the EIA enquiry form for [forest roads and/or quarries](#).

3. Send your details to the Forestry Commission

Send your completed form with the following information/documentation to [your local Forestry Commission admin office](#)

- a map identifying the area and showing the extent of the project – this should be a clear Ordnance Survey map at a scale of 1:10,000 or 1:2,500
- information on the characteristics of the project and any likely significant effects on the environment – significant effects are specified in Appendix 2 of the [EIA screening guidance](#) (PDF, 942KB, 21 pages)

document

- any other information or evidence that you have gathered and is relevant, eg species maps, plans, photographs etc, including a description of any features of the project or measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment

If the Forestry Commission reasonably requires further information in order to form an opinion, it will contact you. If, at any time, it becomes aware of proposals that require its consent, the Forestry Commission may give its opinion to the person whom it believes should have asked it.

4. When to expect an opinion decision

The Forestry Commission will only begin to form an opinion when all the relevant information has been received. If the Forestry Commission has asked you for more information, the process may take longer. It will normally form an opinion within 28 days of receiving all the relevant information, but in exceptional circumstances it may take longer than this period to form an opinion. If this is the case, the Forestry Commission will let you know in writing.

Decisions last for a period of 5 years or any shorter period specified.

5. If consent is not required

If the Forestry Commission decides that consent is not required, it will inform you in writing.

6. If consent is required

If the Forestry Commission decides that consent for the work is required, it will inform you in writing. If you wish to progress with your project you will be required to produce an Environmental Statement and application for consent in order to get a decision about whether or not the work can proceed.

When the Forestry Commission publicises the decision

After notifying you of their decision, the Forestry Commission will publish the decision on a Public Register for 28 days. This will notify the public of the decision on your project.

Grant applications for EIA project types

If you're applying for a Forestry Commission grant to deliver a EIA project type you may not be required to submit an EIA Enquiry Form, as the information provided in your grant application may meet the information requirements of the Enquiry Form.

Additionally you should note that grant applications take longer to assess than EIA projects, so the final EIA decision for Notification or Opinion won't be given until the final grant offer is ready to be made. This may be significantly longer than 28 or 42 days.

Apply for consent

If the Forestry Commission decides your project has a significant impact on the environment, you must get its consent for the work before you start.

Your application will need to include an Environmental Statement and you will have to scope the project. For more help, read the [EIA scoping environmental statement guidance](#).
(PDF, 652KB, 31 pages)

The Forestry Commission is required to provide formal consent for certain 'relevant projects' under the EIA Regulations. The process for getting its consent is outlined below.

In most cases, the Forestry Commission would strongly advise applicants to proceed with the notification or application for our opinion, whichever is relevant, prior to submitting an application for consent. But if you're certain that an application for consent is required, it's possible to apply for consent without completing the previous steps.

1. Make preliminary enquiries

Speak to your local Forestry Commission woodland officer about your project and the need to apply for consent. They will help you to decide which countryside organisations may need to be involved with providing information that might help the preparation of the Environmental Statement.

2. Hold a scoping meeting

This meeting between you, the Forestry Commission, relevant countryside organisations, consultees and interested parties, such as neighbours, will help to identify the particular issues that the environmental statement must

address.

3. Prepare an Environmental Statement (ES)

The purpose of an ES is to provide the Forestry Commission and other interested parties with as full an understanding of the consequences of the proposals as possible.

4. Prepare the application

You will need to include:

- a map showing the area where the project is proposed, and the extent of any planting, regeneration, constructions, works or operations – this should be a clear Ordnance Survey map at a scale of 1:10 000 or 1:2 500
- a description of the nature of the relevant project
- any other information that might be relevant e.g. species maps, plans, photographs etc
- the Environmental Statement for the work
- a copy of the publicity notice that you must place in newspapers (this should only be done once the ES has been finalised with the Forestry Commission)

Note: you may have already supplied some of this information if you've previously asked for the Forestry Commission opinion under the EIA regulations. This information can be reused to help inform your ES. You can also use other relevant and equivalent ES from other similar projects as part of your application for consent, rather than having to recreate the required evidence.)

5. Send the application

Send the documents to your [local admin hub](#).

The Forestry Commission may ask for multiple copies of the application documents to send to appropriate consultees.

6. Publicise the ES and consult

- Once the Forestry Commission is satisfied that the ES addresses all the issues of concern as agreed at the scoping meeting then you must make a public notice.
- Place the public notice (advertisement) in local newspapers and/or electronically, as directed by the Forestry Commission. You're responsible for the cost of this notice.
- Full details about the contents of the notice are given in the Environmental Impact Assessment of Forestry Projects.
- You must make copies of the application and the ES available in public places such as the local library, post office etc. The Forestry Commission will advise you about suitable locations.
- The Forestry Commission will give details of your application to the appropriate consultees and statutory bodies as well as the local

authority with an interest in the application. They're required to give us their comments within 30 days.

- Proposals to carry out new planting or felling will appear on the Register of New Planting and Felling.

7. The Forestry Commission responds

The Forestry Commission will respond with one of 3 possible decisions. You will either be:

- granted consent subject to the standard conditions (that the work must be started within 5 years from the date of consent and finished no later than 10 years from the date of consent)
- granted consent subject to the standard conditions (above) plus other additional conditions
- refused consent

8. The Forestry Commission publicises the decision

After notifying you and other interested parties about their decision, the Forestry Commission will advertise their decision in the same newspapers in which the notice of the application for consent was placed and will be responsible for the cost of this notice.

Appeals

You can [make a complaint or appeal against a Forestry Commission decision.](#)