

## SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT – COVER NOTE

### PART 1

To: SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

SEA Gateway  
Scottish Executive  
Area 1 H (Bridge)  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

### PART 2

An Environmental Report is attached for : The Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy

The Responsible Authority is: Argyll and Bute Council

### PART 3

Contact name : Sybil Johnson

Job Title : Senior Planning and Strategies Officer

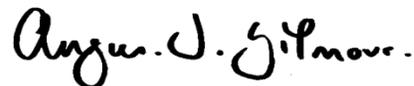
Contact address : Argyll and Bute Council  
Development and Infrastructure Services  
Kilmory Castle  
Lochgilphead  
ARGYLL  
PA31 8RT

Contact tel no : 01546 604308

Contact email : Sybil.johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk

### PART 4

Signature :



Date : 9<sup>th</sup> August 2010



# ARGYLL AND BUTE WOODLAND AND FORESTRY STRATEGY

## ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

# Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy - Environmental Report

## CONTENTS

- 1 Non-technical summary**
  - 2 Introduction**
    - 2.1 Purpose of this Environmental Report
    - 2.2 Key facts about the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
    - 2.3 SEA activities to date
  - 3 Context**
    - 3.1 Outline and objectives of the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
    - 3.2 Relationship with other PPS and environmental objectives
    - 3.3 Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment
    - 3.4 Environmental issues
    - 3.5 Likely future of the area without the ABC WFS
    - 3.6 SEA Objectives
  - 4 Assessment of environmental effects and measures envisaged for the preventions, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects**
    - 4.1 Alternatives considered
    - 4.2 Assessment methods
    - 4.3 Assessment of ABC WFS and alternatives
    - 4.4 Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of any significant adverse effects
  - 5 Monitoring**
  - 6 Next steps**
- Appendix A. Links to other PPS and environmental objectives**
- Appendix B. Full assessment results**
- Appendix C – Scoping Outcomes**
- Appendix D – Advisory Group Membership**
- Appendix E – Maps**
  - i) PPS area
  - ii) Rhododendron Ponticum
- Appendix F –Conservation Sites**

# **1 Non Technical Summary**

## **1.1 How to comment on the Environmental Report**

We would welcome your comments on this Environmental Report. The Environmental Report of the SEA for the ABC WFS was published for consultation on 9th August 2010 and comments are requested by 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Details of how to comment can be found on: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/woodland](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/woodland) or by contacting:

Sybil Johnson  
Senior Planning and Strategies Officer  
Development and Infrastructure  
Argyll and Bute Council  
Kilmory  
Lochgilphead  
Argyll  
PA31 8RT  
Tel: 01546 604308  
Email: [Sybil.Johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Sybil.Johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk).

## **1.2 Background**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations 2004. It is a systematic method for assessing the environmental effects of plans, programmes and strategies during their preparation allowing for the mitigation of any adverse effects before plan implementation.

1.3 This is the non technical summary of the Environmental Report prepared as part of the SEA of the draft Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy (ABC WFS). It sets out a summary of the SEA process, followed by an outline of the likely significant effects of the ABC WFS. An important element of SEA is making the information about possible effects available to the public and this non technical summary also sets out how to make comments on the SEA process.

## **1.4 Summary of the SEA process**

The SEA process to date has comprised a number of key steps. At the outset of the assessment informal screening was undertaken to confirm that the ABC WFS would require an SEA. Following this, a scoping exercise was undertaken to identify the method and overall content of the SEA, with a scoping report having been sent to the Scottish Consultation Authorities –Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Following consideration of comments on the scoping report, the assessment of the ABC WFS and a number of alternative strategies was progressed, culminating in the preparation of this environmental report. This report is now being circulated for further comment, and will be reviewed alongside the content of the ABC WFS on conclusion of the consultation period. Key findings from the SEA will be monitored as the ABC WFS is implemented.

## **1.5 Scope of the Environmental Report**

The Environmental Report includes the following:

- Key facts about the ABC WFS
- An outline of ABC WFS objectives
- Relationship with other plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives
- Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment
- Environmental issues
- Likely future of the area without the ABC WFS
- Identification of SEA objectives
- Consideration of alternative scenarios
- Assessment methods
- Application of SEA objectives to the ABC WFS and alternatives
- Proposed measures for prevention, reduction and offsetting of any significant adverse effects
- Proposed SEA monitoring programme
- Next steps

## 1.6 **Key facts**

- The Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy (ABC WFS) deals with Woodland and Forestry and related matters including rural development.
- The strategy covers around 6,576sq km of land within Argyll and Bute Council area, excluding the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. See Map 1, Appendix E.
- It aims to cover a 20 year period.
- Argyll and Bute Council is the authority responsible for the delivery of the ABC WFS. However, the work has been jointly commissioned by Argyll and Bute Council and Forestry Commission Scotland. Additional funding support has also been given by Argyll and the Islands LEADER, and Scottish Enterprise – Scottish Forest Industries Cluster.
- A partnership approach has been taken to the development of the strategy. An Advisory Group (See Appendix D) has provided advice and guidance throughout the preparation of the strategy. The Group comprises a range of key stakeholders with interests and expertise in woodland and forestry matters.
- The Council's Environment Policy and Performance Group has also been engaged in the process.
- A public consultation, including a number of open day events, was held during May 2009 to help identify the key issues.

## 1.7 **Main objectives of ABC WFS**

The ABC WFS will produce five key outcomes:

- 1) Provide an overview of the existing woodland and forestry resource and related activities in Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNPA)
- 2) Suggest areas for future forestry and woodland expansion
- 3) Identify potential actions which help deliver on agreed Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNP) objectives for social and economic development, biodiversity, environment and climate change, in accord with the development plan.

4) Identify potential future actions which help deliver on the outcomes of the Scottish Forestry Strategy as they relate at a local level to identified priorities for Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNP).

5) Help inform decision-making for grant support available to land managers, rural businesses and rural communities under the Scottish Rural Development Programme.

#### 1.8 **Relationship with other plans, programmes and strategies**

A detailed analysis of the relationship with other relevant plans, programmes and strategies is set out in section 3.2 and Appendix A of this Environmental Report. Any plans, programmes or strategies (PPS) above the Scottish level have generally been excluded from the list, primarily because it is assumed that all relevant international, European and UK environmental legislation has been implemented into regional and local strategy and guidance. Furthermore, the assessment draws on the findings of the SEA of the Scottish Forestry Strategy and the Forest District Strategic Plans covering Argyll and Bute (although it is acknowledged these only apply to Forestry Commission Scotland land), which provide context for the PPS review. The Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy provides a greater level of detail than the Scottish Forestry Strategy, and covers both public and private woodland resources. It is anticipated that the ABC WFS will be adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the Development Plan for Argyll and Bute.

#### 1.9 **Environmental Characteristics potentially affected by ABC WFS**

The current state of the environment has been examined in so far as it is relevant to the ABC WFS as summarised below.

#### 1.10 **Biodiversity, flora and fauna** -. Overall the area has a high quality environment with numerous international and national nature designations. There is a high proportion of woodland cover at around 30% of the land area.

**Population and human health** - The population is around 92,000 and is based largely in the main towns and other more minor settlements. However a sizeable number do live more remotely with 17% of the population living on islands.. Forestry, agriculture, tourism and fishing are important for the economy of the area as well as newer industries such as aquaculture and renewable.

**Soil** - There is not an abundance of high quality agricultural land.

**Cultural Heritage** - Argyll and Bute has a rich heritage of archaeological features.

**Water** – The ecological status of water across Argyll and Bute is generally good or high.

**Landscape** - The environmental quality of Argyll and Bute is one of its key assets, with vast mountain areas and a high proportion of woodland cover as defining characteristic of its landscape.

**Air and Climate** - Argyll and Bute is a predominantly rural area and has not had an air quality problem. The Climate is temperate.

**Material Assets** - Argyll and Bute Council supports the general principle of developing sources of renewable energy in appropriate locations. Mineral extraction is concerned primarily with hard rock, peat, sand and gravel.

#### 1.11 **Environmental issues and likely future of the area without the ABC WFS**

The main environmental issues identified include the following : invasive species; loss of natural habitat and species; ageing/declining population with increasing health issues; climate change; a few water ecological status issues; limited amount of quality land and the importance of inbye land; increasing demand for renewable energy developments; a need to safeguard the historic and natural landscape resources.

- 1.12 The ABC WFS identifies the issues relating to forestry and woodland for Argyll and Bute in terms of both private and public land. This provides a more local perspective under the overarching view provided by the Scottish Forestry Strategy. The context within which to address these issues is provided by the ABC WFS and this would not be as readily accessible without its development. The Strategic Priorities and associated Priority Actions in the ABC WFS are set within the seven Scottish Forestry Strategy themes. The priorities provide a focussed partnership approach to tackling forestry and woodland related issues specific to Argyll and Bute on both private and publically owned land which would not occur to the same extent without the ABC WFS. The SEA has aimed to identify the influence which the ABC WFS could have on ongoing environmental problems and issues.

### **1.13 SEA Objectives**

The SEA was carried out by assessment of the different parts of the draft ABC WFS against an agreed set of objectives. The objectives were identified from a review of relevant existing plans and strategies which define the wider policy context within which the ABC WFS is set.

1. To help implement the objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (see SEA objectives a to e below)
  - a) To halt the loss of biodiversity and continue to reverse previous losses through targeted action for species and habitats
  - b) To increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity and engage many more people in conservation and enhancement.
  - c) To restore and enhance biodiversity in all our urban and rural environments through better planning, design and practice.
  - d) To develop an effective management framework that ensures that biodiversity is taken into account in all decision-making
  - e) To ensure that the best new and existing knowledge on biodiversity is available to all policy makers and practitioners.
2. To increase the opportunities for access to and enjoyment of forests and woodlands by all sectors of society
3. To promote sustainable tourism and recreation in relation to the forestry sector
4. To promote the role of woodland and forestry in contributing to health, quality of life and wellbeing
5. To encourage sustainable timber transport
6. To maximise the contribution of the forestry sector to the viability of rural communities
7. To minimise the air quality impacts of timber transport
8. To maximise the role of woodlands and forestry in contributing to air quality
9. To increase the potential of the forestry sector in contributing to Scotland's renewable energy resources

10. To further increase the role of woodland and forestry in achieving carbon sequestration
11. To promote woodland and forestry planning and management that takes account of the need to adapt to climate change
12. To promote forestry and woodland planning and management that contributes positively to sustainable soil management
13. To promote forestry and woodland management which contributes positively to the sustainable management of the water environment and achievement of the River Basin Management Plan objectives
14. To promote the integration and co-ordination of forestry and woodland with other land uses.
15. To promote the delivery of renewable energy in accord with the Development Plan
16. To protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment, including archaeological remains.
17. To increase awareness and understanding of cultural heritage related to woodlands
18. To increase the contribution of forests and trees to scenic values, including distinctiveness and diversity of the landscape.

#### 1.14 **Alternative approaches considered**

Three alternative scenarios were developed and evaluated as part of the SEA process. This evaluation took a broad overview approach and highlighted the value of taking an enhanced engagement approach to the development of the ABC WFS. The strong cross sector representation on the Advisory Group has been of particular benefit in both raising and addressing a range of environmental issues, ensuring that these matters were picked up early in the process rather than at a later consultation stage. At the more detailed level, the objectives and policies to be contained in the strategy and how these are worded and the proposals, were developed through an evolutionary consensus approach during the pre draft phases rather than examining differing options. This approach, during the development of the ABC WFS, has meant that key problems and opportunities have fed directly into the development of the content and aims of the draft Strategy.

#### 1.15 **Summary of the likely significant effects of the ABC WFS**

The assessment in the Environmental Report has found that the ABC WFS will have a largely positive impact on the SEA issues. **Biodiversity, flora and fauna** – 4 of the Strategic Priorities are specifically aimed at tackling the identified issues related to biodiversity in the ABC area by support for management and restoration, control of invasives, improving understanding and appreciation and safeguarding of existing important habitats. **Population and human health** – The ABC WFS seeks to increase social inclusion through support for further community involvement with woodlands, promote the health and social benefits of woodlands and forests and further develop the role of woodlands and forests in contributing to outdoor access and recreation. **Air and Climatic Factors** – 5 of the Strategic Priorities have been developed specifically related to climate change. These include: encouraging the net expansion of woodland cover to contribute to carbon sequestration, supporting the development of the biomass sector, supporting the use of locally produced timber building products, ensuring that forest management takes account of this issue and by supporting the role of forests in contributing to climate change adaptation strategies. In addition support for the Timber

Transport Group is also seen as a Strategic Priority alongside encouraging use of timber locally. **Water** –The Strategy seeks to support the objectives of River Basin Management Planning and the implementation of the relevant forest guidelines through partnership working. Use of forestry in terms of flood mitigation is specifically noted. **Soil** - the ABC WFS supports; the management of forests so as to conserve and enhance soils and the potential use of forestry to assist with slope stabilization. **Material Assets** – the ABC WFS supports the development of the biomass sector and compensatory planting related to wind farm development as appropriate. **Cultural Heritage** – There is a priority action to ensure that woodland and forest management and creation conserve and enhance important elements of the historic environment and promote appreciation of the historic environment. **Landscape, townscape and amenity** – It is a Strategic Priority of the ABC WFS to manage forests and woodlands to conserve and enhance Argyll and Bute’s landscape and cultural heritage and people’s appreciation and enjoyment of them.

**1.16 Mitigation and enhancement of significant adverse effects**

No significant adverse effects were identified in the assessment of the ABC WFS. A number of minor negative effects were identified in the initial assessment. However, wider review of the ABC WFS as a whole found that other related Strategic Priorities and Priority Actions reduced the need for additional measures to mitigate adverse effects. Current Forestry Commission guidelines also mitigate adverse impacts.

**1.17 Monitoring**

As a result of a lack of significant impacts arising during the course of the assessment no specific monitoring proposals have been identified. It is anticipated that the outcomes from the SEA and, in particular, key potential effects, can be monitored as an integral part of the proposed monitoring of the ABC WFS itself.

**1.18 Next Steps**

<b>Table 1 Anticipated plan-making and SEA milestones</b>	
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Expected date</b>
Publication of the draft ABC WFS for consultation	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2010
Publication of Environmental Report for consultation, including copies sent to SEA Gateway	9 <sup>th</sup> August 2010
Close of Joint Consultation Period	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2010
Review of consultation responses	21 <sup>st</sup> October 2010
Amendment of ABC WFS and Environmental Report	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2010
Publication of finalised ABC WFS and Environmental Report	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2010

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose of this Environmental Report

2.1.1 As part of the preparation of the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy (ABC WFS) a strategic environmental assessment of the plan has been prepared by Argyll and Bute Council. Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain plans and programmes. SEA aims to:-

- integrate environmental decision making into plan/programme preparation and decision making;
- improve plans and programmes and enhance environmental protection;
- increase public participation in environmental decision making; and
- facilitate openness and transparency of decision making.

2.1.2 SEA is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 . The key SEA stages provided for in the Regulations are:-

- **Screening** - determining whether the plan/programme is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required
- **Scoping** - deciding on the scope and level of detail of the environmental report, and the consultation period for the report - this is done in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- **Environmental Report** - publishing an environmental report on the plan or programme and its environmental effects, and consulting on that report
- **Adoption** - providing information on:- the adopted plan/programme; how consultation comments have been taken into account and; methods for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan/programme
- **Monitoring** - monitoring significant environmental effects in such a manner so as to also enable the Responsible Authority to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and undertake appropriate remedial action.

2.1.3 The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:-

- provide information on the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy;
- identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the PPS and its reasonable alternatives; and
- provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this environmental report.

### 2.2 Key Facts

The key facts relating to the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy are set out in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2 : Key facts about the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Name of Responsible Authority	Argyll and Bute Council
Commissioned/Funded	The work on this strategy has been jointly commissioned by Argyll and Bute Council and Forestry Commission Scotland. Additional funding support has also been given by Argyll and the Islands LEADER, and Scottish Enterprise – Scottish Forest Industries Cluster.
Strategy Development	A partnership approach has been taken to the development of the strategy. An Advisory Group (See Appendix D) has provided advice and guidance throughout the preparation of the strategy. The Council's Environment Policy and Performance Group has also been engaged in the process. A public consultation, including a number of open day events, was held during May 2009 to help identify the key issues.
Title of PPS	Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy (ABC WFS)
Subject	Woodland and Forestry and related matters including rural development.
Period covered by PPS	2010 – at least 20 years
Frequency of updates	5 year review period proposed
Area covered by PPS	6575.8 sq km Argyll and Bute Council area excluding the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. See Map 1, Appendix E.
Objectives of PPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide an overview of the existing woodland and forestry resource and related activities in Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNPA)</li><li>• 2) Suggest areas for future forestry and woodland expansion</li><li>• 3) Identify potential actions which help deliver on agreed Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNP) objectives for social and economic</li></ul>

	<p>development, biodiversity, environment and climate change, in accord with the development plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4) Identify potential future actions which help deliver on the outcomes of the Scottish Forestry Strategy as they relate at a local level to identified priorities for Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNP).</li> <li>• 5) Help inform decision-making for grant support available to land managers, rural businesses and rural communities under the Scottish Rural Development Programme.</li> </ul>
Contact Point	<p>Sybil Johnson  Senior Planning and Strategies Officer  Development and Infrastructure  Argyll and Bute Council  Kilmory  Lochgilphead  Argyll  PA31 8RT  Tel: 01546 604308  Email: <a href="mailto:Sybil.Johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk">Sybil.Johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk</a>.</p>

### 2.3 SEA activities to date

The SEA has followed the required steps in the process.

- At the outset of the assessment informal screening was undertaken, which indicated that the ABC WFS would require an SEA.
- Following this, a scoping exercise was undertaken to identify the method and overall content of the SEA, with a scoping report having been sent to the Scottish Consultation Authorities –Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency on 08/03/2010 via the SEA Gateway.
- The Consultation Authorities responded by the end of the 5 week period (12/04/2010).
- No significant issues were raised by the Consultation Authorities in response to the scoping report, but detailed points have been taken into account in the subsequent stages of the work..See Appendix C.
- The assessment of the ABC WFS and a number of alternative strategies was progressed, culminating in the preparation of this environmental report in August 2010.
- This report is now being circulated for further comment, and will be reviewed alongside the content of the ABC WFS on conclusion of the joint consultation period.

### **3 Context**

#### **3.1 Outline and objectives of the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

- 3.1.1 Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes “*an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme*”. The purpose of this section is to explain the nature, contents, objectives and timescale of the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy.
- 3.1.2 An Indicative Forestry Strategy (IFS) was originally prepared by Strathclyde Regional Council in conjunction with Forestry Commission in the 1980’s and updated by them in 1995, which covered Argyll and Bute. The aim of this strategy was to help promote appropriate forestry development and avoid unnecessary conflict or delay for investors at a time of significant growth in forestry planting. Government recognised the value of such strategies and issued Circular 13/1990 advising that IFS be prepared as part of the Structure Plan process by planning authorities.
- 3.1.3 The Approved Argyll and Bute Structure Plan (2002) in policy STRAT FW 1 made a commitment to review the Strathclyde Region IFS, which is still effectively in place. The Structure Plan and recently adopted Argyll and Bute Local Plan also contain the current policies in respect of forestry and woodland, which require to be taken into account.
- 3.1.4 Since the original Strathclyde IFS was prepared there have been a number of changes in the national policy direction in respect of forestry. First a new Circular 9/1999 was issued regarding the preparation of IFS and then a Scottish Forestry Strategy was prepared. During the preparation of this strategy there has been further change with the issuing of an advice note by Forestry Commission Scotland which replaces Circular 9/1999. Argyll and Bute Council were kept informed during the preparation of the new guidance and took this emerging advice into account during the preparation of the Woodland and Forestry Strategy. It is anticipated that when finalized the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the development plan.
- 3.1.5 The new ABC WFS is being developed through a partnership approach with a Steering Group (Forestry Commission Scotland and Argyll and Bute Council) leading the process and an Advisory Group (Appendix D) harnessing the expertise of national and local partners. A consortium of consultants (Land Use Consultants, Bidwells and STAR) has been employed to facilitate the consultation process and production of the strategy. An Issues Paper was prepared and widely consulted on during May to June 2009. This Paper was based on initial meetings of the Advisory Group and information gathered from a questionnaire targeted at a range of business, environmental and community interests. A series of public events were also held during the consultation period. The Issues stage consultation together with a significant level of technical baseline data and

additional input from the Advisory Group informed the production of the draft ABC WFS ([www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/woodland](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/woodland)).

3.1.6 The vision which underpins the ABC WFS is as follows:-

*“The woodland and forests of Argyll and Bute will make a significant contribution to climate change mitigation, have significant levels of economic value retained locally, enhance biodiversity and environmental quality and support the further development of recreation opportunities for the benefit and well-being of local people and visitors alike.”*

3.1.7 This Vision sets out in broad terms the aspirations for woodland and forestry in Argyll and Bute. The Strategy developed to promote this Vision has been structured around the seven Scottish Forestry Strategy themes of Climate Change, Timber, Business Development, Community Development, Access & Health, Environmental Quality and Biodiversity. Strategic Priorities have been defined under each of these seven themes and these are supported by more detailed Priority Actions. The Strategic Priorities are set out in Table 3.

<b>Table 3 Strategic Priorities Identified in the draft Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy</b>	
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Climate change</b>
1	Encourage the net expansion of woodland cover in Argyll and Bute with in order to further contribute to national targets for carbon sequestration
2	Support development of biomass sector as a locally available, low carbon source of heat and power
3	Support the use of locally produced timber building products particularly where this reduces the requirement for energy intensive materials which need to be imported into Argyll and Bute
4	Ensure that woodland and forest management takes account of the need to adapt to a changing climate
5	Support the role of woodland and forests in contributing to climate change adaptation strategies
	<b>Timber</b>
6	Encourage the net expansion of woodland cover in Argyll and Bute with in order to further contribute to national targets for woodland cover
7	Encourage greater use of locally produced timber and wood products in Argyll and Bute
8	Support continued public/private sector partnership in the forestry sector through the Timber Transport group and through delivery of the Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<b>Business Development</b>

<b>Table 3 Strategic Priorities Identified in the draft Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy</b>	
9	Work with timber producers and local businesses to add and retain value to the timber product within Argyll and Bute
10	Work with land managers to expand woodland cover in agricultural areas, thereby contributing to diversification of the rural economy
11	Further develop forest and woodlands' contribution to tourism and recreation in Argyll and Bute
12	Development of a skilled workforce in Argyll and Bute, geared to future forest management and processing requirements, but also reflecting the development of biomass sector and specialist niche activities.
<b>Community development</b>	
13	Support further community involvement in the ownership and management of woodlands, and in the creation of woodland based educational and social enterprises
<b>Access and Health</b>	
14	Further develop the role of woodlands and forests in contributing to outdoor access and recreation
15	Promote the health and social benefits that woodland and forests can bring for both local people and visitors to Argyll and Bute.
<b>Environmental quality</b>	
16	Manage forests and woodlands to conserve enhance water and soils
17	Manage forests and woodlands to conserve and enhance Argyll and Bute's landscape and cultural heritage and people's appreciation and enjoyment of them
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
18	Support the management and where appropriate the restoration of semi-natural woodland
19	Support the control of invasive species where these threaten semi-natural woodland habitats
20	Ensure that woodland and forest expansion and management make a positive contribution to Argyll's biodiversity and people's understanding and appreciation of it
21	Ensure that woodland and forest expansion and management protect internationally, nationally and locally important habitats and species.

3.1.8 The 5 key outcomes of this process are:-

- 1) Provide an overview of the existing woodland and forestry resource and related activities in Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNPA)
- 2) Suggest areas for future forestry and woodland expansion
- 3) Identify potential actions which help deliver on agreed Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNP) objectives for social and economic development, biodiversity, environment and climate change, in accord with the development plan.
- 4) Identify potential future actions which help deliver on the outcomes of the Scottish Forestry Strategy as they relate at a local level to identified priorities for Argyll and Bute (excluding LLTNP).
- 5) Help inform decision-making for grant support available to land managers, rural businesses and rural communities under the Scottish Rural Development Programme.

3.1.9 In terms of timescale the strategy has a 20 year horizon. However, it would be good practice to periodically review the strategy during the lifetime of the document to ensure it is still relevant.

### 3.2 **Relationship with other PPS and environmental objectives**

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes an outline of the ABC WFS relationships with other relevant PPS, and how environmental protection objectives have been taken into account in the Strategy preparation. This section covers these issues and describes the policy context within which the ABC WFS operates, and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the ABC WFS.

3.2.1 Detailed analysis of the relationship with other relevant plans, programmes and Strategies is set out in Appendix A. Any plans, programmes or strategies (PPS) above the Scottish level have generally been excluded from the list, primarily because it is assumed that all relevant international, European and UK environmental legislation has been implemented into regional and local strategy and guidance. Furthermore, the assessment draws on the findings of the SEA of the Scottish Forestry Strategy and the Forest District Strategic Plans covering Argyll and Bute (although it is acknowledged these only apply to Forestry Commission Scotland land), which provide context for the PPS review. The Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy provides a greater level of detail than the Scottish Forestry Strategy, and covers both public and private woodland resources.

3.2.2 The ABC WFS will be adopted as supplementary guidance to the Argyll and Bute Development Plan (Argyll and Bute Structure Plan (Approved 2002) and Argyll and Bute Local Plan (Adopted 2009) and as such is required to cover topics specifically identified in the development plan; and be limited to the provision of further information or detail in respect of policies or proposals set out in the development plan.

3.2.3 The UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines describe the requirements for planning, designing and managing forests and function as the basis of forestry practice in the UK for the independent UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) which is used for voluntary independent certification. Revision of the UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines is underway and consultation is currently taking place. The Forest Guidelines cover all UK forests and include the following topic areas:

- Forests and Landscape
- Forests and Historic Environment
- Forests and Biodiversity
- Forests and Soil
- Forests and Climate Change
- Forests and People
- Forests and Water

3.2.4 The Forest Guidelines are strategic documents which support the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) by explaining how to meet requirements for the sustainable management of forests and woodlands in the UK in relation to each of the topic areas. The identification of potential impacts through the SEA process is considered in the context of these Guidelines, which provide an existing framework of mitigation for potential impacts of the ABC WFS.

3.2.5 Key points arising from the analysis of related PPS for the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy are as follows. (Detailed analysis in Appendix A):-

- the need to follow good environmental practice in respect of forestry and woodland operations to deliver environmental objectives;
- Support for the objectives identified in the Scottish Biodiversity Action Plan will help the strategy deliver in terms of biodiversity;
- support for actions identified in the emerging LBAP will help deliver aims in terms of biodiversity in a manner focused to the specific issues in Argyll and Bute;
- the importance of landscape character in informing proposed areas for new woodland planting and expansion of forestry;
- linking to the delivery of the Scottish Forestry Strategy outcomes at a local level will help provide community, economic and environmental benefits through the identification of Argyll and Bute orientated proposals and actions to achieve the more strategic aims;
- the benefit of providing a more detailed mechanism for implementing the national policies set out within the FES
- the importance of contributing to the local delivery of the priority issues identified for the 3 Forest Districts under each of the SFS themes.

- the requirement to support the strategic vision as set out in the Structure Plan for Argyll and Bute through support for sustainable rural development, supporting rural communities and protecting and enhancing the environment - as linked to forest and woodland related activities.
- the requirement to support the delivery of the adopted local plan through maintaining and protecting the diversity and quality of the local area and landscapes through guiding the location of new woodland development and community projects and also to support the policies of the local plan for trees and woodland, in particular as regards the protection of ancient semi natural woodland and rural and community development related to woodland and forestry activities as identified in the local plan;
- the importance of support for the themes set out in the Argyll and Bute Community Plan in relation to renewable energy production through biomass, and leisure opportunities as outdoor access, environmental enhancement in relation to biodiversity and ancient woodlands, links to SRDP Rural Priorities, and promoting best practice in terms of forest management;
- the need to link to and support the aims of the emerging Core Paths Plan and explore opportunities to develop linkages to the core path network where access is promoted through the ABC WFS;
- the importance of supporting the aims of the Local Transport Strategy through supporting the aims in relation to freight transport and by promoting outdoor access through woodland expansion and proposals that facilitate access.
- assist with delivery of the forestry/woodland related measures in the SRDP by supporting the locally identified objectives;
- encourage the use of locally produced timber and wood products in Argyll and Bute in accord with advice in the Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Guidelines
- importance of following Scottish Government Planning Policy guidance in relation to issues such as flooding, historic environment, landscape and transport. The ABC WFS seeks to support these objectives;
- the need to promote advice, as appropriate, re moving towards low and zero carbon development;
- the need to provide advice re biomass proposals;
- The need to meet with the directions of Circular 1/1999, whilst taking into account the emerging advice which will replace this from Scottish Government.
- actions in terms of invasive non natives and native species that are supportive of the objectives identified in the Species Action Framework should be included in the ABC WFS;
- the Scottish River Basin Management plan aims can be supported through the ABC WFS by encouraging positive actions where the water bodies are most affected by forestry operations and by promoting planting that supports the identified objectives of the RBMP.
- The need to take account of the Climate Change Scotland Act and other objectives, duties and measures identified at national level as they relate to Woodland and Forestry issues.

- The need to provide adequate safeguard for ancient monuments, archaeological areas and other aspects of the historic environment that could be affected by forestry and woodland activities.

### 3.3 Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of “*the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme*”, and “*the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected*”. This section aims to describe the environmental context within which the ABC WFS operates and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the ABC WFS. The table below summarises the data collected and the source.

**Table 4: Data sources used to provide a baseline for the assessment**

Topic	Data source  (includes Argyll and Bute Council GIS data held under licence)
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	European, National & Local designations : SAC, SPA, Ramsar sites SSSI, National Nature Reserves LNRs, Local Nature Conservation Sites LBAP habitats and species Woodland and land cover Ancient Woodland Inventory Scottish Semi-Natural Woodland Inventory Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)
Population and human health	Population – Census/GROS Scottish Index of multiple deprivation Employment sectors and unemployment data Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

	<p>Health trends</p> <p>Open space resources – Open Space Audit</p> <p>Core paths – emerging Core Path Plan data</p>
Air and climatic factors	<p>Air quality monitoring data</p> <p>Areas of peat land</p> <p>Habitats vulnerable to climate change</p>
Water	<p>Ecological status monitoring data SEPA</p> <p>Indicative River and Coastal flood maps</p>
Soil	<p>Vacant and derelict – VDLS register</p> <p>Soil type and quality from:-</p> <p>Land Capability for Forestry Land Cover Map 2000</p> <p>MLURI Prime Agricultural Land</p>
Material Assets	<p>Mineral resources – LP Allocations</p> <p>Energy developments and areas of potential for energy development. – AliEnergy, Local Plan Renewables map</p> <p>Agriculture - MLURI</p> <p>Areas of potential forestry planting</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>Scheduled Monuments</p> <p>Listed buildings</p> <p>Conservation areas</p> <p>Inventory listed Gardens and Designed Landscapes</p> <p>Sites and Monuments Records</p>
Landscape and amenity	<p>Landscape character assessment</p>

	<p>Areas of Panoramic Quality</p> <p>National Scenic Areas</p>
--	----------------------------------------------------------------

The following paragraphs describe the area covered by the ABC WFS:

**3.3.1 Biodiversity, flora and fauna**

Argyll and Bute is the second largest authority in Scotland and covers a range of different environments which create a wide variety of different habitats, including montane, moorland, peatland and coastal. Overall it has a high quality environment with numerous international and national nature designations (See Appendix F for a list of these sites). There is a high proportion of woodland cover at around 30% of the land area, including ancient and semi natural woodlands. See Technical Note for further information e.g. condition, maps etc, native woodland cover.).

**3.3.2 Population and human health**

The population is around 92,000 and is based largely in the main towns of Campbeltown, Helensburgh, Oban, Rothesay, Dunoon and Lochgilphead and other more minor settlements. However, there is still a sizeable number living more remotely with 17% of the population living on islands. Some areas are forecast to have population rise but others are forecast to decline. Forestry, agriculture, tourism and fishing are important for the economy of the area as well as newer industries such as aquaculture and renewable.

**3.3.3 Soil**

Argyll and Bute has mostly peaty gleys and peaty podzols.. There is not a significant level of vacant and derelict land in Argyll and Bute. There is not an abundance of high quality agricultural land. See Technical Note

**3.3.4 Cultural Heritage**

Argyll and Bute has a rich heritage of archaeological features. There are 795 Scheduled Monuments. There are 21 inventory listed gardens and designed landscapes 31 conservation areas (See Appendix F) and over 2,066 listed buildings.

**3.3.5 Water**

In terms of the river basin management process Argyll and Bute is split between 2 management areas; Argyll and Lochaber and the Clyde. The ecological status of water across Argyll and Bute is generally good or high. In the Argyll area there are several key issues causing them to fail to achieve good status. These include the physical alteration of rivers and burns (including the barriers to fish passage) and alterations to river flow. In the Clyde area the key issues are urban drainage pressures; diffuse pollution from rural sources and pressures from our industrial past. Assessment of the rivers and water bodies has been undertaken as part of the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) process which has established the baseline for the ABC WFS area. Those rivers and water bodies affected by forestry activities have been noted and have

associated measures. This information is available at [http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river\\_basin\\_planning.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning.aspx) and a Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken on the RBMP.

### **3.3.6 Landscape**

The environmental quality of Argyll and Bute is one of its key assets, with vast mountain areas and a high proportion of woodland cover as defining characteristic of its landscape. The landscape of Argyll and Bute has been shaped by a combination of both physical and human influences. Of these, the most significant is the region's underlying geology and the extensive modification of landform which took place during the glacial period. Man has also been an important influence, initially in clearing the original forests, and subsequently through the ongoing management, cultivation and subdivision of the land. There are strong contrasts in the scale and character of the landscape. (See Technical Note)

### **3.3.7 Air and Climate**

Argyll and Bute is a predominantly rural area and has not had an air quality problem. It is unlikely that Argyll and Bute will have any Air Quality Management Areas declared. The Climate is temperate.

### **3.3.8 Material Assets**

Argyll and Bute Council supports the general principle of developing sources of renewable energy in appropriate locations. A number of windfarms have been developed and further applications are being processed. Biomass is also being used in district heating systems such as at Glenshellach, Oban and within community facilities. Permissions have been granted for biomass Power Stations. The area also has a number of hydro schemes in place. In relation to waste, recycling rates have been rising and civic amenity sites and kerbside collection schemes support this. Mineral extraction is concerned primarily with hard rock, peat, sand and gravel. (See technical Note)

## **2.4 Gaps and or unreliability of the Environmental Baseline data**

- 2.4.1 The following summarises the likely gaps and/or unreliability of the SEA baseline data, and how they were minimised:
- 2.4.2 There is a lack of information on climate change, the role of woodland and forestry in managing flooding and the role of forestry in slope stabilisation. This was minimised through the identification of further information on the general role of forestry and flood management and slope stabilization as follows : - River Basin Management Plan, SEPA Flood maps and information on slope gradient (figure 9 Technical report ) and slope relative exposure of slopes to the prevailing winds (Figure 10 Technical Report.)
- 2.4.3 There was a lack of information on landscape trends and the implications of climate change on the landscape and forestry and woodland activities during preparation of this draft. SNH is currently undertaking research to explore the landscape implications of climate change, and the available findings of this study will be taken into account in the

final strategy. The Land Use Consultants (2010). An assessment of the impacts of climate change on Scottish landscapes and their contribution to quality of life: Phase 1 - Interim report. *Scottish Natural Heritage* Commissioned Report No. 343 is now available but the final report is not due until August 2010.

2.4.4 There is a lack of information on non native invasive species on the islands. Forestry Commission has information available for the mainland area only at the moment. This was used to provide general information whilst recognising the specific island situation may differ. – See Appendix E.

### 3.4 Environmental Problems

Schedule 3 paragraph 4 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of existing environmental problems, in particular those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance. The purpose of this section is to explain how existing environmental problems will affect or be affected by the ABC WFS, and whether the ABC WFS is likely to aggravate, reduce or otherwise affect existing environmental problems.

Environmental problems were identified through discussions with the Advisory Group (see Appendix D), Land Use Consultants, through public consultation at the Issues stage and through an analysis of the baseline data. Relevant environmental problems are summarised in **Table 5**.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Supporting data (where available at this stage)</b>	<b>Implications for PPS</b>
<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>	Invasive species. Ongoing threat to native species but increase in others. Ongoing threat to limited number of habitats but increase in others. Lack of public awareness of biodiversity issues.	Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan (and emerging review information)  FC Invasive species work	Location and nature of new planting should avoid adverse impact on habitats and species in particular Golden eagle ranges; Priority peatlands; Species rich grasslands; Species rich wetlands; Woodland glade and edge habitats  Increased access and recreation to woodlands may impact on habitats and species through disturbance and erosion, and the ABC WFS provides a context to manage this conflict.  Management of woodlands to reduce levels of invasive species has been developed in the ABC WFS
<b>Population and</b>	Ageing population,	General	The ABC WFS seeks to promote woodland

**Table 5. Environmental issues relevant to the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Topic	Problem	Supporting data (where available at this stage)	Implications for PPS
<b>human health</b>	<p>increase in life expectancy Population decline in some areas</p> <p>General reduction in levels of health Increasing obesity across Scotland</p>	register office for Scotland statistics	recreation in a positive way and support access to woodland and awareness of opportunities for recreation Increased outdoor access could contribute to greater social inclusion, and levels of health and physical activity
<b>Air and Climatic factors</b>	Adapting to climate change Mitigating climate change	Transport Data  Planning applications for renewables	<p>Woodland planting may contribute positively to air quality and climate through filtering and carbon sequestration and the ABC WFS promotes this role.</p> <p>Reduction in level of freight transported by road will be an objective. The promotion of new areas of woodland should ensure compatibility with renewable energy development, but can also support the production of biomass for fuel.</p> <p>Woodland planting may ameliorate the affects of any increased levels of flooding related to climate change.</p> <p>Woodland planting may assist with slope stabilisation. Reducing the impacts of climate change.</p>
<b>Water</b>	River water ecological status is mostly rated excellent/good. Forestry related issues have been identified as part of the RBMP process	SEPA water ecological status classification data SEPA flood risk data	The planting and felling of woodland may have implications for water ecological status, and the ABC WFS is integrated with the objectives of the RBMP in order to help safeguard water ecological status from adverse impacts.
<b>Soil</b>	Very limited proportion of quality agricultural land within Argyll and Bute. Importance of in bye land	Land classification for agriculture	The planting and felling of woodland will have impacts on soil through disturbance and erosion, changes in nutrient status and adverse impacts on the soil resource should be avoided.
<b>Material assets</b>	Increasing demand for renewable energy	Scottish Government	A strategic approach to wind energy development and biomass cropping that

**Table 5. Environmental issues relevant to the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Topic	Problem	Supporting data (where available at this stage)	Implications for PPS
	development	targets Adopted Argyll and Bute Local Plan. Planning Applications	accords with the Development Plan has been accommodated within the ABC WFS.
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	Extensive historic environment resources	Protected sites and features	New woodland planting and felling activities can impact on known and unknown archaeological resources and the ABC WFS promotes the protection of the historic environment.
<b>Landscape, townscape and amenity</b>	High quality mountain landscape	Landscape character assessment	New woodland planting, species choice and felling activities impact on the landscape experience and the ABC WFS promotes the avoidance of adverse landscape impacts and seeks to enhance landscape quality at the strategic level.

### 3.5 Likely evolution of the environment without the ABC WFS

Without the implementation of the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy, woodland expansion would be subject to less detailed guidance and the delivery of the outcomes and objectives of the Scottish Forestry Strategy would be less effectively implemented. Opportunities to tailor forestry activities and priorities to local area characteristics and opportunities would potentially be missed. This would result in fewer benefits for community development, sustainable economic development, biodiversity and climate change within Argyll and Bute. **With** the ABC WFS there would be :-

- **Biodiversity** : Improved collaborative approach to examination of biodiversity issues in relation to forestry and woodland issues within Argyll and Bute. Improved co-ordination and effectiveness of actions related to conservation, enhancement and awareness of biodiversity
- **Human Health** : Enhanced community engagement to determine issues that affect population re woodland and forestry. Health and other population issues taken into account as per emerging guidance with improved opportunities to maximize benefits of access to woodlands for recreation for all land within Argyll and Bute (less LLTNP).
- **Soils** : Improved collaborative approach to assessment of soil issues in relation to woodland and forestry matters. Latest advice re preparation of IFS taken into account in respect of soil issues for all land within Argyll and Bute (less LLTNP).

- **Water** : Improved collaborative approach to issues related to ecological status of water and flooding as they link to woodland and forestry matters. Clear linkage with River Basin Management Plan process allowing integrated approach to forestry and water issues specific to Argyll and Bute.
- **Climate** : Improved collaborative approach to climate change issues and air quality matters giving an integrated response to these issues for Argyll and Bute in relation to woodland and forestry issues.
- **Material Assets** : Emerging advice re relationship of forestry with other renewable energy generation such as wind farms taken into account relating to Argyll and Bute. Enhanced integrated approach to material assets and forestry taken.
- **Cultural Heritage** : Improved collaborative approach to assessment of issues relating to forestry and built heritage. Emerging advice taken into account in integrated manner to safeguard and enhance cultural heritage within Argyll and Bute within the context of woodland and forestry settings.
- **Landscape** : Improved collaborative approach to assessment of landscape issues related to forestry and woodland in Argyll and Bute. Impact of climate change on the environment to be taken into consideration. SNH research underway.

### 3.6 SEA Objectives

The SEA Objectives against which the assessment has been made are set out below.

<b>SEA topic</b>	<b>SEA objectives</b>
<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>	<p>1 To help implement the objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (see SEA objectives a - e below)</p> <p>a) To halt the loss of biodiversity and continue to reverse previous losses through targeted action for species and habitats</p> <p>b) To increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity and engage many more people in conservation and enhancement.</p> <p>c) To restore and enhance biodiversity in all our urban and rural environments through better planning, design and practice.</p> <p>d) To develop an effective management framework that ensures that biodiversity is taken into account in all decision-making</p> <p>e) To ensure that the best new and existing knowledge on biodiversity is available to all policy makers and practitioners.</p>
<b>Population and human health</b>	<p>2 To increase the opportunities for access to and enjoyment of forests and woodlands by all sectors of society</p> <p>3 To promote sustainable tourism and recreation in relation to the forestry sector</p> <p>4 To promote the role of woodland and forestry in contributing to health, quality of life and wellbeing</p> <p>5 To encourage sustainable timber transport</p> <p>6 To maximise the contribution of the forestry sector to the viability of rural</p>

**Table 6: Proposed SEA Objectives to apply in the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

SEA topic	SEA objectives
	communities
<b>Air</b>	<p>7 To minimise the air quality impacts of timber transport</p> <p>8 To maximise the role of woodlands and forestry in contributing to air quality</p>
<b>Climate</b>	<p>9 To increase the potential of the forestry sector in contributing to Scotland's renewable energy resources</p> <p>10 To further increase the role of woodland and forestry in achieving carbon sequestration</p> <p>11 To promote woodland and forestry planning and management that takes account of the need to adapt to climate change</p>
<b>Water and soil</b>	<p>12 To promote forestry and woodland planning and management that contributes positively to sustainable soil management</p> <p>13 To promote forestry and woodland management which contributes positively to the sustainable management of the water environment and achievement of the River Basin Management Plan objectives</p>
<b>Material assets</b> Energy, minerals, waste, land use, forestry, agriculture, tourism	<p>14 To promote the integration and co-ordination of forestry and woodland with other land uses.</p> <p>15 To promote the delivery of renewable energy in accord with the Development Plan</p>
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<p>16 To protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment, including archaeological remains.</p> <p>17 To increase awareness and understanding of cultural heritage related to woodlands</p>
<b>Landscape/townscape and amenity</b>	18 To increase the contribution of forests and trees to scenic values, including distinctiveness and diversity of the landscape.

## 4 Assessment of environmental effects and measures envisaged for the preventions, reduction and offsetting of significant adverse effects

### 4.1 Alternatives considered : Approach to Strategy Preparation

4.1.1 Three alternative scenarios to the approach to development of the strategy were considered by the Steering Group (Argyll and Bute Council and Forestry Commission Scotland) as part of the SEA process. This evaluation took a broad overview and highlighted the value of taking an enhanced engagement approach to the development of the ABC WFS. The following methods were used to determine the alternatives considered as part of this Strategic Environmental Assessment :-

- Comparison - of current approaches to IFS taken by other planning authorities
- Assessment - of current advice re preparation of IFS and community engagement
- Discussion - between members of the Steering Group

The alternatives considered are outlined below. The alternatives were assessed against a simplified assessment framework, using agreed SEA objectives. It should be noted that an IFS is intended to integrate a range of related issues would not focus on one particular issue such as biodiversity.

4.1.2 Potential reasonable alternatives to approach to development of the strategy have been identified as:

1. Do Nothing – An Indicative Forestry Strategy is seen as good practice and is not a requirement. Therefore the first alternative is to do nothing and not prepare an IFS.
2. Circular – Prepare an IFS in accord with Circular 9/1999. This would not take into account changes that have occurred since 1999, for example in national policy.
3. Enhanced – Prepare an IFS that reflects latest advice and draft guidance and also has an enhanced community engagement element to reflect the importance of forestry and woodland and its related activities to the communities of Argyll and Bute.

#### 4.1.3 Assessment methods

The reasonable alternatives to approach to development of the strategy described above have been assessed against the range of environmental issues set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Comments from the Consultation Authorities (SNH, SEPA and The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) have been taken into account regarding the methods, scope and level of detail in this Environmental Report. The assessment findings are shown in **Table 7 below**. Alternative 3 was accepted by both the Steering Group and Advisory Group as the most appropriate way forward for the ABC WFS.

**Table 7: Assessment of Alternatives**

<b>SEA Topic</b>	<b>Alternative 1 Do nothing</b>	<b>Alternative 2 Circular</b>	<b>Alternative 3 Enhanced</b>
Biodiversity Flora and Fauna	Forestry Commission Land – Forest District Plans would apply.  Other land – Forestry Commission Guidelines re biodiversity would be encouraged. Scottish Forestry Strategy and RPAC priorities seek to promote enhanced biodiversity	Biodiversity issues examined and included in IFS for ABC area in accord with Circular 9/1999.	Collaborative approach to examination of biodiversity issues. Latest advice re preparation of IFS taken into account in respect of biodiversity issues.
Population and human health	Forestry Commission Land – Forest District Plans would apply.  Other land - Forestry Commission Guidelines re recreation would be encouraged. Scottish Forestry Strategy and RPAC Priorities would be promoted re recreation and access to woodland.	Circular does not specifically refer to health. Circular notes role of IFS re recreation. Circular notes role of forestry operations in preventing depopulation.	Enhanced community engagement to determine issues that affect population re woodland and forestry. Health and other population issues taken into account as per emerging guidance.
Soil	Forestry Commission Land - Forest District Plans and Soil Guidelines would apply. Other Land – Scottish Forestry Strategy, RPAC priorities and guidelines encouraged.	The Circular notes agricultural land and land capability for planting but does not go into detail on soil quality or address issues such as carbon release from peat land.	Collaborative approach to examination of soil issues. Latest advice re preparation of IFS taken into account in respect of soil issues.
Water	Forestry Commission Land – District Plans would apply. SFC is partner in the River Basin Management Planning Process. Water Guidelines in place.  Other Land - Controlled Activities Regulation would apply and River Basin Management Planning process is in place.	Circular recognizes importance of water quality but was written prior to Water Framework directive.	Collaborative approach to issues related to ecological status of water and flooding. Clear linkage with River Basin Management Plan process allowing integrated approach to forestry and water issues specific to Argyll and Bute.

**Table 7: Assessment of Alternatives**

<b>SEA Topic</b>	<b>Alternative 1 Do nothing</b>	<b>Alternative 2 Circular</b>	<b>Alternative 3 Enhanced</b>
Air and climatic factors	Forestry Commission Land – District Plans would apply. Scottish Forestry Strategy raises air quality and climatic factors as issues. Forestry Guidelines in place.	Climate change and air quality were not issues addressed by Circular 9/1999.	Collaborative approach to climate change issues and air quality matters giving an integrated response to these issues for Argyll and Bute in relation to woodland and forestry issues.
Material assets	Forestry Commission Land – District Plans would apply  Other land – Scottish Forestry Strategy in place and also forestry guidelines.	Interrelationship with wind farm development etc not addressed in Circular 9/1999.	Emerging advice re relationship of forestry with other renewable energy generation such as wind farms taken into account. Integrated approach to material assets and forestry taken.
Cultural heritage	Forestry Commission Land – District Plans would apply.  Other Land - Scottish Forestry Strategy and Guidelines available. Scottish Historic Environment Policy – available.	Circular notes safeguarding of cultural heritage	Collaborative approach to assessment of issues. Emerging advice taken into account in integrated manner to safeguard and enhance cultural heritage.
Landscape	Forestry Commission Land – District Plans would apply.  SNH – Landscape Assessments available. Scottish Forestry Strategy and Guidelines available.	Circular seeks to safeguard and enhance the landscape	Collaborative approach to assessment of landscape issues related to forestry and woodland. Impact of climate change on the environment to be taken into consideration. SNH research underway.

Summary : Alternative 3 uses enhanced community engagement and extended Advisory Group to gather and assess additional information relevant to Argyll and Bute issues. Emerging advice re the preparation of IFS is taken into account rather than restricting the strategy to those issues set out in the Circular 9/1999. Focus is Argyll and Bute wide not restricted to Scottish Forestry Commission land and so more integrated approach to environmental issues can be taken.

## **4.2 Alternatives considered : Detail within the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

4.2.1 The ABC WFS has been prepared under the guidance of the Argyll and Bute Advisory Group (see Appendix D). In terms of the preparation of the ABC WFS the strong cross sector representation on the Advisory Group has been of particular benefit in both raising and addressing a range of environmental issues, ensuring that these matters were picked up early in the process rather than at a later consultation stage. At the more detailed level the objectives and policies to be contained in the strategy and how these are worded, and the proposals were developed through an evolutionary consensus approach during the pre draft phases rather than examining differing options. This approach, during the development of the ABC WFS, has meant that key problems and opportunities have fed directly into the development of the content and aims of the draft Strategy. The Environmental Report therefore contains no alternatives to detail contained within the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy (alternatives to the approach examined above) as the process of plan preparation effectively assessed and removed unsuitable alternatives at each step of its preparation.

### 4.2.2 Assessment methods

The Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy has been assessed against the range of environmental issues set out in Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Comments from the Consultation Authorities (SNH, SEPA and The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland) have been taken into account regarding the methods, scope and level of detail in this Environmental Report.

4.2.3 The expert opinion of the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy Advisory Group was the method used to develop the Strategic Priorities and Actions. Each ABC WFS theme, strategic priority and action was subject to individual scrutiny and the results presented within 3 matrices.

4.2.4 As the ABC WFS contains no strategic priorities or actions that are required to take place at specific locations within Argyll and Bute, the assessment results are therefore generic. However, they do highlight areas where potential issues are likely or may possibly arise during implementation of the ABC WFS. Such issues have been addressed, either by a modification of the ABC WFS strategic priorities or actions, or by inclusion in the ABC WFS of generic guidance on appropriate mitigation that should be carried out during implementation. It should be noted that the strategy is intended to be read as a whole and that many of the Strategic Priorities are mutually supportive, e.g. potential issues re expansion of woodland and landscape are addressed through the Strategic Priorities and actions related to Environment Quality.

### 4.3 Assessment of PPS - Summary

4.3.1 The ABC WFS preferred alternative was assessed using the methods described above. A summary of the assessment findings is shown in Table 9, and the full findings are shown in Appendix B. All ABC WFS Themes, Strategic Priorities and Actions were included in the assessment, the summary results of which are shown below according to the Evaluation Framework in table 8.

<b>Table 8 Evaluation framework</b>						
<b>Significant positive impact</b>	<b>Minimal positive impact</b>	<b>Neutral impact</b>	<b>Unknown impact</b>	<b>Both positive and negative impacts</b>	<b>Minimal negative impact</b>	<b>Significant negative impact</b>
++	+	0	?	+/-	-	--

<b>Table 9 : Summary of Assessment Findings</b>														
<b>SEA topic</b>	<b>SEA Objective</b>						<b>Evaluation (++/+/?/+or-/-/--)</b>							
								<b>ABC WFS Themes</b>						
	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Objective</b>						<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</b>	1	To help implement the objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (see SEA objectives a to e below)						0	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	++	++
	1a	To halt the loss of biodiversity and continue to reverse previous losses through targeted action for species and habitats						0	+/-	+/-	0	-	++	++

	1b	To increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity and engage many more people in conservation and enhancement.	0	0	+/-	++	+	++	++
	1c	To restore and enhance biodiversity in all our urban and rural environments through better planning, design and practice.	0	0	0	0	0	++	++
	1d	To develop an effective management framework that ensures that biodiversity is taken into account in all decision-making	0	0	0	0	0	+	++
	1e	To ensure that the best new and existing knowledge on biodiversity is available to all policy makers and practitioners.	0	0	0	0	0	0	++
<b>Population and human health</b>	2	To increase the opportunities for access to and enjoyment of forests and woodlands by all sectors of society	0	+/-	++	++	++	++	++
	3	To promote sustainable tourism and recreation in relation to the forestry sector	0	+/-	++	++	++	+	++
	4	To promote the role of woodland and forestry in contributing to health, quality of life and wellbeing	+	+	++	++	++	+	+
	5	To encourage sustainable timber transport	0	++	+	0	0	0	0
	6	To maximise the contribution of the forestry sector to the viability of rural communities	+	++	++	++	++	+	+
	<b>Air</b>	7	To minimise the air quality impacts of timber transport	0	++	+	0	0	0
8		To maximise the role of woodlands and forestry in contributing to air quality	0	+	+	0	0	0	0

<b>Climate</b>	9	To increase the potential of the forestry sector in contributing to Scotland's renewable energy resources	++	+	+	+	0	0	0
	10	To further increase the role of woodland and forestry in achieving carbon sequestration	++	+	++	0	0	0	0
	11	To promote woodland and forestry planning and management that takes account of the need to adapt to climate change	++	'+	+	0	0	+	0
<b>Water and soil</b>	12	To promote forestry and woodland planning and management that contributes positively to sustainable soil management	0	0	0	0	0	++	?
	13	To promote forestry and woodland management which contributes positively to the sustainable management of the water environment and achievement of the River Basin Management Plan objectives	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
<b>Material assets</b> Energy, minerals, waste, land use, forestry, agriculture, tourism	14	To promote the integration and co-ordination of forestry and woodland with other land uses.	++	+	++	++	++	+	+
	15	To promote the delivery of renewable energy in accord with the Development Plan	0	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	0
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	16	To protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment, including archaeological remains.	0	0	0	0	+/-	++	+/-
	17	To increase awareness and understanding of cultural heritage related to woodlands	0	0	0	0	+/-	++	0
<b>Landscape/townscape and amenity</b>	18	To increase the contribution of forests and trees to scenic values, including distinctiveness and diversity of the landscape.	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	++	++

4.3.2 Overall, the assessment showed very positive, positive or no impacts for virtually all the ABC WFS Themes, Strategic Priorities and Actions. Some themes/priorities/actions had the potential to have negative impacts, however, the negative impacts were dealt with by other themes/priorities/actions. It should be noted that the strategy requires to be read as a whole. No significant negative impacts were identified.

#### 4.3.3 Potentially negative impacts identified were as follows:-

- Increasing woodland cover for carbon sequestration/timber production can have positive benefits for biodiversity, however, inappropriate expansion and management could impact on biodiversity. Strategic Priorities 20 and 21 ensure that biodiversity is safeguarded from inappropriate expansion. In addition, FC guidance and the EIA process support the safeguarding of biodiversity.
- Potential positive effect on landscape related to additional forest cover. Potential negative impact if inappropriate expansion impacting on landscape. Strategic Priority 17 supports management of forests and woodlands to conserve and enhance the landscape. In addition the Forestry and Landscape guidelines are in place as well as an EIA process for larger forestation schemes.
- Potential positive effect of additional woodland to recreate original setting of historic environment. Potential negative effect if archaeological remains are damaged. Strategic Priority 17 supports management of forests and woodlands to conserve and enhance the cultural heritage. In addition the Forestry and Archaeology guidelines are in place as well as an EIA process for larger afforestation schemes.
- Potential for access to forests via timber transport routes. Potential for timber transport to inhibit pedestrian access. Strategic Priority 8 promotes partnership working on the Timber Transport Group. This provides a forum within which the Council and timber hauliers work together to resolve access issues.
- Developing forest and woodland's contribution to tourism and recreation is in general positive but could have negative impacts in terms of biodiversity, landscape and cultural heritage if not managed appropriately. SP 20, 21 and 17 safeguard against this alongside FC Guidance.
- Increasing access to woods for recreation and tourism has many positive benefits in particular in relation to health. However there is the potential for negative impacts on biodiversity and cultural heritage if this is not managed appropriately. SP 20, 21 and 17 safeguard against this alongside FC Guidance.
- Restoration of semi natural woodland could have a negative impact on archaeological remains. Strategic Priority 17 supports management of forests and woodlands to conserve and enhance the cultural heritage. In addition the Forestry and Archaeology guidelines are in place as well as an EIA process for larger afforestation schemes.

4.3.4 All impacts were deemed to be long-term and permanent, at least as far as can be foreseen. It was also considered to be the case that many were likely to be of a cumulative and synergistic nature. For example SP1 encourage net expansion of woodland in relation to carbon sequestration has an anticipated significant positive impact in terms of climate but also has potential positive benefits in relation to soils (slope stabilisation, water (reducing flooding),

biodiversity (increase in native woodlands). Given the complex nature of these links, no attempt was made to analyse cumulative and synergistic effects.

#### **4.4 Measures envisaged for the prevention, reduction and offsetting of any significant adverse effects**

There are no significant adverse effects anticipated as a result of the implementation of the ABC WFS and therefore no measures have been identified for the prevention, reduction or offsetting of these. The Strategy should be read as a whole as the policies are mutually supportive. Potential minor negative impacts are offset by other Strategic Priorities or actions (as above para 4.3.3) or other related Forestry Commission guidance and processes such as EIA. .

## 5 Monitoring

5.1 Regulation 21 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations requires the Responsible Authority to monitor significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan/programme in order to identify unforeseen adverse effects and to take appropriate remedial action. The following activities were undertaken to establish the monitoring approach:

- An initial review of indicators associated with the SEA objectives and emerging from the baseline analysis
- A subsequent review of potential indicators identified for monitoring the ABC WFS
- Review of key issues emerging from the assessment requiring monitoring
- Consideration of appropriate indicators and monitoring processes

5.2 Given that no significant negative effects have been identified by the SEA, it is suggested that no additional monitoring programme will be required. It is proposed that the ABC WFS itself is monitored through a suite of 19 indicators, to be confirmed in discussion with the Advisory Group prior to publication of the final strategy. These relate directly to the 21 Strategic Priorities identified and the 65 related Priority Actions and have been developed taking into account the outcomes from the SEA. It is important that these indicators are related to specifically to the ABC WFS and avoid duplicating the more strategic monitoring programme associated with the Scottish Forestry Strategy. The proposed indicators are shown in Table 10 below.

<b>SP Ref</b>	<b>Strategic Priority</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
1	Encourage the net expansion of woodland cover in Argyll and Bute in order to further contribute to national targets for carbon sequestration	Net change in woodland cover
2	Support development of biomass sector as a locally available, low carbon source of heat and power	Biomass Information Officer in post (SFC)
3	Support the use of locally produced timber building products particularly where this reduces the requirement for energy intensive materials which need to be imported into Argyll and Bute	Sustainable Design Forum in place
4	Ensure that woodland and forest management takes account of the need to adapt to a changing climate	Best practice guidance available
5	Support the role of woodland and forests in contributing to climate change adaptation strategies	Delivery of research related to these issues
6	Encourage the net expansion of woodland cover in Argyll and Bute in order to further contribute to national targets for woodland cover	Net change in woodland cover
7	Encourage greater use of locally produced timber and wood products in Argyll and Bute	Sustainable Design Forum in place
8	Support continued public/private sector partnership in the forestry sector through the Timber Transport	Argyll Timber Transport Group in place and

	group and through delivery of the Woodland and Forestry Strategy	engagement continuing
9	Work with timber producers and local businesses to add and retain value to the timber product within Argyll and Bute	Sustainable Design Forum in place
10	Work with land managers to expand woodland cover in agricultural areas, thereby contributing to diversification of the rural economy	Additional woodland cover on agricultural land
11	Further develop forest and woodlands' contribution to tourism and recreation in Argyll and Bute	Length of long distance routes developed
12	Development of a skilled workforce in Argyll and Bute, geared to future forest management and processing requirements, but also reflecting the development of biomass sector and specialist niche activities.	Number of Modern Apprenticeships and training places
13	Support further community involvement in the ownership and management of woodlands, and in the creation of woodland based educational and social enterprises	Forest Croft developments Number of forest schools supported Number of Community woodlands supported
14	Further develop the role of woodlands and forests in contributing to outdoor access and recreation	Length of long distance routes supported
15	Promote the health and social benefits that woodland and forests can bring for both local people and visitors to Argyll and Bute.	Length of local path network supported
16	Manage forests and woodlands to conserve enhance water and soils	Delivery of agreed measures in RBMP relating to Forestry and ecological status of water
17	Manage forests and woodlands to conserve and enhance Argyll and Bute's landscape and cultural heritage and people's appreciation and enjoyment of them	Area of native woodland supported SRDP – positive management of archaeological sites related to woodlands
18	Support the management and where appropriate the restoration of semi-natural woodland	Hectares of restored semi natural woodland
19	Support the control of invasive species where these threaten semi-natural woodland habitats	Invasive species protocol in place
20	Ensure that woodland and forest expansion and management make a positive contribution to Argyll's biodiversity and people's understanding and appreciation of it	Area of native woodland supported Number of forest schools supported
21	Ensure that woodland and forest expansion and management protect internationally, nationally and locally important habitats and species.	Site condition monitoring by SNH

## 6 Next steps

6.1 Table 11 lists future milestones in the development of the plan and its SEA, and the dates when these are expected to be completed.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Expected date</b>
Publication of the draft ABC WFS for consultation	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2010
Publication of Environmental Report for consultation, including copies sent to SEA Gateway	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2010
Close of Joint Consultation Period	12 <sup>th</sup> August 2010
Review of consultation responses	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2010
Amendment of ABC WFS and Environmental Report	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2010
Publication of finalised ABC WFS and Environmental Report	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2010

### 6.2 Commenting on the Environmental Report

We would welcome your comments on this Environmental Report. The Environmental Report of the SEA for the ABC WFS was published for consultation on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2010 and comments are requested by 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Details of how to comment can be found on: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/woodland](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/woodland) or by contacting:

Sybil Johnson  
Senior Planning and Strategies Officer  
Argyll and Bute Council  
Development and Infrastructure  
Kilmory  
Lochgilphead  
Argyll  
PA31 8RT  
Tel: 01546 604308  
Email: [Sybil.johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Sybil.johnson@argyll-bute.gov.uk).

## Appendix A. Links to other PPS and environmental objectives

Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy		
Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
UK Forestry Standard Consultation Draft July 2009	<p>The United Kingdom Forestry Standard (UKFS) sets out the approach of the governments in the UK to sustainable forest management (SFM). As the foundation for sustainable forestry in the United Kingdom (UK), the UKFS sets standards, provides a basis for regulation and monitoring (including national and international reporting); and indicates sources of guidance.</p> <p>The Standard outlines the legal requirements and requirement of good forestry practice for soils, the historic environment and people.</p> <p>Forests and soils: This includes protecting forest soil in terms of their physical, chemical and biological properties, maintaining fertility levels, mitigating damage to soil structure, and avoiding adverse impacts on the adjacent environment.</p> <p>Forests and historic environment: This includes taking account of the historic character of the landscape in planting and felling, taking account of relevant designations, maintaining or enhancing the historic and cultural values of landscapes, identifying and evaluating historic features and identifying how important features are to be protected and integrated with the management of the forest environment.</p> <p>Forests and people: This includes protecting existing rights of access and providing recreation facilities, providing information and signage on risks, and involving local people and interested parties, consideration of support for woodland based enterprises and activities.</p>	<p>The UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines provide a framework of good environmental practice within which the forestry actions carried out under the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy will operate.</p>

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
<p>Forests and Climate Change Guidelines Consultation Draft July 2009</p>	<p>Good forestry practice requirements are listed as:</p> <p>Climate change mitigation</p> <p>CCGFPR1 - Forest management should aim to contribute to climate change mitigation over the long term through the net capture and storage of carbon in the forest ecosystem and forest products</p> <p>Climate change adaptation and protection</p> <p>CCGFPR2 - Forest management should aim to enhance the resilience of forests and forest ecosystems in order to reduce the risks posed by climate change to their sustainability</p> <p>CCGFPR3 - Forest management should aim to enhance the potential of forests to protect society from the various effects of climate change</p>	
<p>Forests and Landscape Guidelines Consultation Draft July 2009</p>	<p>Good forestry practice requirements are listed as:</p> <p>Landscape diversity and character</p> <p>LGFGFR3 - Forests should be planned, designed and managed in a way that acknowledges landscape character and supports local distinctiveness</p> <p>LGFGFR4 - Where landscape character has been degraded, forest management should develop or restore the character, or create attractive new landscapes</p>	

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<p>Maintain or enhance cultural values</p> <p>LGFP2 - Forest management should take account of landscape designations, designed landscapes, historic landscapes and the various policies that apply</p> <p>Enhance the scenic quality and amenity value of UK Forests</p> <p>LGFR1 - Forest management should make a positive contribution to scenic quality</p> <p>LGFR5 - Where existing forests fall short of the UKFS &amp; Guidelines on landscape, improvements should be made when management opportunities to do so arise</p>	
<p>Forests and Biodiversity Guidelines Consultation Draft July 2009</p>	<p>Good forestry practice requirements are listed as:</p> <p>Woodland management and biodiversity:</p> <p>BGFPR1 - Forest management should protect or enhance biodiversity</p> <p>BGFPR2 - Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity should be considered in forest plans</p> <p>BGFPR5 - Where existing forests fall short of the UKFS &amp; Guidelines on biodiversity, improvements should be made when management opportunities to do so arise</p> <p>Biodiversity in the wider landscape:</p> <p>BGFPR3 - The implications for biodiversity of woodland creation in the</p>	

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<p>wider environment should be considered, including the role of forest habitats and</p> <p>other habitats in ecological connectivity</p> <p>Non-statutory action plans for priority species and habitats:</p> <p>BGFPR4 - Particular consideration should be given to protecting, enhancing and restoring priority habitats and species as part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan</p>	
<p>Forests and soils Guidelines Consultation Draft July 2009</p>	<p>Good forestry practice requirements are listed as:</p> <p>The physical, chemical and biological properties of forest soils:</p> <p>SGFPR1 - Forest planning and management should ensure that forest soils, are not degraded in terms of their physical, chemical and biological properties</p> <p>SGFPR2 - Forest planning and management should maintain soil fertility levels to ensure the productive potential of forest soils is not degraded</p> <p>SGFPR3 - Where forest operations damage soil structure measures should be taken to mitigate the effects</p> <p>Prevent harmful effects occurring in the wider environment:</p> <p>SGFPR4 - The environment adjacent to forests should not be subject adverse effects due to run-off, contamination or erosion</p>	
<p>Forests and Water Guidelines</p>	<p>The consultation Draft of the Forests and Water Guidelines 2009 is not yet available. The 2003 guidance provides information on the effects of forests on the freshwater environment and specific</p>	

Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy		
Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
(2003)	recommendations on forest operations to protect against these effects.	
Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan	The Plan outlines the importance of biodiversity and its role in working towards a sustainable future and highlights the special biological features in Argyll and Bute. The Plan is currently under review	The current LBAP sets out Actions for woodland highlighting actions in particular for plantation, Caledonian pinewood and atlantic oakwood. The ABC WFS will support the actions set out within the LBAP and take account of the emerging LBAP.
Argyll and Firth of Clyde Landscape Character Assessment 1996	The study undertook a detailed assessment of the landscape character of Argyll and the Firth of Clyde and established landscape character zones and key character features. This has provided a better understanding of these character zones and features, enabling better conservation, restoration, management and enhancement of them.	The LCA will inform suggestions for new woodland planting and expansion within the ABC WFS.
Forestry Commission Scotland (2006) Scottish Forestry Strategy	Sets out a vision for Scottish forestry based on the following outcomes: 1:Improved health and well-being of people and their communities 2:Competitive and innovative businesses contributing to the growth of the Scottish economy 3:High quality, robust and adaptable environment	The ABC WFS will contribute to the delivery of these outcomes at a local level within Argyll and Bute (excluding the LLTNP), providing community, economic and environmental benefits through the identification of proposals and actions to achieve these aims
Forest Enterprise Scotland Framework Strategic Plan 2008-2013	The Framework Strategic Plan provides direction for the fourteen Forest District Strategic Plans, 3 of which cover the Argyll and Bute area.  The FES Strategic Plan sets out a series of national policies which complement the more locally specific policies contained within each of the district level documents.	The ABC WFS provides a more detailed mechanism for implementing the national policies set out within the FES under the key themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change;</li> <li>• Timber;</li> <li>• Business development;</li> <li>• Community development;</li> <li>• Access and health;</li> </ul>

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental quality; and</li> <li>• Biodiversity.</li> </ul>
Cowal and Trossachs; Lorne; and West Argyll Forest District Strategic plans (2006/7 – 2016/17)	There are 3 District Strategic Plans covering Argyll and Bute. The plans outline how the National Forest Estate forests will be managed to deliver the SFS Vision and Outcomes. The plans ensure that local issues are addressed together with national objectives by producing locally-specific policies in response to the seven national themes presented in the SFS.	The ABC WFS will contribute to the local delivery of the priority issues identified for the 3 Forest Districts under each of the SFS themes.
Argyll and Bute Structure Plan (Approved 2002)	<p>The structure plan sets out the development strategy for the Argyll and Bute Structure Plan area.</p> <p>The Overall Aims of this Structure Plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a strategic land use plan for the 10 year Plan period up to 2012.</li> <li>• promote appropriate planning responses to the strategic economic, environmental and land use issues facing the distinctive island, peninsular, mainland and conurbation edge areas of Argyll and Bute.</li> <li>• establish and maintain a ten year supply of marketable business and industrial land and a five year supply of land for housing.</li> <li>• promote ‘sustainable development’ within short- and long-term economic, social, AND environmental perspectives.</li> <li>• promote the safeguarding and the enhancement of the natural and historic environment and the maintenance of biodiversity within Argyll and Bute.</li> </ul>	The ABC WFS will support the strategic vision for Argyll and Bute through its support for sustainable rural development, supporting rural communities and protecting and enhancing the environment - as linked to forest and woodland related activities.

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guide the preparation of the detailed Argyll and Bute Local Plan and a future Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Local Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Guiding principles which underpin the approach to sustainable development in Argyll and Bute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The win/win principle</b> – considering the short- and long-term from the outset and favouring the most sustainable option; this entails safeguarding and adding value to economies AND the environment.</li> <li>• <b>The biodiversity maintenance principle</b> – reinforcing habitats and variety of life allied to the local biodiversity action plan and partnership process.</li> <li>• <b>The precautionary principle</b> – based on prudent avoidance and risk assessment.</li> <li>• <b>The polluter pays principle</b> – based on natural justice and effective enforcement.</li> </ul>	
Argyll and Bute Local Plan Review - Adopted August 2009	<p>The Argyll and Bute Local Plan Review provides the detailed policy framework to guide future development, land use and investment in Argyll and Bute for the period to 2014.</p> <p>The main objectives are as follows:-</p> <p>Economic and Social Objectives SI 1</p> <p>a) to improve economic competitiveness and the relatively poor economic performance of Argyll and Bute as a whole.</p> <p>b) to enhance the economic and social prospects of the geographically diverse local communities in Argyll and Bute.</p>	<p>The ABC WFS will seek to maintain and protect the diversity and quality of the local area and landscapes through guiding the location of new woodland development and community projects.</p> <p>The ABC WFS will support the policies of the local plan for trees and woodland, in particular as regards the protection of ancient semi natural woodland. It will also support the aims for rural and community development related to woodland and forestry activities as identified in the local plan.</p>

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<p>c) to promote appropriate responses to the variety of challenging economic, transport-related and planning circumstances facing these local communities.</p> <p>d) to treat the rich natural and historic environment of Argyll and Bute as a not fully realised economic asset which, if safeguarded and enhanced, can stimulate further investment and increased economic activity.</p> <p>Environmental Objectives SI 2</p> <p>a) to safeguard the diverse and high quality natural and built heritage resources, including the abundant landward and maritime biodiversity of Argyll and Bute.</p> <p>b) to reinforce the strength of protection given to the European and national statutorily protected nature conservation sites, habitats, species and built heritage sites, with which Argyll and Bute is particularly richly endowed.</p> <p>c) to enhance and invest in the quality of the natural and built environment and to engage development more effectively with this enhancement process.</p> <p>d) to encourage development of a scale, form, design and location appropriate to the character of the landscape and settlements of Argyll and Bute.</p>	
Argyll and Bute Community Plan 2009– 2013	In Argyll and Bute Community Planning is a process whereby public agencies and other key stakeholders work together to deliver better services and, through representation and participation, involve people and communities in the decisions that affect them most.	The ABC WFS can support the themes set out in the Argyll and Bute Community Plan in relation to renewable energy production through biomass, and leisure opportunities as outdoor access, environmental enhancement in relation to biodiversity and ancient

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<p>The plan identifies four key themes for partnership action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy</li> <li>• environment,</li> <li>• social affairs</li> <li>• community engagement</li> </ul> <p>Under the them of the environment, the plan aims to:-</p> <p>Protect and enhance our built, natural, and managed environment whilst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting our cultural, social and natural heritage</li> <li>• using our environment to create employment and prosperity</li> <li>• protecting our unique area</li> </ul> <p>To achieve this the plan supports a range of actions including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of a <b>renewable energy</b> industry in Argyll and Bute, ensuring that the development complements the <b>outstanding biodiversity</b> and landscape of Argyll and Bute.</li> <li>• rural businesses by ensuring good access to the <b>Scottish Rural Development Programme</b>.</li> <li>• Argyll and Bute’s crofts and farms through their agricultural businesses to sustain many of the UK and Europe’s <b>iconic species</b> and habitats such as marsh fritillary butterflies, corncrakes, chough, golden eagles, otters, flower-rich machair and old oak woodlands.</li> <li>• continue to sustain and enhance the management of Argyll and Bute’s forests and woodland with particular emphasis on adding value to the local economy.</li> <li>• Increase the value of their contribution with developments in renewable energy</li> <li>• encouraging more access by walkers, cyclists and horse riders</li> <li>• adopting best practice management of sensitive woodlands to</li> </ul>	<p>woodlands, links to SRDP Rural Priorities, and promoting best practice in terms of forest management.</p>

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<p>improve biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners in transport and health to ensure opportunities for all to enjoy our natural environment and improve the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.</li> </ul> <p>Priorities for the next 4 years include:-</p> <p><b><i>promote our cultural, social and natural heritage by -</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving access to forestry and woodland</li> <li>• Promoting health and wellbeing through activities such as cycling and walking</li> </ul> <p><b><i>utilise our environment to create employment and prosperity by -</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with our business partners and communities to ensure renewable energy</li> </ul> <p>developments compliment landscape and biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring good access to the Scottish Rural Development Programme to support rural businesses</li> </ul> <p><b><i>protect our unique area by</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting iconic species and habitats</li> <li>• Adopting best practice for the management of sensitive woodlands</li> </ul>	
Argyll and Bute Council Draft Consultative Draft Core Paths Plan 2009	The Plan identifies a network of “core paths” sufficient to give the public reasonable access for walking, cycling, horse-riding and access	The ABC WFS will support the aims of the Core Paths Plan and explore opportunities to develop linkages to the core path network where access is promoted

Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy		
Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	to inland water and sea lochs launch points in Argyll and Bute, excluding the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.	through the ABC WFS.
Moving Forward - Argyll and Bute Local Transport Strategy 2007 - 2010	The Strategy identifies key transport objectives covering accessibility, integration, freight, choice, environment and safety issues.	The ABC WFS will support the aims of the LTS through supporting the aims in relation to freight transport and by promoting outdoor access through woodland expansion and proposals that facilitate access.
The Scottish Rural Development Programme	The SRDP is a £1.6 billion programme of economic, environmental and social measures designed to develop rural Scotland over the next six years. Individuals and groups may seek support to help deliver the Government's strategic objectives in rural Scotland.	The ABC WFS will seek to deliver the forestry/woodland related measures in the SRDP by supporting the locally identified objectives.
Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Guidelines	Sustainable Design Guidance for new build , extensions and refurbishment, promoting the use of local resources such as timber	The ABC WFS will encourage the use of locally produced timber and wood products in Argyll and Bute
Scottish Planning Policy (includes Flooding, historic environment, landscape, Transport)	Scottish Planning policy - related to sustainable development objectives in terms of transport, flooding, built environment, landscape, biodiversity and forestry.	The ABC WFS will seek to support the policy objectives identified in the Scottish Planning Policy
Planning Advice Note 84 Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development (PAN 84)	Planning Advice Note - provides advice on moving towards low and zero carbon developments ( <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/214728/0057273.pdf">www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/214728/0057273.pdf</a> );	The ABC WFS will consider the use of forest products in construction and the potential they have to enable a move towards a low/zero carbon development.
Planning Advice Note 45 Renewable Energy Technologies (PAN 45)	Planning Advice Note - provides advice for both large and small scale renewable proposals ( <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans/Q/editmode/on/forceupdate/on">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans/Q/editmode/on/forceupdate/on</a> )	The ABC WFS will seek to support renewable energy technologies as they relate to the woodland and forest environment.
Circular 1/1999	This Circular provides an overview of the purpose and coverage of Indicative Forestry Strategies (IFSs) in practice, and it explains the role of IFSs in relation to planning authorities' Structure Plans. The Circular provides advice for local authorities on the preparation and content of IFSs, explains the key issues and opportunities for woodland	The ABC WFS will meet with the directions in Circular 9/1999 in so far as practicable given the changes in policy and planning legislation since it was written. New guidance will be taken into account as it emerges.

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	expansion, and describes a number of detailed aspects that need to be addressed. Lastly, it offers revised definitions for the 'preferred', 'potential' and 'sensitive' land categories used in Circular 13/1990, and emphasises the importance of maintaining the background data and monitoring the operation of IFSS .	
SNH's Species Action Framework	This provides a list of 32 species for national priority action over the next 5 years, including key species associated with woodland habitats such as capercaillie and black grouse.	The ABC WFS will be supportive of the objectives identified in the Species Action Framework
the Water Framework Directive implemented in Scotland as the Water Environment Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (WEWS Act) and the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (as amended)	Directive's requirements to ensure no deterioration in the status of water bodies, enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems (including surface waters, coastal waters, transitional waters and groundwater); promote sustainable water use; reduce pollution; and contribute to the mitigation of floods and droughts	The ABC WFS will be supportive of the WFD as delivered for the ABC area through the Scottish River Basin Management Plan
River Basin Management Planning process	The River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Scotland River Basin District and the draft Area Management Plans describe environmental objectives for each waterbody to protect and improve the water environment and a Programme of Measures to progress towards achieving these environmental objectives.	
The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	The Act, creates the statutory framework for greenhouse gas emissions reductions in Scotland The Act includes other provisions on climate change in Part 5, including adaptation, forestry, energy efficiency and waste reduction.	The ABC WFS will take account of the Climate Change Scotland Act and other objectives, duties and measures identified at national level as they relate to Woodland and Forestry issues.
Changing Our Ways – Scotland's Climate Change Programme (2006);	The programme provides national interpretation of broader climate change objectives	

**Plans, programmes, strategies and environmental objectives to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their relationship with Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy**

Relevant plan/strategy	Environmental objectives/requirements	How it affects or is affected by the Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy
	<a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/30091039/0">www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/30091039/0</a>	
the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	The Act places duties on public bodies to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in the Act in exercising its functions;	
Tomorrow's Climate, Today's Challenge: UK Climate Change Programme (2006)	The programme sets out measures to reduce emissions target every sector of the economy <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukccp/index.htm">www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/ukccp/index.htm</a>	
The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	An Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to ancient monuments; to make provision for the investigation, preservation and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest and (in connection therewith) for the regulation of operations or activities affecting such matters; to provide for the recovery of grants under section 10 of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972 or under section 4 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 in certain circumstances; and to provide for grants by the Secretary of State to the Architectural Heritage Fund	The ABC WFS will take account of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as related to Woodland and Forestry issues
Scottish Historic Environment Policy July 2009	The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP ) document sets out Scottish Ministers' policies for the historic environment, provides greater policy direction for Historic Scotland and provides a framework that informs the day-to-day work of a range of organisations that have a role and interest in managing the historic environment.	The ABC WFS will take account of the SHEP as related to Woodland and Forestry issues
Scotland's Biodiversity: It's In Your Hands 2004 & Implementation Plans 2005-2007.	Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity for health, enjoyment & well-being of people. Actions to conserve and enhance biodiversity in rural, urban, marine, education, local and cross-cutting sectors.	The ABC WFS will take account of the objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, as related to woodland and forestry issues

**Appendix B. Full assessment results  
See Spreadsheets**

## Appendix C – Scoping Outcomes

The following table provides a summary record of the scoping outcomes, and how comments from the consultation authorities were taken into account.

Consultation Authority Comment	Response
<b>Scottish Environment Protection Agency</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Generally, the scoping report provides clear and detailed information on the proposed scope and level of detail of the assessment and covers most of the aspects that we would wish to see addressed at this stage. Subject to the detailed comments provided in Annex 1 below, we are generally content with the scope and level of detail proposed for the ER.	Comment welcomed – detailed comments taken into consideration as set out below.
<b>Relationship with other Plans, Policies and Strategies (PPS)</b>	
We consider that the review is very thorough and includes the relevant plans, programmes and strategies for the SEA topics within our remit.	Comment welcomed
We accept that PPS above the national level have been excluded, and that this current SEA builds on the context set by the SEA of the Scottish Forestry Strategy and the Forest District Strategic Plans.	Noted – no change required
In addition we bring the following PPS relating to climate change to your attention for consideration.:- Changing Our Ways – Scotland’s Climate Change Programme (2006) Tomorrow’s Climate, Today’s Challenge: UK Climate Change Programme (2006) Planning Advice Note 84 Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development Planning Advice Note 45 Renewable Energy Technologies	Added to Appendix A. Links to other PPS and environmental objectives
<b>Baseline information</b>	
The scoping report provide good specific baseline data for those aspects of the environment where we have an interest.	Comment welcomed
We hold significant amounts of environmental data, such as flood risk areas, waste data and watercourse classification, which may be of relevance to establishing the baseline and environmental problems for the strategy area. Some of this data is now readily available on our website and a copy of our publications list is available from <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/access_to_information.aspx">www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/access_to_information.aspx</a> . Other local information may also be available from our Access to Information unit at Corporate Office (telephone: 01786 457700).	Flood risk maps available in Council GIS examined. Watercourse classification on SEPA website examined. It is noted that this information is not available for use within the Council GIS without charge.
Please note that a new monitoring and classification system for water bodies was introduced by the Water Framework Directive which is based on the ecological status rather than just water quality. The ecological status of a water body takes account of biological, physico-chemical, hydrological and morphological properties. For further details on the new classification system please refer to our website ( <a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/monitoring_and_classification.aspx">www.sepa.org.uk/water/monitoring_and_classification.aspx</a> ).	Argyll and Bute Council and Forestry Commission are both closely engaged in the RBMP process. The ecological status of water quality has been taken into account.

<p>In addition to this there are other sources of information which may be useful and to try and help this work progress generally, we make the following suggestions.</p> <p>The new website <a href="http://www.seaguidance.org.uk">www.seaguidance.org.uk</a> - baseline information on air, soil and water.</p> <p>In relation to climatic factors you may find that the SNIFFER publication "A handbook of climate trends across Scotland" can provide useful information (<a href="http://www.sniffer.org.uk">www.sniffer.org.uk</a>).</p> <p>The Scottish Climate Change Impacts Partnership (SCCIP) website (<a href="http://www.sccip.org.uk">www.sccip.org.uk</a>) also offers free access to data on climate trends and their impacts on Scotland which might be helpful.</p>	<p>Additional sources of information noted and taken into account.</p>
<p>We support the clear way in which data is presented making use of maps and diagrams</p>	<p>Comment welcomed</p>
<p>We also welcome the consideration of data gaps, difficulties and limitations of the SEA baseline.</p>	<p>Comment welcomed</p>
<p>Where information on a plan level is not available our State of the Environment Report for Scotland could provide national information (<a href="http://www.sepa.org.uk/changetomorrowtoday/report/index.html">www.sepa.org.uk/changetomorrowtoday/report/index.html</a>).</p>	<p>Additional information source noted and taken into account</p>
<p>A summary of the likely changes to the environment if the strategy is not implemented, as set out in Section 2.5.4, should be provided in the ER.</p>	<p>A summary of the likely changes to the environment if the strategy is implemented is included in Section 3.5 - Likely evolution of the environment without the ABC WFS</p>
<p><b>Environmental problems</b></p>	
<p>We consider that the environmental problems described in Section 2.5 of the scoping report generally highlight the main issues of relevance for the SEA topics within our remit.</p>	<p>Comment welcomed</p>
<p>Under the water or climate change topics consideration could also be given to potential role of forestry in relation to flooding.</p>	<p>This issue is dealt with in paragraphs 1.15, 3.5, 4.3.4 and tables 3,5,7 and 9. of the Environmental Report</p>
<p><b>Alternatives</b></p>	
<p>We are satisfied with the alternatives outlined. These should be assessed as part of the SEA process and the findings of the assessment should inform the choice of the preferred option. This should be documented in the ER.</p>	<p>Comment welcomed. Assessment of alternatives is dealt with in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 and Table 7</p>
<p>It may also be possible to consider reasonable alternatives in relation to the objectives and policies to be contained in the strategy and how these are worded, or reasonable alternatives to specific proposals. If any such reasonable alternatives are identified during the development of the strategy, then they should be assessed as part of the SEA process and the findings of the assessment should inform the choice of the preferred option. This should be documented in the ER.</p>	<p>This issue is dealt with in Section 4.2 and Appendix D of the Environmental Report.</p>
<p><b>Scoping in/out of SEA Objectives</b></p>	
<p>We agree that in this instance all environmental receptors should be scoped into the assessment.</p>	<p>Comment noted. All environmental receptors were scoped into the assessment in the Environmental Report.</p>
<p><b>Methodology for assessing environmental effects</b></p>	
<p>It is good practice to provide a worked example of the assessment process in the scoping</p>	<p>Comment noted. See Section 4.2 for assessment</p>

report. This is to allow the Consultation Authorities to get an idea of the intended approach to the assessment in order to inform their comments on the scope and level of detail. As this has not been provided we are able to provide only limited advice on the proposed methodology.	process, which it is considered is in accord with the SEA guidance.
It is proposed to undertake the assessment using a set of SEA objectives. However, it is unclear from the information presented in Section 3.3 of the scoping report as to which of the main components of the strategy will be assessed against these objectives. It is also unclear how the individual objectives under each SEA topic will be used in the assessment.	Comment noted. The Themes, Strategic Priorities and Actions have been assessed against the SEA Objectives.
We would suggest that assessment of the individual Strategic Priorities under each of the strategy's Themes could be used as the basis for this assessment. Please note that the environmental assessment should be carried out on all aspects of the strategy that are likely to result in significant environmental effects. This may include the strategy's themes, objectives, policies and proposals/actions as well as alternatives.	Comment noted. The Themes, Strategic Priorities and Actions have been assessed against the SEA Objectives. See Appendix B
Guidance on assessment techniques and developing assessment methods can be found in Chapter 9 of the Scottish Government SEA Toolkit. We would recommend that enough information and justification is provided in the ER to allow the Consultation Authorities to understand how the results of the assessment were reached.	The Scottish Government SEA Toolkit has been used in the preparation of the Environmental Report.
We would encourage you to use the assessment as a way to improve the environmental performance of individual aspects of the final option. Proposals for enhancement would also be supported.	Comment noted.
<b>Mitigation</b>	
We note that mitigation and enhancement measures will be proposed through the assessment process. We consider that mitigation is a crucial part of SEA in that it offers an opportunity to not only address potential adverse effects of a strategy, but also to make a strategy even more positive than it already may be. We would recommend that the mitigation hierarchy be followed ie: avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate.	See paragraph re mitigation 4.4
One of the most important ways to mitigate significant environmental effects identified through the assessment is to make changes to the strategy itself so that significant effects are avoided. The ER should therefore identify any changes made to the current draft of the strategy as a result of the environmental assessment.	No significant environmental impacts were identified as a result of the assessment.
<b>Monitoring</b>	
Although not specifically required at this stage, we would welcome the early consideration of monitoring requirements to be included in the ER. We note the early consideration of the choice of indicators in Table 6 of the scoping report. The chosen indicators may need to be targeted to monitor the potential environmental effects likely to result from the proposals in the strategy identified through the assessment process, and as far as possible should establish a clear link between implementation of the strategy and the identified effects to the environment. Wherever possible and appropriate, existing monitoring frameworks and indicators can be used effectively to meet the SEA monitoring requirements.	SEA Monitoring Requirements have been considered in the ER – Chapter 5
<b>Next steps</b>	
Section 4 of the scoping report indicates that the ER consultation period will run between April and May however the specific time period proposed for consultation on the ER is not clear.	Consultation Authorities contacted prior to consultation period to advise of dates and time

<p>This period should be agreed with the Consultation Authorities at the scoping stage. Accordingly, we would welcome further dialogue with the Responsible Authority to agree an appropriate timeframe. Typical consultation periods range from 6-12 weeks depending on the content and nature of the strategy. The consultation period must offer the Consultation Authorities and the public an early and effective opportunity to express views and opinions.</p>	<p>period (6 weeks). In addition it should be noted that significant levels of engagement have been undertaken with the public, Advisory Group and Steering Group prior to the publication of the draft strategy, including joint public sessions with the River Basin Management Plan team.</p>
<p>We would also find helpful if the ER included a summary record of the scoping outcomes, and how comments from the consultation authorities were taken into account</p>	<p>Record of scoping outcomes and how the comments from the consultation authorities were taken into account provided in Appendix C of the ER.</p>
<p><b>Historic Scotland</b></p>	
<p><b>General</b></p>	
<p>I found the Scoping Report to be clear and, subject to the specific comments set out below and in the annex to this letter, I am content with the scope and level of detail proposed for the environmental assessment.</p>	<p>Comment welcomed</p>
<p><b>Baseline Information</b></p>	
<p>Simply for information, Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) provides a useful definition of the historic environment. It defines that the historic environment encompasses built heritage features (ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings, townscapes, parks, gardens and designed landscapes, as well as marine heritage) and the context or setting in which they sit, and the patterns of past use, in landscapes and within the soil, and also in our towns, villages and streets. It also recognises that the historic environment has less tangible aspects including the historical, artistic, literary, linguistic and scenic associations of places and landscapes.</p>	<p>Scottish Historic Environment Policy has been taken into account – see Section - Relationship with other PPS</p>
<p><b>Relationship with other Plans, Programmes and Strategies</b></p>	
<p>Appendix 1 sets out the relationships between the emerging strategy and other plans. It lists the local, national and regional plans, programmes and strategies that will be reviewed in the SEA including those for the historic environment. I note that you have included The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP). You may also find the following useful for your review:</p> <p>The new <i>Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)</i>, which supersedes <i>SPP 23 Planning and the Historic Environment</i> was published in February 2010. This document can be found at: <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf">http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf</a></p>	<p>The SPP has been included in the review of related PPS. The Guidance notes will be taken into account in once finalized and formally issued.</p>

<p><i>Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes</i> replace the guidance previously provided by the Memorandum of Guidance (1998) and were subject to consultation earlier in the year. That consultation sought views on the form and content of a series of guidance notes, which are designed to support the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) and Scottish Planning Policy. The notes have been designed to offer clear and consistent advice to professionals, developers and applicants. Although now closed, the consultation documents can be accessed via the following link: <a href="http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/about/consultations/closedconsultations.htm">http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/about/consultations/closedconsultations.htm</a></p>	
<p>I welcome the inclusion of Table 1 which outlines the key implications for the strategy of the PPS review. In summary, the key environmental protection objective of the legislation and policy framework is 'to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment'</p>	<p>Comment welcomed . Relevant sections in ER are Paragraph 3.2.4 and Appendix A</p>
<p><b>Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment</b></p>	
<p>I am content that the baseline set out at Table 2 and Appendix 2 of the scoping report provides a good summary of the historic environment within the Argyll and Bute Council area. As a minor point, I suggest changing the wording from <i>scheduled ancient monuments</i> to <i>scheduled monuments</i> to reflect that not all monuments are ancient.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Scheduled Ancient Monument changed to Scheduled Monument.</p>
<p>Simply for information Historic Scotland can provide up to date GIS datasets under licence for scheduled monuments, listed buildings, and gardens and designed landscapes (contact <a href="mailto:hsgmanager@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">hsgmanager@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a>). This information can also be downloaded from Historic Scotland's spatial data warehouse at <a href="http://hsewsf.sedsh.gov.uk/pls/htmlldb/f?p=500:1:8448412299472048421::NO">http://hsewsf.sedsh.gov.uk/pls/htmlldb/f?p=500:1:8448412299472048421::NO</a></p>	<p>ABC hold this information under licence.</p>
<p>Information on Conservation Areas is available from your council. Information on the Sites and Monuments Record is available from Dr Carol Swanson West of Scotland Archaeology Services, 0141 287 8332.</p>	<p>The Conservation sites are noted in table 4 as an information source. The list of sites in the ABC WFS area is included in Appendix F. Dr Carol Swanson is a member of the Advisory Group See Appendix D.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Issues</b></p>	
<p>I found the information included in Table 3 on the environmental problems relevant to the strategy useful. I agree that projects that are identified within the framework such as new woodland planning and felling activities could have the potential to impact on the known and unknown historic environment resources and that the strategy should ensure the protection of the historic environment.</p>	<p>This aspect has been dealt with in the ABC WFS and is highlighted in the Environmental Report. SP17 seeks to ensure the protection of the Historic environment. SP 12 related to a skilled local workforce is supportive of this aim.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives</b></p>	
<p>I note that the ER will assess reasonable alternatives to its preparation including a 'do-nothing' option. As well as assessing alternatives to the implementation of the strategy you may also wish to consider alternatives that arise within the strategy itself. For example, where a</p>	<p>Comment noted. Assessment of alternatives is dealt with in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 and Table 7</p>

<p>preferred objective, policy or option for a project is identified the Environmental Report could include an assessment of alternatives to that project to demonstrate that the environmental implications of the various options have been considered in determining the preferred option to be taken forward in the strategy. I would be happy to discuss this further with you if necessary.</p>	
<p><b>Scoping in/out of SEA issues</b></p>	
<p>I note that the historic environment has been scoped in to the assessment and I am content.</p>	<p>Comment noted and welcomed</p>
<p><b>Methodology for assessing environmental effects</b></p>	
<p>The environmental assessment will undertake an assessment of each of the main components of the strategy against the SEA objectives set out in Table 6. On the basis of information provided it is my understanding that this will include the objectives and potential actions identified in the strategy. When undertaking an environmental assessment at the strategic level you may find that some impacts are uncertain. Where this is the case it is important to identify these issues and to be clear how they will be taken into account at the lower level, for example at project level, and who will be responsible for following them through. I am content with the SEA objectives set out for the historic environment in Table 6.</p>	<p>Themes, Strategic Priorities and Actions have been assessed. Some impacts were uncertain and these have been identified in Appendix B.</p>
<p><b>Mitigation</b></p>	
<p>Mitigation is not addressed in the scoping report. Mitigation may involve making changes to the guidance and/or developing more detailed mitigation proposals to be implemented as the guidance is delivered. It would be helpful in the Environmental Report to clearly describe any changes made to the strategy as a result of the environmental assessment, and to clearly set out any recommendations or expectations for lower level plans, projects or activities that are identified as mitigation measures. It would also be helpful to identify in the report who will be responsible for ensuring that the mitigation measures are taken forward as the strategy is implemented.</p>	<p>See paragraph re mitigation 4.4</p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p>	
<p>Monitoring the effects of the strategy is an important part of the SEA process. To aid in this indicators should be chosen for the historic environment that reflect both the actions to be taken within the programme and the potential impacts identified in the course of the SEA. In this respect the indicator 'Number and condition of designated and non-designated sites' is not necessarily a good measure of the effectiveness of the strategy. This is because the number of historic environment assets can be a result of other influences such as Historic Scotland's designation programmes. At the monitoring stage, you may wish to develop indicators that are closely related to the expected effects of the guidance. I would be happy to discuss this with you as the assessment progresses.</p>	<p>SEA Monitoring Requirements have been considered in the ER – Chapter 5. See indicator in relation to SP17</p>
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	
<p>The time proposed for the period of consultation on the Environmental Report (Table 9 in the Scoping Report) has not been specified and will need to be agreed with the Consultation Authorities. (For information, this information is required at the scoping stage by section 15(1)(b)). For administrative purposes, Historic Scotland consider that the consultation period commences on receipt of the relevant documents by the SEA Secretariat. Please note that a</p>	<p>Consultation Authorities contacted prior to consultation period to advise of dates and time period (6 weeks).</p>

consultation period of 6 weeks is preferred.	
<b>Scottish Natural Heritage</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Subject to the specific comments set out below and in the annex to this letter, SNH is generally content with the scope and level of detail proposed for the environmental report.	Comment noted and welcomed
We do, however, wish to make some comments in relation to the inclusion of biodiversity objectives at national and local level within the overall scope of the study, and to other highly applicable national strategies and plans. In particular, we note that within Section 3 Table 6 the first stated SEA objective is to help implement the objectives of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy. However, we also note that there is no mention of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and associated Plans within the earlier section which reviews the 'Relationship with Other Plans Programmes and Environmental Objectives'.	The Scottish biodiversity Strategy has been included in the PPS review (See Appendix A and paragraph 3.2.4
The Scottish Biodiversity Forum (SBF) which coordinates the delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS) is in the process of adopting an ecosystem based approach to its biodiversity programme. The SBF sub groups have recently produced draft plans based on Freshwater and Wetland, Upland, and Woodland ecosystems. Although all plans are relevant to the ABC WFS, the Woodland ecosystem plan will be the most applicable to this Strategy as its sets out the priorities and actions required to address key issues under Scottish Biodiversity and Forestry Strategies. We strongly recommend that reference is made to this plan and the work of the SBF sub groups, and we suggest that the emerging outcomes of these plans should also be supported by the ABC WFS.	Comments regarding the Draft Strategy will be taken into account in the preparation of the final ABC WFS. The Woodland ecosystem plans were not readily available during the preparation of the draft ABC WFS. Any additional information will be taken into account prior to finalizing the Strategy as appropriate.
SNH also notes that recognition is given to SNH's Species Action Framework in Appendix 1 but as above this is also not mentioned in the body of the Scoping Report. It should be noted that a number of Species within the Framework are dependent on woodland, and/or woodland as a component of their habitat range. Woodland expansion or new planting close to existing woodland could have a potential impact on these species and SNH would therefore recommend that recognition is given to this in the environmental report.	Impact of woodland on biodiversity (habitats and species) is noted in Appendix B.
Although, SNH recognise that the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the LBAP aim to deliver actions on UK BAP habitats and species at a local level, until the Argyll and Bute LBAP has been reviewed and updated recognition to the UK BAP process and in particular UK priority habitats and species for which Argyll and Bute is an important location should be made both in the strategy and environmental report.	Comments regarding the Draft Strategy will be taken into account in the preparation of the final ABC WFS. It is considered inappropriate to recover issues in the ABC WFS that are effectively dealt with in the emerging AB LBAP. It is considered more appropriate to make linkage between these documents. There has been close working during the preparation of both the LBAP and ABC WFS. The ABC WFS is more generic and does not contain detailed priorities or actions in relation to specific species and habitats.
We note that there is a high proportion of woodland cover in Argyll and Bute at around 30%.	Native woodland is an important resource for

<p>Much of this consists of commercial coniferous forest predominantly made up of Sitka spruce. Although an important economic asset commercial conifer woodland is of low value for biodiversity. Therefore, in relation to identifying the Environmental baseline in relation to biodiversity the proportion of native woodland is the key factor in this respect.</p>	<p>biodiversity. The Technical Report Figure 4 shows coverage by native woodland in relation to coniferous afforestation. The ABC WFS supports the management and where appropriate the restoration of semi-natural woodland and proposes a monitoring indicator related to support for native woodland.</p>
<p>SNH also would like to point out that due to the diverse range of high quality habitats and associated species, in addition to woodland, that occurs across Argyll and Bute there is a clear need to balance the interests of woodland expansion, with the need to protect other important habitats and species. These interests and the potential impacts of inappropriate woodland expansion need to be clearly identified both within the Strategy document itself and the accompanying Environmental Report. For example, woodland versus;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Golden eagle ranges</li> <li>Priority peatlands</li> <li>Species rich grasslands</li> <li>Species rich wetlands</li> <li>Woodland glade and edge habitats.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments regarding the Draft Strategy will be taken into account in the preparation of the final ABC WFS.</p> <p>The impact of expansion of woodland on biodiversity has been taken into consideration (See table 5 and Appendix B)</p>
<p><b>Relationship with Other Plans, Programme and Environmental Objectives</b></p>	
<p>SNH welcome the recognition given to other relevant plans, programmes and strategies (PPS).</p>	<p>Comment noted and welcomed</p>
<p>However, SNH consider that within Table 1 and Appendix 1 of the Scoping Report insufficient recognition is given to the UK and Scottish Biodiversity Action Plan process which is highly significant and applicable to the ABC WFS. In particular, the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS) and its associated Implementation Plans, and the UK BAP Action Plan process which includes UK priority habitat and species for which Argyll and Bute is an important location.</p>	<p>The assessment has been undertaken against the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy objectives as set out in Appendix B.</p>
<p>SNH note and welcome reference to the Argyll and Bute Local Biodiversity Action Plan within Table 1 and Appendix 1 of the Scoping Document. As a key partner SNH is aware that the AB LBAP is currently under revision and the timescale for completion of this document is uncertain. Therefore, in relation to the points above SNH consider that the SBS and UK Action Plan should be the main reference sources for habitats and species which may be affected by the ABC WFS. In addition to this, SNH recognise that the LBAP review and revision process when completed may not include all UK BAP and Scottish List priority habitats and species within its key target actions and projects, and therefore reference to both sets of plans and strategies is relevant in the context of this overall strategy.</p>	<p>The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy has been taken into account. It is considered inappropriate to recover issues in the ABC WFS that are effectively dealt with in the emerging AB LBAP. It is considered more appropriate to make linkage between these documents. There has been close working during the preparation of both the LBAP and ABC WFS. The ABC WFS is more generic and does not contain detailed priorities or actions in relation to specific species and habitats.</p>
<p>SNH welcome the reference made to SNH's Species Action Framework within Appendix 1 of the Scoping Report. A significant number of the Species for Conservation Action are dependent on woodland or woodland associated habitat, and one invasive non-native species <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> and hybrids is having a significant impact on biodiversity in woodland habitats. SNH supports recognition given to the objectives of this framework and the potential</p>	<p>Comment noted and welcomed</p>

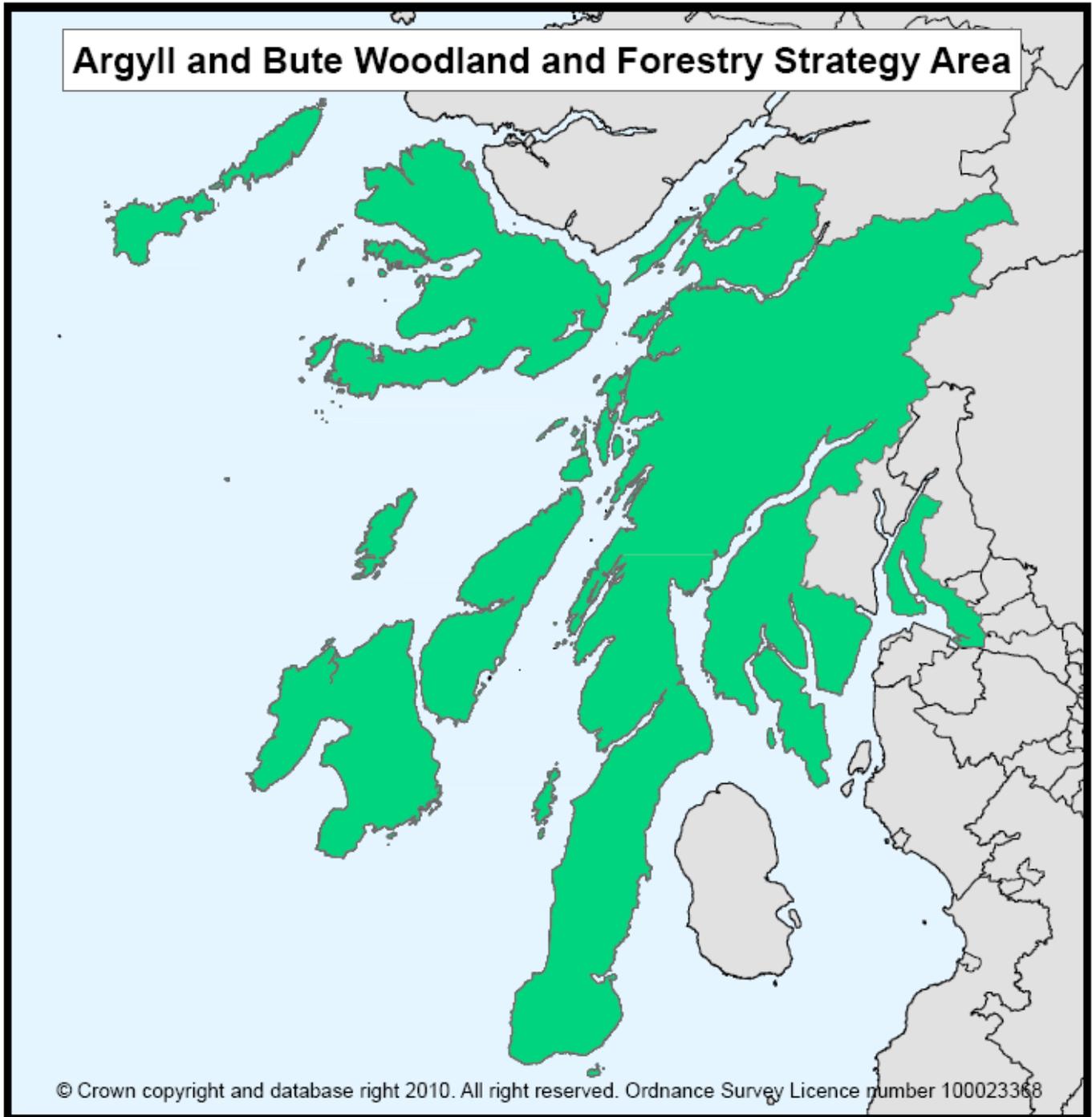
<p>impact of the ABC WFS in delivering the frameworks key outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>Data sources used to provide a baseline for the assessment.</b></p>	
<p>SNH recommend that the Scottish List, UK BAP list and Species identified in the Species Action Framework are included as data sources for the assessment.</p>	<p>The Scottish BAP has been examined. The ABC WFS is more generic and does not contain detailed priorities or actions in relation to specific species and habitats. Detail re species and habitats is more appropriately dealt with in the AB LBAP which has been developed in close consultation with the ABC WFS.</p>
<p><b>Summary of Environmental Baseline</b></p>	
<p>SNH note under 2.3.2 Biodiversity, flora and fauna, that it is recognised that there is a high proportion of woodland cover in Argyll and Bute at around 30%. However, the important factor in assessing the potential impact of the Strategy on biodiversity is the present proportion and distribution of native woodland which contributes to the overall woodland resource. Commercial coniferous forest predominantly made up of Sitka spruce, although an important economic asset is of low value for biodiversity. Therefore, in relation to identifying the Environmental baseline in relation to biodiversity the proportion of native woodland is the key factor in this respect.</p>	<p>The existing native woodland resource is mapped in the Technical Note.</p>
<p>SNH note within Appendix 2 'Environmental Baseline Additional Information', a further distinction of the existing woodland resource is outlined in relation to the national coverage. However, these figures are confusing and do not give a clear indication of the existing native woodland cover within Argyll and Bute as a baseline figure. SNH suggests that a clear indication of the existing native woodland resource as a major contributor to biodiversity is included in the Environmental Baseline information.</p>	<p>The existing native woodland resource is mapped in the Technical Note.</p>
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	
<p>SNH notes that the consultation period for the Environmental Report is proposed to run in April and May of this year. However, it is unclear whether this consultation period is for six or eight weeks in duration. SNH wish to seek clarification of the proposed timescale for consultation.</p>	<p>Consultation Authorities contacted prior to consultation period to advise of dates and time period (6 weeks).</p>

## Appendix D – Advisory Group

Name	Organisation	SEA topic expertise of Organisation in relation to woodland and forestry issues
Fergus Younger	Argyll & Bute Agricultural Forum	
Fergus Murray/Sybil Johnson	Argyll and Bute Council	Biodiversity (Local Biodiversity Officer), Material Assets (Planning Authority), Water (Flooding Authority), Human Health (Access Manager)
Lucy Sumsion	Argyll FWAG, Perth and Argyll Forestry Forum	Biodiversity,
Fergus Tickell	Argyll Timber Transport	
Jake Willis	Community Woodlands Association	Human Health
Syd House/Keith Miller	Forestry Commission Scotland	Biodiversity, Material Assets (Market Place and Economics) Forest soils, water, Cultural Heritage (archaeology) and Human Health (access)
John Little	UPM - Tilhill Forestry Ltd	Material Assets
Adam Dawson	Mull and Iona Community Trust/Argyll Islands Native Woodland Partnership	Biodiversity
Andy Robinson	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	Biodiversity
Jim Frame	Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Water, Soil, Climatic
Gordon Gray Stephens	Scottish Native Woods /Argyll Green Woodworkers Association	Biodiversity
Gavin Smith/Ross Lilley	Scottish Natural Heritage	Biodiversity, Landscape, Climatic
Stuart Johnston	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Material Assets
Bill Dundas	SGRIPD	Material Assets
Carol Swanson	West of Scotland Archaeology Service	Cultural Heritage

Appendix E - Maps

Map 1 : Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy Area

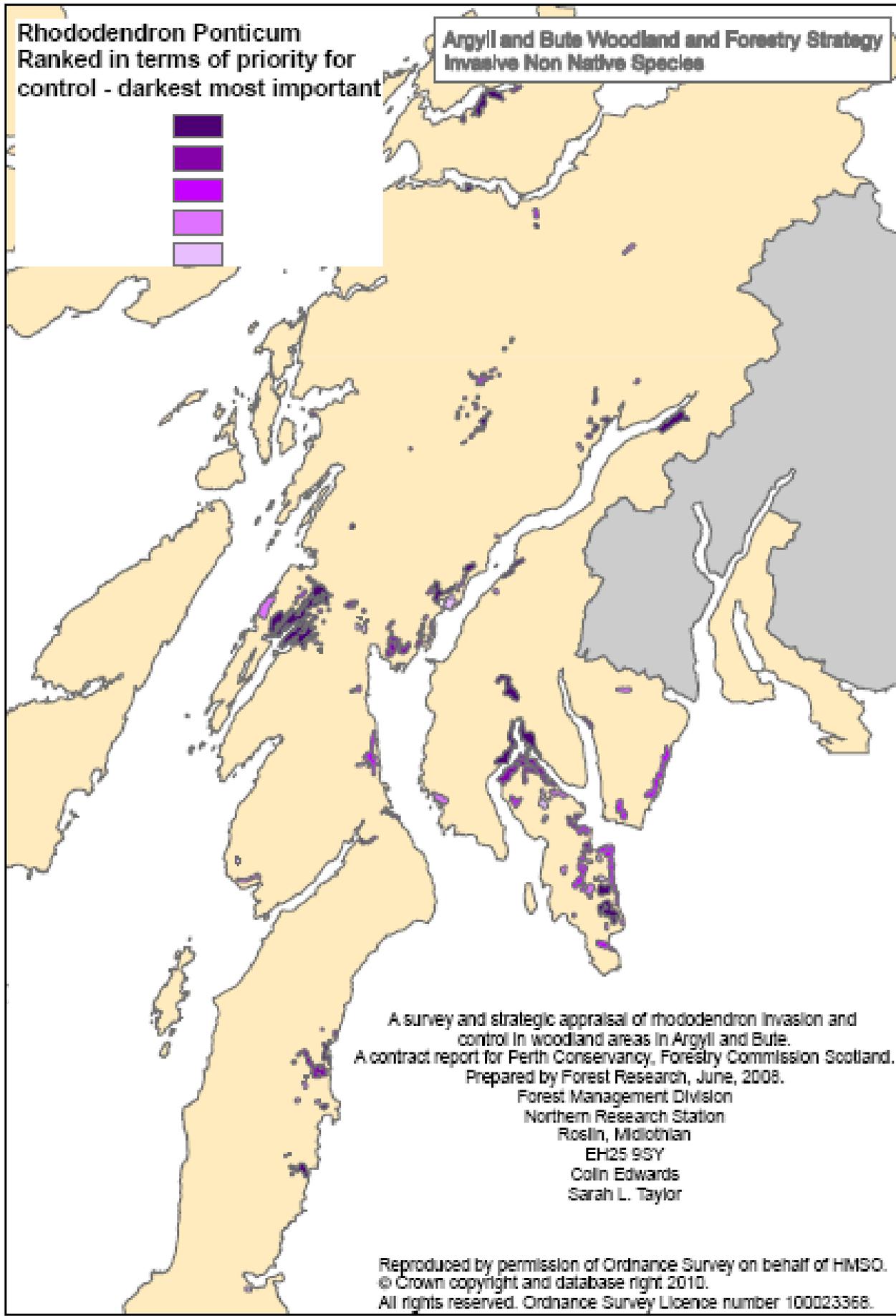


**Map 2 Rhododendron Ponticum – Priority for control**

Rhododendron Ponticum  
Ranked in terms of priority for  
control - darkest most important



Argyll and Bute Woodland and Forestry Strategy  
Invasive Non Native Species



A survey and strategic appraisal of rhododendron invasion and control in woodland areas in Argyll and Bute.  
A contract report for Perth Conservancy, Forestry Commission Scotland.  
Prepared by Forest Research, June, 2008.  
Forest Management Division  
Northern Research Station  
Roslin, Midlothian  
EH25 9SY  
Colin Edwards  
Sarah L. Taylor

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO.  
© Crown copyright and database right 2010.  
All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100023368.

## Appendix F – Conservation sites

### SSSI in Argyll and Bute (excluding Loch Lomond and the Trossachs national Park)

SITE NAME	TYPE	Hectares	NOTIFIED
Allt Broighleachan	Biological	39.99	28/02/1986
Allt Coire Chailein	Geological	51.34	12/03/1990
Allt Molach	Geological	279.82	28/02/1990
Ard Trilleachan	Biological	579.97	31/01/1986
Ardchylene Wood	Biological	176.07	07/11/2002
Ardmeanach	Mixed	3257.51	28/02/1986
Ardmore, Kildalton and Callumkill Woodlands	Biological	1511.85	28/11/1985
Ardpatrick and Dunmore Woods	Mixed	758.41	21/03/1986
Ardtun Leaf Beds	Geological	18.32	04/08/1986
Ardura - Auchnacraig	Mixed	1783.83	30/09/1986
Artilligan and Abhain Srathain Burns	Biological	60.49	31/01/1986
Auchensail Quarry	Geological	0.49	13/05/1983
Balnabraid Glen	Biological	104.24	28/11/1985
Beinn an Lochain	Biological	1369.23	09/11/1995
Beinn Shiantaidh	Geological	37.89	25/03/1992
Bellochantuy and Tangy Gorges	Geological	20.6	30/12/1986
Ben Heasgarnich	Biological	4048.46	19/04/1985
Ben Lui	Biological	2928.26	18/12/1990
Ben More - Scarisdale	Mixed	4089.42	28/02/1990
Benera Island	Biological	42.47	30/04/1986
Bonawe to Cadderlie	Geological	890.83	28/02/1990
Bridgend Flats	Biological	331.16	11/11/1983
Calgary Dunes	Biological	23.17	30/06/1986
Central Lochs, Bute	Biological	189.43	23/02/1984
Clach Tholl	Geological	7.33	28/02/1990
Clais Dhearg	Biological	839.39	28/06/1985
Claonaig Wood	Biological	53.33	28/06/1985
Coille Leitire	Biological	97.54	30/05/1986
Coladoir Bog	Biological	155.55	27/08/1996
Craighouse Ravine, Jura	Biological	3.2	23/05/1985
Craignure Mine	Geological	3.06	18/11/1991
Crannach Wood	Biological	283.11	05/08/1983
Crossapol and Gunna	Biological	917.61	30/08/1985
Cruach Choireadail	Geological	383.61	28/02/1990
Dalavich Oakwood	Biological	20.78	21/12/1984
Doire Darach	Biological	119.81	05/08/1983
Doire Dhonn, Jura	Biological	41.73	15/06/1984
Dun Ban	Biological	253.88	28/06/1985
Eilean na Muice Duibhe	Biological	576.42	19/07/1984
Ellary Woods	Biological	797.32	31/03/1989
Feur Lochain - Moine nam Faoileann	Biological	376.18	20/07/1984

**SSSI in Argyll and Bute (excluding Loch Lomond and the Trossachs national Park)**

<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>TYPE</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>NOTIFIED</b>
Garvellachs	Biological	255.41	30/08/1985
Geilston Burn	Geological	2.93	21/12/1984
Glac na Criche	Biological	265.15	11/11/1983
Glen Nant	Biological	502.08	06/05/2003
Glen Ralloch to Baravalla Woods	Biological	239.71	29/09/1989
Glenacardoch Point	Geological	81.8	30/03/1990
Glendaruel Wood and Crags	Biological	80.74	23/08/1985
Gribun Shore and Crags	Mixed	223.07	24/10/1988
Gruinart Flats	Biological	3262.47	24/11/1983
Hough Bay and Balevullin Machair	Biological	513.11	22/02/1985
Inverneil Burn	Biological	15.45	28/06/1985
Kennacraig and Esragan Burn	Biological	172.74	31/03/1987
Kilberry Coast	Biological	209.3	21/03/1986
Kinuachdrach	Biological	142.5	28/11/1986
Laggan Peninsula and Bay	Biological	1230.02	11/11/1983
Lagganulva Wood	Mixed	210.88	17/06/1988
Lismore Lochs	Biological	108	22/02/1985
Loch Ba Woodland	Biological	118.58	28/02/1990
Loch Fada	Biological	80.34	23/02/1984
Loch Sguabain	Geological	72.51	28/02/1990
Loch Tallant	Biological	92.36	11/11/1983
Lynn of Lorn Small Islands	Biological	106.78	30/12/1986
Machrihanish Dunes	Biological	293.35	28/02/1986
Moine Mhor	Biological	1172.85	14/12/1990
North Colonsay	Mixed	932.64	19/07/1996
North East Coll Lochs and Moors	Biological	2315.01	10/12/1993
North End of Bute	Biological	928.85	29/06/1990
Rannoch Moor	Biological	10102.96	19/04/1985
Rhu Point	Geological	0.11	29/10/1984
Rhunahaorine Point	Mixed	326.32	23/08/1985
Rinns of Islay	Mixed	8784.95	08/04/1987
Rubh' a' Mhail to Uamhannan Donna Coast	Geological	412.36	28/02/1990
Ruel Estuary	Biological	332.78	30/09/1986
S'Airde Beinn	Geological	31.05	30/04/1986
Sanda Islands	Biological	81.45	22/05/1995
Sound of Mull Cliffs	Biological	33.13	30/06/1986
South Kerrera and Gallanach	Geological	80.99	21/12/1989
South Mull Coast	Mixed	591.29	28/10/1988
South Shian and Balure	Geological	8.9	28/02/1990
Staffa	Mixed	45.71	30/06/1986
Strone Point, North Loch Fyne	Geological	3.77	29/06/1990
Tangy Loch	Biological	75.37	21/12/1989
Tarbert to Skipness Coast	Biological	607.76	29/09/1989

**SSSI in Argyll and Bute (excluding Loch Lomond and the Trossachs national Park)**

<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>TYPE</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>NOTIFIED</b>
Taynish Woods	Biological	392.41	30/03/1990
Tayvallich Juniper and Fen	Biological	410.67	27/05/1992
Torrisdale Cliff	Biological	27.1	23/08/1985
Totamore Dunes and Loch Ballyhaugh	Biological	209.76	23/07/1997
Treshnish Isles	Mixed	240.67	04/08/1986
Ulva, Danna and the McCormaig Isles	Biological	736.78	12/03/1992
West Coast of Jura	Geological	1893.58	25/03/1992
West Colonsay Seabird Cliffs	Biological	43.3	15/06/1984
West Tayvallich Peninsula	Biological	658.15	12/03/1992
Airds Park and Coille Nathais	Biological	356.48	10/02/1997
Kintyre Goose Lochs	Biological	282.49	13/08/1997
Ceann a' Mhara to Loch a' Phuill	Biological	628.24	17/03/1999
Inner Clyde	Biological	1824.92	21/06/1999
Sleibhtean agus Cladach Thiriodh	Biological	1772.51	19/02/2001
Knapdale Lochs	Biological	112.39	12/04/2000
Rannoch Lochs	Biological	353.11	13/03/2000
Knapdale Woods	Biological	586.85	25/04/2001
Glen Creran Woods	Biological	703.88	16/05/2003
Barran Dubh	Biological	83.19	21/03/2003
The Oa	Biological	1931.31	01/09/2006
Oronsay and South Colonsay	Biological	2178.36	22/01/2007

**SAC in Argyll and Bute (excl LLTNP)**

<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>Hectares</b>
Ardmeanach	374.79
Ben Heasgarnich	2780.01
Ben Lui	2059.36
Coladoir Bog	155.55
Coll Machair	851.02
Eilean na Muice Duibhe	568.08
Eileanan agus Sgeiran Lios mor	1139.8
Feur Lochain	376.18
Firth of Lorn	21002.77
Glac na Criche	265.15
Glen Creran Woods	703.88
Glen Shira	65.34
Lismore Lochs	108
Loch a' Phuill	151.17
Loch Creran	1226.39
Loch Etive Woods	2639.83
Loch Fada	80.34
Mingarry Burn	4.25

<b>SAC in Argyll and Bute (excl LLTNP)</b>	
<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>Hectares</b>
Moine Mhor	1150.41
Mull Oakwoods	1401.89
Oronsay	340.07
Rannoch Moor	10102.66
Rinns of Islay	1088.06
South-East Islay Skerries	1498.28
Tarbert Woods	1595.96
Taynish and Knapdale Woods	966.11
Tayvallich Juniper and Coast	1212.46
Tiree Machair	785.4
Treshnish Isles	1962.66

<b>SPA Sites</b>	
<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>Hectares</b>
Bridgend Flats, Islay	331.16
Cruic agus Cladach Mhuile (Mull Coast and Hills)	29248.98
Coll	2321.91
Coll (corncrake)	371.07
Eilean na Muice Duibhe (Duich Moss), Islay	576.42
Glas Eileanan	1.44
Glen Etive and Glen Fyne	81372.9
Gruinart Flats, Islay	3261.75
Inner Clyde	1824.92
Jura, Scarba and the Garvellachs	34585.96
Kintyre Goose Roosts	413.74
Knapdale Lochs	112.39
Laggan, Islay	1230.02
North Colonsay and Western Cliffs	3295.95
Oronsay and South Colonsay	2016.86
Rannoch Lochs	1170.19
Rinns of Islay	9409.72
Sleibhtean agus Cladach Thiriodh (Tiree Wetlands and Coast)	1938.59
The Oa	1931.31
Tiree (corncrake)	544.07
Treshnish Isles	240.67

<b>Ramsar Sites</b>	
<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>EUR CODE</b>
Bridgend Flats, Islay	UK13001
Coll	UK13008

<b>Ramsar Sites</b>	
<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>EUR CODE</b>
Eilean na Muice Duibhe, Islay	UK13014
Gruinart Flats, Islay	UK13023
Inner Clyde	UK13024
Kintyre Goose Roosts	UK13027
Rinns of Islay	UK13052
Sleibhtean agus Cladach Thiriodh	UK13056

<b>National Nature Reserves</b>		
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Hectares</b>	<b>ESTABLISHED</b>
Ben Lui	2056.9	27/04/1961
Glasdrum Wood	167.84	11/04/1967
Glen Nant	387.09	15/03/1979
Mealdarroch	203.52	22/10/1987
Moine Mhor	486.61	22/10/1987
Staffa	30.72	17/11/2000
Taynish	344.17	09/06/1977

<b>Listed Gardens and Designed Landscapes</b>
<b>SITE NAME</b>
ACHAMORE HOUSE
ACHNACLOICH
AN CALA
ARDANAISEIG
ARDCHATTAN PRIORY
ARDKINGLAS
ARDUAINE GARDEN
BALLIMORE
CASTLE TOWARD
COLONSAY HOUSE
CRARAE
DUNTRUNE CASTLE
GARELOCH HOUSE (ACHNASHIE)
GLENARN
INVERARAY CASTLE
ISLAY HOUSE
MOUNT STUART (KIRRIENIVEN)
ROSNEATH
STONEFIELD CASTLE HOTEL
STRONE
TOROSAY CASTLE (DUART HOUSE)

<b>Conservation Areas in Argyll and Bute (excl LLTNP)</b>
-----------------------------------------------------------

Old Ref CA010 – Inveraray
---------------------------

Old Ref CA001 - Auchindrain
-----------------------------

Old Ref CA015 - Kilmoluaig
----------------------------

Old Ref CA005 – Cullipool
---------------------------

Old Ref CA007 – Dunoon
------------------------

Old Ref CA013 – Kerrycroy
---------------------------

Old Ref CA014 – Kilmartin
---------------------------

Old Ref CA025 – Clachaig
--------------------------

Old Ref CA012 - Keills, Jura
------------------------------

Old Ref CA016 - Lochgilphead
------------------------------

Old Ref CA004 - Crinan Canal
------------------------------

Old Ref CA009 - Ellanbeich
----------------------------

Old Ref CA024 - Toberonochy
-----------------------------

Old Ref CA017 - Lorn Furnace
------------------------------

Old Ref CA006 – Dervaig
-------------------------

Old Ref CA023 - Tobermory
---------------------------

Old Ref CA002 – Bowmore
-------------------------

Old Ref CA019 - Port Ellen
----------------------------

Old Ref CA020 - Portnahaven / Port Wemyss
-------------------------------------------

Old Ref CA022 – Tarbert
-------------------------

Old Ref CA003 - Campbeltown
-----------------------------

Old Ref CA021 – Rothesay
--------------------------

Old Ref CA018 - Port Charlotte
--------------------------------

Old Ref CA027 - Hill House, Helensburgh
-----------------------------------------

Old Ref CA028 - Upper Helensburgh
-----------------------------------

Old Ref CA029 - Rosneath
--------------------------

Old Ref CA030 - Cove And Kilcreggan
-------------------------------------

Old Ref CA031 - Rhu
---------------------

Old Ref CA032 - Cardross
--------------------------

Old Ref CA008 - Easdale Island
--------------------------------

Old Ref CA011 - Iona
----------------------