



UKWAS consultation event, March 2021

Agenda

Welcome, agenda and housekeeping

- Owen Davies, Forest Standards Manager, FSC UK

Overview of the revision process and summary of proposed changes to the standard

- Peter Wilson, Chair, UKWAS Working Group

Question & answer session

Closing messages

Housekeeping



The consultation paper and draft standard are available as handouts.



The presentation slides will be shared afterwards, so don't worry about taking screenshots. We will also record the presentation, but not the Q&A.



Please type your questions in the box, and we will address them in turn. If clarification is needed we will unmute you.

UKWAS

UNITED KINGDOM WOODLAND ASSURANCE STANDARD

FSC UK Webinar on Initial Revision Draft

Peter Wilson

Chair of Revision Working Group

Briefing on UKWAS review & revision process

- **What is UKWAS?**
 - The certification schemes and their role (UKFS, FSC UK & PEFC UK)
 - Scope of UKWAS standard
- **Review & revision process**
 - Working Group
 - Review & Revision
 - Timetable
- **Initial Revision Draft**
 - Some of the issues addressed

WHAT IS UKWAS?

- UKWAS 1 (1999)
 - UKWAS 2 (2006)
 - UKWAS 3 (2011)
 - UKWAS 4 (2017)
 - UKWAS 5 (April 2023)
-
- A bespoke audit protocol for SFM
 - A critical piece of soft infrastructure for woodland owners and forest products businesses
 - Assurance of responsible and sustainable forest management for stakeholders

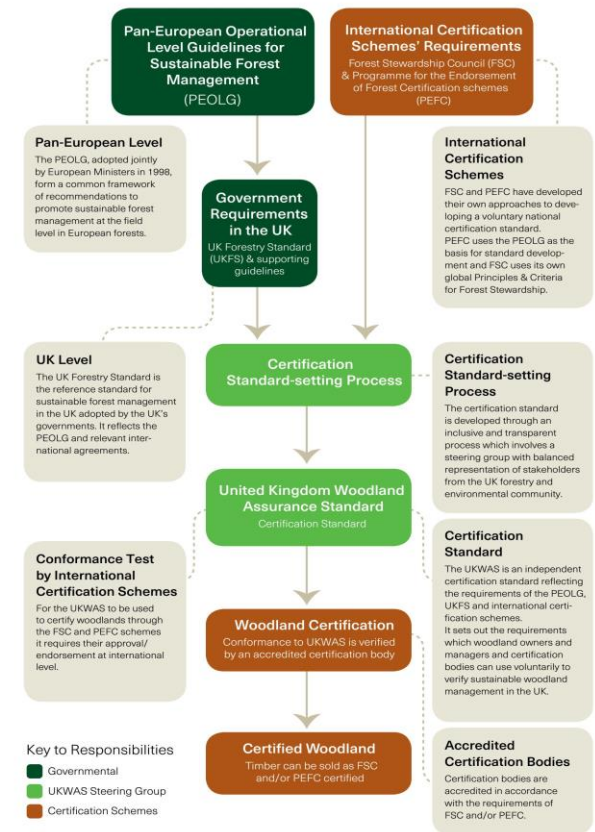


A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP MODEL



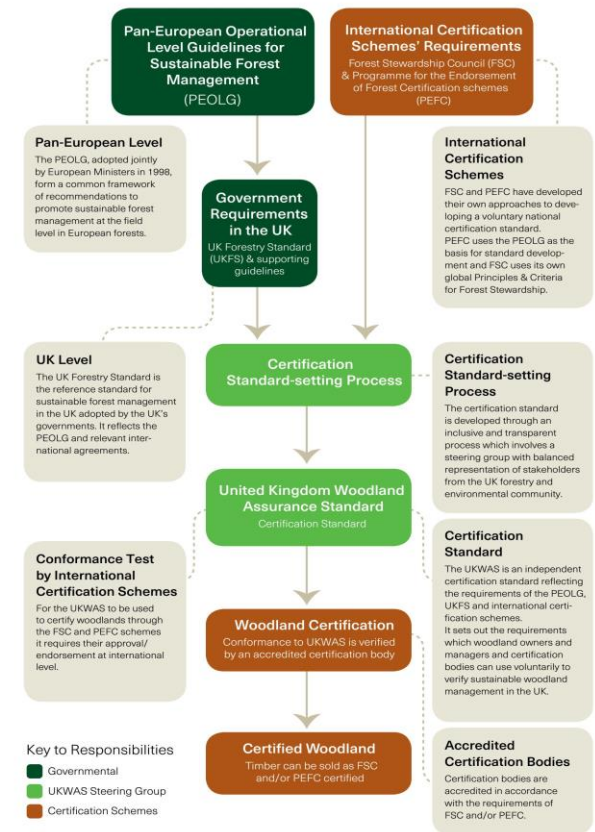
SCOPE OF UKWAS STANDARD

- **Geographical scope:** United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland so excludes Crown Dependencies (IOM & CI)
- UKWAS is a '**Certification Standard**' (audit protocol) for demonstrating sustainable forest management not a comprehensive forestry manual: it complements governmental UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) and can help to demonstrate UKFS delivery in the field
- UKWAS steering group's role is limited to **setting** a SFM certification standard – it is not a 'scheme'
- Working group is appointed by UKWAS steering group as its **independent standard-setting group**
- **Baseline:** UKWAS is based on inter-governmental (PEOLG), governmental (UKFS), FSC and PEFC standards so collectively these provide the baseline standards
- **Quality control:** subject to rigorous FSC approval and PEFC endorsement processes to ensure conformance
- **Scope to go beyond baseline requirements** and to fill gaps where considered necessary
- Steering group has hitherto taken the view that it should be **an accessible 'mainstream' standard** not a 'niche' standard akin to Organic.



SOME THOUGHTS ON WHY IT WORKS

- A unique UKWAS model based on principled pragmatism
- Agreement was based on building of mutual trust
- UKWAS is based on intergovernmental (PEOLG), governmental (UKFS), FSC and PEFC standards
- Ownership of the standard rests with the stakeholders
- All decisions are based on consensus (everyone has a veto!)
- FSC UK played a key role in initiating the original process and raising the bar
- PEFC UK was able to endorse existing UKWAS rather than reinvent the wheel
- Dual certification means timber growers and processors can easily supply customers with FSC or PEFC-certified products
- An enduring UKWAS partnership with FSC UK and PEFC UK enshrined in concordats.



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REVIEW & REVISION PROCESS

UKWAS REVIEW & REVISION WORKING GROUP APPOINTED BY UKWAS STEERING GROUP

Peter Wilson

Independent WG Chair

Ewan McIntosh

Tilhill

Stuart Wilkie

Scottish Woodlands

Amanda Calvert

Small Woods Association

ECONOMIC

Angus Mackie

Forestry and Land Scotland

Andrew Sharkey

Woodland Trust

Jonathan Spencer

Soil Association

ENVIRONMENTAL

Stuart Housden

RSPB

Maria Wilding

Llais y Goedwig

John Deakin

National Trust (E, W, NI)

SOCIAL

Paul Nolan

Mersey Forest

Bob Frost

UKFS

Owen Davies

FSC UK

STANDARD-SETTING BODIES

Alun Watkins

PEFC UK

THE REVIEW (EVIDENCE GATHERING)

The Working Group shall be responsible for undertaking the review process which should include as a minimum:

- a) **An Interpretation Review** – a consideration of any advice developed by the Interpretation Panel.
- b) **A Technical Review** – a consideration of any new scientific or technical knowledge.
- c) **A Standard Users' Feedback Review**
 - a consideration of feedback made directly to the UKWAS Steering Group
 - a consideration of feedback made to the certification schemes from certificate holders and accredited certification bodies.
- d) **A Risk Review**
 - a consideration of the impact and applicability of the standard for different scales and intensities of operation
 - a consideration of potential impacts on areas and features of high conservation value.
- e) **A Certification Schemes' Requirements Review** – a consideration of advice (to be provided by the certification schemes based) on any new or revised policies, procedures or guidance that is relevant to the revision and any learnings from standards of a similar geographical or ecological scope of application and similar forest conditions.

THE REVIEW (CONCLUSION)

The review should conclude with a decision on whether or not the standard needs to be revised.

- a) **Issues Paper prepared** – incorporates review findings and additional stakeholder input
- b) **Working Group undertook a review** – a consideration of Issues Paper
- c) **Conclusion** – a revision is required.

THE REVISION & CONSULTATION PHASES

Aim: WG to prepare a Pre-approval Draft of the standard and confirm that it has undergone sufficient consultation and any necessary testing, meets the aims and objectives of the revision, and so merits approval by the Steering Group.

a) An **‘Initial Revision Draft’** - an invitation to comment on an initial revision of the current standard which should identify any other aspects already identified as requiring review and on which stakeholder comments would be particularly helpful (minimum **consultation** period of 60 days).

b) A **‘Second Revision Draft’** which should include a synopsis of the stakeholders’ initial comments and clearly identify and explain the proposed changes (minimum **consultation** period of 60 days).

REVISION MILESTONES

- Two formal consultation phases:
 - Initial Revision Draft – 60 days (March/April 2021)
 - Second Revision Draft – 60 days (October/November 2021)
- WG remits Pre-approval Draft to UKWAS steering group (by end May 2022)
- Steering group considers, approves and remits to certification schemes (by end September)
- Certification schemes prepare and remit to international offices for approval / endorsement
- Target 'effective date' for UKWAS 5 – 1st April 2023

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INITIAL REVISION DRAFT HIGHLIGHTS

HIERARCHICAL TRIAGE APPROACH

- **STRUCTURAL** ISSUES (significant changes and style)
- **MAJOR** ISSUES (often cross-cutting)
- **SIGNIFICANT** ISSUES (important but easy to deal with in existing structure and text e.g. plastics)
- **MINOR** ISSUES (matters of detail and easy to deal with e.g. suggested rewording of existing text)

STRUCTURAL ISSUES

Structure of the standard - unchanged and retains the five main sections introduced in UKWAS 4.

- 1. Legal compliance and UKWAS conformance
- 2. Management planning
- 3. Forestry operations
- 4. Natural and historic environment
- 5. People, communities and workforce.

Some retitling of sub-sections – for clarity and / or consistency.

Some adding / splitting / re-ordering of sub-sections – for clarity and / or consistency.

Expression of requirements - in recent editions of UKWAS, requirements were stated as 'shall'. To improve clarity, this edition reverts to the simpler form of wording used in the first edition of UKWAS; this does not imply any change in the status of requirements, and these remain mandatory.

MAJOR ISSUES

The requirements have been updated and adapted where thought appropriate. In particular, the working group has sought to adapt the standard to reflect global challenges:

- **climate change**
- **biodiversity loss**
- **forest resilience**
- **enhancing natural capital value of woodlands**
- **safeguarding the provision of valuable ecosystem services.**

For example, additional wording on practices that enhance carbon storage in trees and soils and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from woodland operations has been woven into the text. There have also been updates to reflect relevant post-Brexit changes.

OTHER ISSUES

Section 2: Management planning:

- Forest resilience to be embedded in management policy and objectives
- Increased focus on co-operating with neighbouring landowners e.g. to control wild mammals and invasive species
- Average annual allowable cut – quantification and justification
- Soil carbon explicitly included in maintenance of woodland's productive potential
- Specific inclusion of some NWFPs which can be in scope of certification
- Greater differentiation between existing and new woodlands
- Use of non-toxic ammunition for wild deer management
- Minimisation of environmental impacts of tree protection products e.g. tree shelters
- Land converted to non-woodland use shall not exceed 5% of WMU or destroy areas of high carbon stock
- Conversion of woodland to short rotation coppice aligned with requirements for Christmas trees i.e. must meet all UKWAS requirements.

OTHER ISSUES

Section 3: Woodland operations:

- Greater focus on carbon
- Greater focus on historic environment sites
- New requirement on operational biosecurity
- No stump harvesting permitted
- New section on ground preparation and restocking reduces potential for soil carbon losses
- Explicit inclusion of visitor infrastructure
- Pesticides, etc: the working group is giving further thought to this sub-section
- Inclusion of avoiding environmental damage by fertilisers as for pesticides
- Requirement for risk assessment process for pest control options
- Elaboration of requirement on fencing alignment and specification
- New requirement requiring materials to be chosen with regard to minimisation of waste.

OTHER ISSUES

Section 4: Natural, historical and cultural environment:

- Enhanced text on conserving ASNWs
- Enhanced text on managing PAWS
- Enhanced text on managing semi-natural woodlands
- Minimum area of WMU to comprise semi-natural habitat raised from 5% to 10%
- Preference for natural regeneration in ASNW and semi-natural woodlands
- Enhanced sub-section on historic environment
- Disaggregated sub-section on game, shooting and fishing sustainability includes game release pens to be located outside areas of high conservation value and use of non-toxic ammunition in all shooting activities.

OTHER ISSUES

Section 5: People, communities and workers:

- Elaborated text on public access, etc.
- Elaborated text on training and continuing development
- Health & safety: the working group is giving further thought to this sub-section
- Workers' rights: the working group is giving further thought to this sub-section.

SPECIFIC FEEDBACK REQUESTED

In particular, the working group seeks specific feedback on the issues set out below:

1. **Sub-section 2.12.1 b)** – draft requirement proposes that only **non-toxic (i.e. non-lead) ammunition** is used in the management of wild deer. What are your views on the practicability of this proposal?
2. **Sub-section 2.4.3** – draft guidance specifies which **Non-wood Forest Products (NWFPs)** are explicitly included within scope of the standard. Is this a complete list?
3. **Sub-section 5.4 Health and safety** - the working group is giving further thought to this sub-section and only minor changes to guidance have been made to date. Do you have suggestions?
4. **Sub-section 5.6 Workers' rights** - the working group is giving further thought to this sub-section. Do you have suggestions?

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Thank you!

Question & answer session

Over to you!

Remember, please type your questions in the box, and we will address them in turn. If clarification is needed we will unmute you.



Closing messages

Please submit your feedback in writing if you want the UKWAS Working Group to take it into consideration.

More information and a consultation template are available at <http://ukwas.org.uk/consultation/>

You should submit your input by Friday 30 April 2021 to ukwas@ukwas.org.uk

Thank you all for joining us today!



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