



An Independent FSC® & PEFC Certified Forestry Group Scheme

Providing UKWAS certification to forest owners throughout the UK

UKFCG E-NEWS

DECEMBER 2018

UKFCG membership update

At the time of writing the Group has 138 members. Total certified area is almost 60,000 hectares. Annual timber production is in the region of 500,000 tonnes.

2018 proved to be a hectic year with the steady addition of new members throughout the year. Sadly there have been a number of resignations this year due to property sales, management company changes and completion of restructuring programmes. Overall new applications have kept pace with resignations and, with the benefit of new enquiries, we are confident of continued growth into 2019.

In light of requests from a number of members we decided to apply for PEFC certification earlier in 2018. The successful PEFC assessment, which took place as part of this year's annual audit conducted by Soil Association, means that dual certification [FSC/PEFC] claims can be made by all our members. Dual certification enables UKFCG members to market timber with the same advantages offered by State forestry [FC/FCS/NRW] and other large certification groups.

The PEFC assessment, along with the annual FSC audit, was particularly onerous due to the recent introduction of the new UKWAS version 4. We noticed particular emphasis on the new sections of the v4 Standard and, as a result, received a number of Corrective Actions that were greater in number than expected.

Our last newsletter detailed the findings and we have been working with the managers of the affected forests to settle the corrective actions. We hope that all members will by now have taken note of the audit findings and made adjustments to documentation and procedures accordingly.

In an effort to focus on the **new** requirements in UKWAS v4 we have listed these below. Please ensure that you take action to address these subjects and, if your documents and procedures are not already encompassing the requirements, please amend or append documents to your forest plan as required. Do let us know if you have any questions or require assistance to ensure on-going compliance with UKWAS v4.

UKWAS v4 – A reminder of new requirements

UKWAS v4 describes Example Verifiers as follows:

*These are examples of objective evidence – documents, actions or discussions – that owners/managers may present to the certification body for their consideration in order to demonstrate that the requirement is being met. Certification bodies are required to undertake audits and owners/managers should be able to present sufficient evidence to allow the auditor to report conformance. **It will not***

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always be necessary to use any or all of the verifiers suggested, and conformance to requirements may be demonstrated in other ways. The selected verifiers should be appropriate to the scale and intensity of management of the WMU and the risk of negative impacts.

Please refer to the full version of UKWAS v4 for guidance on all the following subjects, or contact UKFCG if you require any assistance with interpretation of the standard in relation to your existing forest plan or procedures.

New in UKWAS v4	Requirement	Example Verifiers
1.1.3.c, d & e	c) The scope of the owner's/manager's legal rights to manage the WMU and to harvest products and/or supply services from within the WMU shall be documented. d) Legal authority to carry out specific operations, where required by the relevant authorities, shall be documented. e) Payment shall be made in a <u>timely manner</u> of all applicable legally prescribed charges connected with forest management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licences • Written permissions from competent authorities • Records of payments.
1.1.4.b	b) Where possible, the owner/manager shall seek to resolve disputes (over tenure claims and use rights) out of court and in a <u>timely manner</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of dispute resolution mechanism.
1.1.6.a & b	a) There shall be conformance to guidance on anti-corruption legislation. b) <u>Large enterprises</u> shall have and implement a <u>publicly available</u> anti-corruption policy, which meets or exceeds the requirements of legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager • Written procedures • Public statement of policy.
1.1.7	There shall be <u>compliance</u> with legislation relating to the transportation and trade of forest products, including, where relevant, the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) and phytosanitary requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant procedures and records.
2.1.1.a & b	a) The owner/manager shall have a long-term policy and management objectives which are environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically viable. b) The policy and objectives, or summaries thereof, shall be proactively communicated to <u>workers</u> consistent with their roles and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager and workers • Management planning documentation • Toolbox talks.
2.1.3.a	a) Woodland management planning shall demonstrate a commitment to long-term economic viability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager • Management planning documentation
2.3.1.d	d) Methods of consultation and engagement shall be designed to ensure that local people, relevant organisations and other interested parties have reasonable opportunities to participate equitably and without discrimination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that users of the WMU are informed about high impact operations (e.g. signs, letters or other appropriate means) • Established means of pro-active

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		communication • A public contact point.
2.3.2.c	c) Where appropriate and possible, the owner/manager shall consider opportunities for co-operating with neighbours in landscape-scale conservation initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of a wildlife management group • Where there is a significant problem caused by wildlife, a documented plan (which may take the form of a contract or licence) for control.
2.4.1	The owner/manager shall plan and implement measures to maintain and/or enhance long-term soil and hydrological functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Field observation.
2.4.2.b	b) Selective harvesting shall not be to the long-term detriment of the quality and value of stands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth and yield estimates • Production records or appropriate standing sale volume assessments and reconciliation with estimates • Demonstrated control of <u>thinning</u> intensity • Discussion with the owner/manager • Field observation.
2.4.4	<u>Priority species</u> shall not be harvested or controlled without the consent of the relevant statutory nature conservation and countryside agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager • Monitoring records • Species inventories.
2.5.3.a	a) The owner/manager shall assess the potential negative impacts of natural hazards on the WMU, including drought, floods, wind, fire, <u>invasive</u> plant and animal species, and other pests and diseases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Discussion with the owner/manager.
2.8.1.b	b) Regeneration (natural or planted) shall restore stand composition in a <u>timely manner</u> to pre-harvesting or more <u>natural conditions</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Field observation.
2.9.1.a	a) Non-native tree species shall only be introduced to the WMU when evidence or experience shows that any <u>invasive</u> impacts can be controlled effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented impact assessment of any introductions made after the first certification • Discussion with the owner/manager • Field observation.
2.11.2.	<p>a) Management strategies and actions shall be developed to maintain and, where possible, enhance the areas and features of <u>high conservation value</u> identified in the following sections: Statutory designated sites (section 4.1) <u>Ancient semi-natural woodland</u> (section 4.2) <u>Plantations on ancient woodland sites</u> (section 4.3) Areas and features of critical importance for watershed management or erosion control (section 4.5).</p> <p>b) Management strategies and actions shall be developed in consultation with <u>statutory bodies, interested parties and experts</u>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Discussion with the owner/manager • Specialist surveys.



3.1.4	<p>Operations shall cease or relocate immediately where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They damage sites or features of <u>conservation value</u> or of special cultural and historical significance identified in sections 4.1–4.5 and 4.8. Operations in the vicinity shall recommence only when action has been taken to repair damage and prevent any further damage, including establishing <u>buffer areas</u> where appropriate • They reveal previously unknown sites or features which may be of conservation value or of special cultural and historical significance. Operations in the vicinity shall recommence only when the sites or features have been investigated and appropriate management agreed, where relevant in discussion with <u>statutory bodies</u> and/or <u>local people</u>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager • Site diaries • Field observation.
3.4.1.c	<p>c) Damage to <u>environmental values</u> from pesticide and biological control agent use shall be avoided, mitigated and/or repaired, and steps shall be taken to avoid recurrence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager • Pesticide policy or position statement.
3.4.5.c	<p>c) No fertilisers shall be applied: in <u>priority habitats</u> around priority plant species, or around <u>veteran trees</u>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with the owner/manager and workers • Field observation, particularly in respect to storage, application sites, protective clothing and warning signs • Adequate written procedures, work instructions, and other documentation.
3.6.2	<p>The owner/manager shall prepare and implement a prioritised plan to manage and progressively remove redundant materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field observation • Removal plan • Budget.
4.1.2	<p>Appropriate measures shall be taken to protect identified <u>priority habitats and species</u> in accordance with plans agreed with nature conservation agencies. In planning and implementing measures within the WMU, the owner/manager shall take into account the geographic range and ecological requirements of priority species beyond the boundary of the WMU.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field observation • Management planning documentation • Discussion with the owner/manager.
4.2.1.a & b	<p>a) <u>Ancient semi-natural woodland</u> shall be identified by reference to published maps and/or by assessment on the ground. b) Adopting a <u>precautionary approach</u>, the <u>high conservation value</u> of ancient semi-natural woodlands shall be main</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field observation • Discussion with the owner/manager • Management planning documentation including relevant <u>forestry authority</u> management plan and <u>restocking plans</u> • <u>Ancient woodland inventories</u> • Other studies • Monitoring records.
4.4.1.a,b & c	<p>a) Areas, species and features of <u>conservation value</u> in other woodlands shall be identified. b) The identified areas, species and features of <u>conservation value</u> shall be maintained and where possible enhanced. c) Adverse ecological impacts shall be identified and inform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field observation • Discussion with the owner/manager • Management planning documentation • Historical maps



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	management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring records.
4.4.2.b	b) Adverse ecological impacts shall be identified and inform management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Workers</u> are aware of such sites and of any plans for their management • For all potentially damaging operations, awareness demonstrated of how areas shall be protected and/ or safeguarded • Discussion with the owner/manager demonstrates how such areas will be managed • Planning documentation shows how areas will be managed.
4.4.3	Areas of semi-natural habitats shall constitute a minimum of 5% of the WMU. Where existing habitats or restored remnant features comprise less than 5% of the WMU, the owner/manager shall take action to convert other areas to more <u>natural conditions</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Field observation.
4.5.1	a) Areas and features of critical importance for watershed management or erosion control shall be identified in consultation with relevant <u>statutory bodies</u> . b) Where critically important areas or features are identified, their management shall be agreed with the relevant statutory bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of consultation • Management planning documentation • Monitoring records • Licences or consents.
4.6.3	The owner/manager shall plan and take action to maintain continuity of <u>veteran tree</u> habitat by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping existing veteran trees, and • Managing or establishing suitable trees to eventually take the place of existing veterans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field observation • Harvesting contracts • Discussion with the owner/manager and <u>workers</u> • If there is a conflict with safety, the issues have been documented • Management planning documentation.
5.1.1.b	b) A <u>precautionary approach</u> shall be adopted in relation to water supplies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation or maps of all existing permissive and traditional uses of the woodland
5.4.1.c	a) There shall be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Compliance</u> with health and safety legislation Conformance with associated codes of practice Conformance with <u>FISA</u> guidance. b) There shall be contingency plans for any accidents. c) There shall be appropriate competency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field observation that health and safety legislation and codes of practice are being implemented • Discussion with <u>workers</u> demonstrates that they are aware of relevant requirements and have access to appropriate FISA codes of practice • Contracts specifying health and safety requirements • Records maintained and up to date (e.g. accident book, site risk assessments, chemical record book, tree safety reports) • System to ensure that anyone working in the woodland has had

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		<p>relevant instruction in safe working practice and that the appropriate number has had training in basic first aid and, where relevant, holds a certificate of competence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for monitoring compliance with safety requirements (written for larger organisations) and for dealing with situations where safety requirements are not met • Documented health and safety policy and consideration of issues in all procedures and work instructions • Evidence of a systematic approach to accident prevention.
<p>5.6.1.a, d & e</p>	<p>a) There shall be <u>compliance with workers'</u> rights legislation, including equality legislation.</p> <p>d) Workers shall have recourse to mechanisms for resolving grievances which meet the requirements of statutory codes of practice.</p> <p>e) Wages paid to workers shall meet or exceed the statutory national living wage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with workers • Documented policies.

We have a number of bound copies of UKWAS v4 which we have been distributing to all UKFCG members during our planned visits. If you have not already received a copy, please ask for one when we see you.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy Christmas and thank you for choosing UKFCG for certification of your forest. We hope that everyone enjoys a happy, healthy and prosperous 2019 and We wish you every success with the on-going management and marketing of timber from your forests. We look forward to meeting you again in 2019.

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