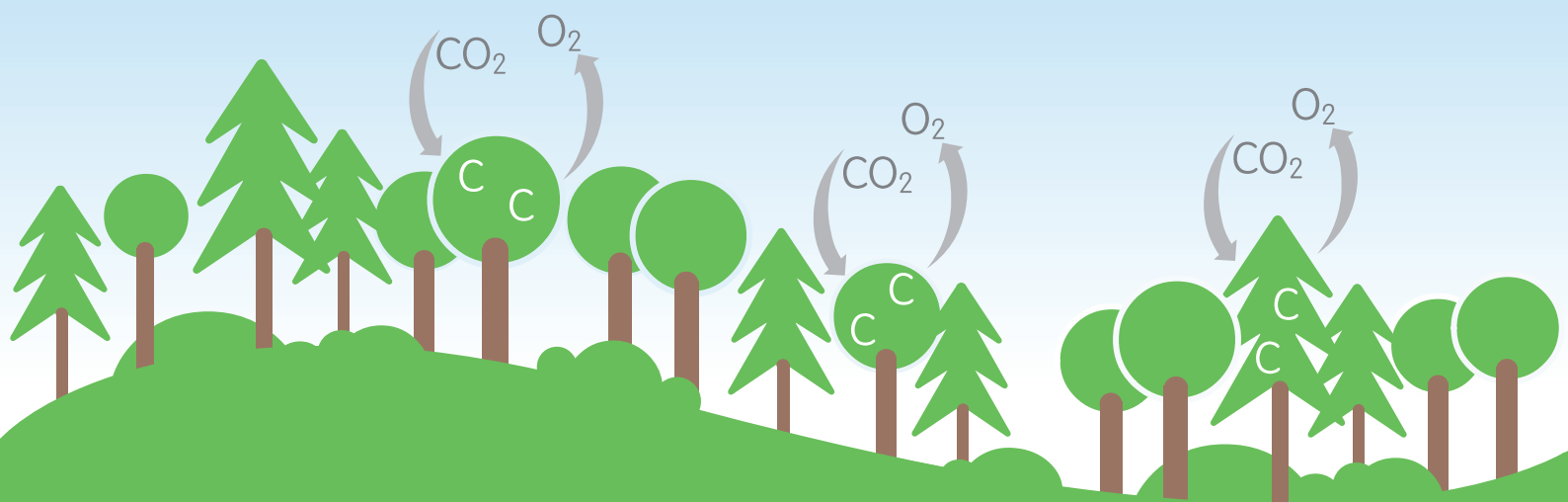


# Woodland Carbon Code

Requirements for voluntary carbon sequestration projects



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# Introduction

## Background and purpose

Trees and forests can mitigate climate change through sequestering carbon. Woodland creation therefore provides an attractive option for companies, organisations and individuals wishing to reduce their carbon footprint while also delivering a range of other environmental and social benefits.

The Woodland Carbon Code supports the move towards a low carbon economy through encouraging investment in woodland creation in the UK for climate change mitigation. It sets out robust requirements for voluntary carbon sequestration projects that incorporate core principles of good carbon management as part of modern sustainable forest management. Specific objectives of the Code include:

- ensuring high standards of sustainable forest management in line with the UK Forestry Standard and Climate Change Guidelines for forestry;
- setting out requirements of good practice in terms of both carbon sequestration and sustainable forest management;
- providing access to forest carbon measurement protocols that enable consistent and rigorous measurement of carbon uptake in woodlands;
- establishing a system of independent quality assurance through the introduction of procedures for registering, validating and verifying woodland carbon projects.

In addition to helping to tackle our greenhouse gas emissions woodland creation can also provide many other benefits and ecosystem services such as habitat restoration, rural business development and diversification, a sustained timber supply, landscape improvement, and the enhancement of urban areas.

## Use of the Code

The Code sets out design and management requirements for voluntary UK based projects that aim to sequester carbon through woodland creation. In scope it accounts for carbon sequestration and emissions within the woodland. It does not account for carbon stored in forest products or the carbon saved when substituting wood products for other products with a larger carbon footprint.

In order for UK woodland creation projects to gain certification to the Code, they must be initially validated by an independent certification body which has been accredited by the UK Accreditation Service. Individual projects or groups of projects ('group schemes') can be certified. In order to remain certified, projects or group schemes must be verified, normally at 5-yearly intervals, by an independent certification body. Certification to the Code is voluntary and does not imply endorsement by the Forestry Commission of the value of any investment.

Woodland carbon projects contribute to just one of a hierarchy of actions that can help to combat the effects of climate change. Before considering such mitigation measures individuals, businesses and other organisations need to:

- understand their carbon footprint;
- take steps to prevent avoidable emissions;
- reduce any remaining emissions.

See [www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/emissions/co2\\_offsetting/co2\\_offsetting.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/emissions/co2_offsetting/co2_offsetting.aspx)

In 2009, the UK Government produced guidance on how organisations should measure and report their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions ([www.defra.gov.uk/environment/economy/business-efficiency/reporting](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/economy/business-efficiency/reporting)).

Where organisations choose to invest in external greenhouse gas reduction projects outside of their operations or supply chain, they may wish to report these activities. Woodland creation has not previously been eligible as an activity to be included in the calculation of an organisation's net greenhouse gas emissions, even if the organisation is directly responsible for the planting of the new woodland. However, a newly published annex to the UK Guidance (Annex L) now recognises the carbon benefits of woodland creation and allows organisations that invest in or are directly associated with projects certified to the Code, to report those carbon savings as part of their net greenhouse gas emissions. Where organisations wish to report the carbon sequestration and emissions associated with woodland creation projects in the UK, they must read and follow the guidance provided in Annex L alongside the Woodland Carbon Code.

Carbon sequestration resulting from projects certified to the Code will, in common with other woodland creation, contribute directly to the UK's national targets for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. The Code does not provide a route to conformance with regulatory carbon 'offsetting' schemes (e.g. the Carbon Reduction Scheme or EU Emissions Trading Scheme); or the generation of internationally tradable carbon credits linked to either the compliance or voluntary markets.

## Future changes to the Code

This is the first version of the Woodland Carbon Code (Version 1) launched in July 2011. Additional guidance and interpretation is available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode).

The Code will be subject to annual review, which will ensure the standards it contains are clear and reflect best practice in terms of the requirements and guidance available. A management group including the Forestry Commission and a range of interested stakeholders will oversee future management of the Code.

Updates to the Code and the supporting guidance will be available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode). Please refer to this website for the most up to date version. Some further guidance will be developed during 2011–2012.

Projects should adhere to the most current version of the Code. Certified projects must comply with changes within one year of their introduction.

## The structure of the Code

The Code sets out overarching principles and specific requirements that woodland carbon sequestration projects must incorporate in order to demonstrate best practice. Core principles and requirements for each key aspect of project design and management are addressed in turn, along with the means of verification and further guidance.

### Principle

The overarching principle behind the requirement is stated first to establish the overall context.

## Aspect 1

### Requirement

These are the compulsory elements of the Code and are generally stated as 'shall'. Certification bodies will check and verify that each requirement is being met.

### Means of verification

Illustrates the type of objective evidence that the certification body will consider in order to verify that the requirements are being met. These means of verification are split into two categories using the following symbols:

- ▶ These items **must** be provided if they are applicable to the project.
- These items are alternatives which can be used to provide additional evidence.

The examples given are not exclusive or exhaustive – certification bodies will not always need to use all the verifiers suggested, and may seek verification in other ways.

The certification body will take into account the size of the project when assessing evidence.

### Guidance

These notes help the project developer to understand how the requirements should be applied in practice. Additional guidance is often referred to on the Woodland Carbon Code or other websites.

# 1 Eligibility

## Principle

The project must be eligible in terms of:

- The timing of the project.
- The activity (Creating new woodland on unwooded land of a suitable site type).
- Legal ownership of the land and compliance with all relevant legislation.
- Demonstrating **additionality** (i.e. only viable due to availability of carbon finance).

## 1.1 Project start date and duration

### Requirement

Until 31 July 2013, projects with a start date 1 January 2000 or later may register. After 31 July 2013, projects shall register within 2 years of the project start date.

All projects shall be validated within 3 years of registration.

Projects shall have a clearly defined duration and shall not exceed 100 years.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Project Design Document.
- Other written evidence.

### Guidance

The **project start date** is the date when planting begins.

The **project duration** is the time over which project activities are to be implemented, monitored and carbon sequestration claims are to be made.

The project duration should not be confused with permanence. All projects shall involve a permanent land-use change to woodland cover (See 2.4).

## 1.2 Eligible activities

### Requirement

Eligible activities shall be those relating to woodland creation on soils which are not organic.

### Means of verification

For unwooded land:

- ▶ Statement on land use in Project Design Document.
- Land use records.
- Reference to historical maps, images or other sources such as the Forestry Commission planting and felling database (Grants & Licences Online Service).
- Expert or local evidence.

For soil type:

- ▶ Statement on soil type in Project Design Document.
- ▶ Results of field survey for soil type (see 3.2).

### Guidance

**Woodland creation** is the direct, human-induced conversion to woodland of land that has not been under tree cover for at least 25 years.

**Organic soil** consists of more than 50cm deep organic (or peat) surface horizon overlaying the mineral layer or rock. A list of organic soils can be found at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

See 3.2 for details of field survey for soil type.

## 1.3 Eligible land

### Requirement

Legal ownership, or tenure of the project area for the duration of the project, can be demonstrated.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Declaration in Project Design Document detailing nature and location of ownership or tenure documentation and landlords consent.
- Solicitor's letter.
- Title deeds.
- Land registry records.
- Certified copy of contractual agreements.

### Guidance

Legal ownership may be demonstrated by signed attestation, title deeds, a solicitor's letter, or evidence of long-term unchallenged use.

See 2.4 relating to risks and permanence.

## 1.4 Compliance with the law

### Requirement

Projects shall comply with the law.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Statement in Project Design Document.
- ▶ Project Design Document outlines a system or procedures for being aware of and implementing requirements of new legislation.
- No evidence of non-compliance.

### Guidance

Certification is not a legal compliance audit. The certification body will be checking that there is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant legal requirements, including:

- managers and employees understand and comply with all legal requirements relevant to their responsibilities;
- all documentation, including procedures, work instructions and contracts, meet requirements;
- no issues of legal non-compliance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.

## 1.5 Additionality

### Requirement

Additionality shall be demonstrated through the following tests. The legal test shall be satisfied. If the investment test is not satisfied then there shall be good evidence for the barrier test.

1. **Legal test:** There is no legal requirement specifying that woodlands should be created. Compensatory planting is not eligible.
2. **Investment test:** The project would not have gone ahead without the availability of carbon finance.
3. **Barriers test** (in exceptional circumstances): Existing barriers to the implementation of the project have been overcome (e.g. through the provision of financial support, technical support, etc).

### Means of verification

- ▶ Statements in Project Design Document.
- ▶ A full financial analysis (including expected costs and revenues) of the funds required to implement and manage for the project duration.
- ▶ Analysis of public vs. private funding of actual planting, establishment and management costs.
- Further evidence to support barrier test if used.

### Guidance

#### Grant-aided woodland

Projects receiving grant aid under a government-funded initiative are eligible provided a minimum proportion of funding is from a non-governmental source.

Further guidance on additionality [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 2 Project governance & documentation

### Principle

Projects need an effective and transparent governance structure with clear lines of accountability and clearly documented processes so as to enable cost-effective verification and to build confidence with stakeholders. Specifically to:

- Ensure carbon sequestration is **not double-counted**.
- Risks are adequately managed to sustain, in perpetuity, the carbon sequestered by the new woodland.
- Claims about carbon are **clear** and **accurate**.
- Effective **monitoring** gives **up to date information** on the project's progress.

### 2.1 Registry and avoidance of double counting

#### Requirement

Details of the project and the land to be planted shall be registered on the Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects.

#### Means of verification

- Land area is recorded on the Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects.

#### Guidance

The **Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects**, and details of registration are available at:  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

### 2.2 Project Design Documentation

#### Requirement

The project shall have a **Project Design Document** (PDD) containing the following information:

1. **Eligibility** (dates, legal aspects, additionality).
2. **Project governance and documentation** (registration, design document, management and monitoring).
3. **Carbon Sequestration** (including identification of risks to the achievement and permanence of the carbon benefits, along with relevant risk mitigation strategies).
4. **Environmental Quality**.
5. **Social Responsibility**.

The project shall provide electronically all relevant additional evidence requested within the PDD.

#### Means of verification

- ▶ Project design document with all relevant additional maps and additional evidence.

#### Guidance

The project should be clearly defined using appropriate maps, identifying all relevant aspects of the woodland resource, including any special characteristics and/or sensitive areas.

A template PDD is available at  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 2.3 Management plan and capacity

### Requirement

Projects shall be managed in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard, including all environmental (See 4) and social (See 5) aspects. There shall be a detailed management plan for the establishment period containing:

- An outline of the necessary inputs and resources including a full financial analysis.
- A summary of operational techniques.
- A chronological plan for initiation of key project activities.
- Consideration of species selection for future climate.

There shall be an outline of the longer-term management intentions, for the project duration and beyond.

The project developer shall have the management capacity necessary to carry out the planned project activities for the duration of the project.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Management plan deals with all issues above and meets the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard.
- ▶ Project Design Document sets out longer-term management intentions (including the woodland management regime to be applied).
- Certification to UK Woodland Assurance Standard.
- No evidence of non-compliance with the UK Forestry Standard.
- Project Design Document which clearly defines how roles in the project will be fulfilled.
- Project team lists which identify key technical skills.
- Evidence from previous project experience.

### Guidance

If the project is receiving a woodland grant, any existing woodland management plan may provide sufficient evidence for plans for the establishment period. There should be a process for updating the management plan at the end of this period.

Longer term, a short statement is required to confirm the intended management regime of the woodland for the project duration and beyond.

See the UK Forestry Standard and supporting Guidelines for Climate Change, Soil, Water, Biodiversity, Landscape, Historic Environment and People: [www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs)

## 2.4 Management of risks and permanence

### Requirement

The project land owner(s) shall commit to a permanent land-use change to woodland and to maintain the project area as a permanent woodland carbon sink. The Project shall demonstrate the commitment to permanence by:

- Identifying risk factors and developing appropriate mitigation strategies as set out in the Risk Assessment guidance.
- Calculating the level of risk according to the guidance on Risk Assessment and contributing to the Woodland Carbon Code buffer of unclaimed carbon.
- Ensuring re-stocking where projects involve harvesting.
- Replanting or undertaking compensatory planting should woodland area be lost due to wind, fire, pests, diseases or development.
- Managing as per the longer-term management intentions for the project duration and beyond (See Section 2.3).

### Means of verification

- ▶ Risk Assessment in the Project Design Document.
- ▶ Subtraction of carbon buffer in project carbon calculations (Section 3.4).
- ▶ Evidence of contracts requiring continued implementation of the Project Design Document by the landowner and requiring the landowner to inform future owners of the commitment to the Woodland Carbon Code.
- Practical evidence of the project developer demonstrating sensitivity to risk factors.
- Field observations confirming that assessment of risk is reasonable.

### Guidance

**Permanence** describes the issue of ensuring removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is permanent, and not reversed at a future point in time. Woodland projects carry a risk of reversibility and as such safeguards must be in place to minimise that risk and to guarantee replacement or compensatory woodland should a reversal occur.

Risk management should be built in at every stage of project design. The size of the risk buffer should be determined using the Risk Assessment guidance and specified in carbon sequestration calculations (See 3.4).

More detailed information about Permanence and Risk Assessment is available at:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)



## 2.5 Management of group schemes

### Requirement

The group scheme manager shall have adequate processes in place to:

- Keep records of group participants.
- Represent the group in the certification process.
- Establish procedures for the management of the group participants.
- Undertake internal monitoring, review and any actions resulting from the certification process.

The group scheme manager shall be responsible for ensuring that all projects within the group conform to the Code.

### Means of verification

- Contractual or written agreement in place to enable the Group Manager to ensure participating projects conform to Code requirements and to represent the Group in the certification process

### Guidance

Small projects may come together in a **group scheme** to be certified. Each individual project must still produce a Project Design Document and enter their project on the Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects.

Guidance on project eligibility for group scheme certification is available at: [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 2.6 Monitoring

### Requirement

The project shall have a monitoring plan in place before the project begins, to quantify and document the progress of carbon sequestration as well as ensure that the project is being managed to the UK Forestry Standard.

Regular monitoring of projects shall take place to demonstrate successful woodland establishment and that tree growth rates are consistent with anticipated carbon uptake as identified in the Project Design Document.

Corrective actions shall be undertaken if establishment and/or growth rates do not meet expectations.

The carbon monitoring plan shall include details of:

- The assessment protocol(s) (A–E).
- The frequency of monitoring.
- The sampling frequency/no of sample plots.
- How the data will be reported and quality assured.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Monitoring plans set out in the Project Design Document.
- ▶ Carbon monitoring reports which show progress of carbon sequestration.
- Certification to UK Woodland Assurance Standard, or other monitoring demonstrates compliance with UK Forestry Standard.
- No evidence of non-compliance with UK Forestry Standard.

### Guidance

Monitoring project carbon stocks should be carried out at least once every five years until the carbon stock is 90% or more of the project carbon sequestration. Monitoring can occur less frequently after this threshold is reached. If carbon stocks subsequently decline below this level then 5-yearly monitoring should be resumed.

After the initial establishment period it may be possible to monitor less frequently if the carbon sequestration is not being formally reported.

Where projects are subject to grant aid, audit and site visit reports by external parties (e.g. Forestry Commission) may contribute evidence in support of the monitoring plan.

To monitor carbon, projects should adopt the methodologies set out in the Carbon Assessment Protocol available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 2.7 Carbon statements and reporting

### Requirement

Carbon statements shall comply with recommended claims wording.

Carbon shall only be reported after it is sequestered. Statements made prior to sequestration shall clearly state the timescale over which the carbon is to be sequestered.

The legal rights of all parties to claim or report the carbon benefits of the project shall be clearly stated in the Project Design Document.

### Guidance

A **carbon statement** is simply a statement of what a project will sequester or has sequestered to date. It can be restated by more than one party with an interest in a project.

Any changes to ownership of the carbon shall be documented and updated in the Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Statement of claims in Project Design Document.
- ▶ Record in the UK Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects.
- ▶ Contract(s) between landowner/carbon company/agent and investor state(s) the parties' respective carbon rights.
- ▶ Signed attestation from each party to the project regarding the agreed approach to carbon claims.

Where organisations wish to **report** the carbon sequestration and emissions from woodland creation projects, they should do so in accordance with Annex L to Defra's 'Guidance on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions'. Reporting the contribution of a project towards GHG emissions reduction can only be done once, after the carbon is sequestered, and implies that the tCO<sub>2</sub>e reported has been 'retired' (i.e. it cannot be reported again).

Further guidance on carbon statements and reporting is available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

Anyone making carbon or other environmental claims should also refer to Defra's Green Claims Guidance at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/economy/products-consumers/green-claims-labels/>

## 2.8 Woodland Carbon Code registered trademark

### Requirement

Certified projects may use the Woodland Carbon Code logo and shall do so in accordance with the Rules of Use.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Examples of appropriate use.
- ▶ No evidence of misuse.

### Guidance

The Forestry Commission owns the registered trademark 'Woodland Carbon Code'. The rules of use are available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

# 3 Carbon sequestration

## Principle

Projects need to meet the following criteria by:

- Clarifying the **baseline** (business as usual) changes in carbon on the site.
- **Minimising any leakage** caused by the project.
- Predicting **carbon sequestration** over and above the baseline changes.
- Setting aside a carbon 'buffer' to **insure against unavoidable loss**.
- Calculating the **net carbon benefit** of the project.

## 3.1 Units of carbon calculation

### Requirement

Carbon sequestration shall be calculated and expressed in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e).

'1 Woodland Carbon Unit' may be used to describe 1 tCO<sub>2</sub>e sequestered by a project certified to this Code.

Positive values shall denote sequestration and negative values shall denote emissions.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Project documentation shows all carbon calculations in tCO<sub>2</sub>e with positive values representing sequestration and negative values representing emissions.
- References to 'Woodland Carbon Units' in any project documentation are clearly related to the tCO<sub>2</sub>e to be or already sequestered.

### Guidance

Calculations shall be undertaken in tCO<sub>2</sub>e to ensure transparency in measurement and recording.

## 3.2 Carbon baseline

### Requirement

Projects shall describe the original condition of the project site including details of the vegetation cover, soil type and their carbon content.

Project managers shall estimate the baseline, or changes in the carbon stock at the site for the duration of the project in the absence of the project activities (i.e. business as usual).

Where there is significant sequestration, the carbon baseline shall be accounted for in 'net carbon sequestration' (3.5). Otherwise, the carbon baseline is assumed to be '0, no change over time'.

### Guidance

A **carbon baseline** is the reference projection from which the impact of the project can be measured. It is based on a continuation of the current land use in the absence of the project.

Changes to baseline are significant if they are ≥5% of the project carbon sequestration over the duration of the project.

## Means of verification

For site description:

- Appropriate maps, photographs or remotely sensed images to indicate previous land cover.
- Results of field survey for vegetation or soil type.

For baseline calculations:

- ▶ Carbon baseline calculations in Project Design Document.
- More detailed calculations of carbon baseline.

Carbon pools included:

- Tree above and below ground biomass
- Litter and deadwood
- Non-tree above and below ground biomass
- Soil

Further guidance on preparing a project carbon baseline is given at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 3.3 Carbon leakage

### Requirement

Confirmation shall be given whether the land manager intends to change or intensify the use of land elsewhere on the holding as a consequence of the woodland creation.

If leakage (land use change / intensification) outside the project boundary but within the UK is proposed, then projects shall carry out an assessment to determine whether this will result in GHG emissions.

If significant GHG emissions occur they shall be quantified for the duration of the project and accounted for in 'net carbon sequestration' (3.5). Otherwise leakage is assumed to be '0, no change over time'.

### Means of verification

- ▶ Statement in Project Design Document of intention by the owner/applicant to replace the previous land use or activity elsewhere.
- ▶ Leakage assessment in Project Design Document.
- Mapping or field observation of current land uses and the likelihood of displacement of activities.
- Further calculations of leakage.

### Guidance

**Leakage** is GHG emissions outside the project boundary as a result of the project (e.g. displacement of agricultural activities might result in deforestation or intensification of use of non-wooded land elsewhere).

Leakage is significant if it results in GHG emissions of magnitude  $\geq 5\%$  of the project carbon sequestration over the duration of the project

Carbon pools included:

- Tree above and below ground biomass
- Litter and deadwood
- Non-tree above and below ground biomass
- Soil
- GHG emissions to manage the land which has changed use

Further guidance on assessing and accounting for leakage is given at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 3.4 Project carbon sequestration

### Requirement

Where land is cleared of trees or other vegetation in preparation for the project start date, the lost carbon stock shall be calculated and subtracted from the project carbon sequestration at year 1.

Predictions of the changes in relevant carbon pools for the duration of the project shall be made using the Carbon Lookup Tables.

Carbon sequestration in woodland biomass shall be restricted to the long-term average carbon stock that is projected to accumulate on the site. A carbon buffer shall be deducted from each project's projected carbon sequestration to 'insure' against unavoidable loss (See 2.4).

### Means of verification

- ▶ Project carbon predictions in Project Design Document.
- Additional evidence: More detailed calculations.

### Guidance

Carbon pools included:

- Tree above and below ground biomass
- Litter and deadwood
- Non-tree above and below ground biomass (at project outset)
- Soil
- GHG emissions from woodland management

Guidance on predicting project carbon sequestration can be found at: [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

## 3.5 Net carbon sequestration

### Requirement

Net carbon sequestration of a project shall be calculated as project carbon (3.4) adjusted for leakage (3.3) minus baseline (3.2).

### Means of verification

- ▶ Net Sequestration in Project Design Document.
- Additional evidence: More detailed calculations.

### Guidance

Documentation should show the predicted net carbon sequestration at 5-yearly intervals for the duration of the project.

# 4 Environmental quality

## Principle

Projects need to be of high **environmental quality**, taking into account the wider impacts on ecosystems to ensure that no harm is done by the project and, whenever possible, that wider benefits are created.

## Requirement

The project design shall incorporate the environmental aspects of sustainable forest management set out in the UK Forestry Standard and these standards shall be maintained throughout the duration of the project (See 2.3 and 2.6).

## Means of verification

- ▶ Environmental Quality statements in Project Design Document.
- ▶ Environmental Impact Assessment/Environmental Statement or confirmation that EIA is not required.
- ▶ Other relevant documentation.

## Guidance

All projects should be able to show that any environmental impacts on the land area concerned are likely to be positive.

Where required, the content of an Environmental Statement and the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment process will usually cover all issues associated with environmental integrity.

See the UK Forestry Standard and supporting Guidelines for Climate Change, Soil, Water, Biodiversity, Landscape and Historic Environment: [www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs)

# 5 Social responsibility

## Principle

The project shall be socially responsible and where possible offer benefits to local communities and other interested forest users or stakeholders. Stakeholders (local communities and others) shall be consulted and engaged in plans to create and manage new woodland.

## Requirement

The project shall provide an opportunity for, and take account of, inputs from stakeholders and feedback from local communities during both the project design phase and over the life-span of the project.

The project design shall incorporate the social aspects of sustainable forest management set out in the UK Forestry Standard and these standards shall be maintained throughout the lifetime of the project (See 2.3 and 2.6).

## Means of verification

- ▶ Social Responsibility statements in Project Design Document.
- ▶ Consultation details in Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Statement.
- Evidence of placement on the Forestry Commission's public register (if grant aided in GB).
- Other documentation which provides evidence of the approach taken to achieve meaningful stakeholder consultation, along with a summary of feedback and the actions taken.

## Guidance

See the UK Forestry Standard and supporting Guidelines for Forests and People [www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs)

'A toolbox for public engagement in forest and woodland planning' assists forest and woodland managers when planning for public involvement, and when considering which tools they could use to include people in forest or woodland planning [www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox)

Where an EIA has been required, the regulatory process should usually provide the appropriate documentary evidence for stakeholder consultation and engagement.

# Glossary

**Additionality** – A project is ‘additional’ if it, and the activities supported by it, could not have happened without private carbon finance.

**Barrier** – Any obstacle to reaching a goal that can be overcome by a project or measure.

**Baseline** – The projected changes to carbon on the site if the project weren’t to go ahead (the ‘business as usual’ scenario). This is a reference projection to which the carbon benefits of project activities can be compared over the project lifetime.

**Buffer** – A carbon pool of ‘unclaimed carbon’ to cover either uncertainty in carbon measurement or unavoidable potential losses which may occur from the project over time, thus ensuring the permanence of carbon sequestration.

**Carbon pool** – A system that can store and/or accumulate carbon, e.g. above-ground biomass, leaf/needle litter, dead wood and soil organic carbon.

**Carbon reporting** involves a carbon owner or organisation formally reporting carbon sequestration in accordance with Defra’s ‘Guidance on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions’. This can only be done once, after the carbon is sequestered, and implies that the tCO<sub>2</sub>e reported has been ‘retired’ (i.e. it cannot be reported again). See **Carbon statement**.

**Carbon sequestration** – Direct removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through land-use change, afforestation, reforestation and/or increases in soil carbon.

**Carbon statement** – a statement of what a project will sequester or has sequestered to date. It can be restated by more than one party with an interest in a project. See **Carbon reporting**.

**Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** – A naturally occurring gas and by-product of burning fossil fuels or biomass, land-use changes and industrial processes. It is the principal anthropogenic (caused by human activity) greenhouse gas that affects the Earth’s climate.

**Carbon offsetting** – A way of compensating for greenhouse gas emissions by making an equivalent carbon dioxide saving elsewhere. This involves calculating emissions and then purchasing Kyoto compliant ‘credits’ from emission-reduction projects elsewhere. Kyoto compliant woodland creation can currently only occur outside the UK.

**Carbon sink** – A carbon pool that is expanding, e.g. a growing forest.

**Certification** – Registration and assessment of a project against the criteria of the Code by an independent body accredited by UK Accreditation Service.

**Climate change** – Change or changes in the climate which can be directly or indirectly attributed to human activity (UNFCCC Article 1).

**Compensatory planting** – New woodland created to compensate for woodland lost elsewhere which provides at least the equivalent woodland-related net public benefit embodied in the woodland which was removed (e.g. for development (windfarms or in urban areas) or where woodland is removed to restore open habitats).

**Deforestation** – Permanent or long-term removal of woodland; the direct, human-induced conversion of forested land to another land use, or the long-term reduction of the tree canopy cover below the minimum 20% threshold.

**Double-counting** – Double-counting occurs when the same tonne of carbon dioxide is claimed by two separate entities, or when the same tonne of carbon dioxide is sold more than once.

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** – These regulations apply to forestry related projects. If the Forestry Commission/Forest Service considers that project proposals may have a significant effect on the environment then the proposer must obtain Forestry Commission/Forestry Service consent for the work and submit an Environmental Statement as part of the application for consent.

**Forest** – See ‘Woodland’.



**Greenhouse gases (GHGs)** – Greenhouse gases. The gases which are causing the warming of the Earth’s atmosphere that is leading to climate change. The Kyoto Protocol deals with 6 of these: carbon dioxide, hydrofluorocarbons, methane, nitrous oxide, perfluorocarbons and sulphur-hexafluoride. These contribute to the ‘greenhouse effect’.

**Group Scheme** – A group of projects that work together to gain certification. These projects will be coordinated and overseen by a group scheme manager. The group scheme manager is responsible for ensuring that all projects within the group conform to the Code.

**Kyoto Protocol** – the Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement linked to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The major feature of the Kyoto Protocol is that it sets binding targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European Community for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. [www.unfccc.int](http://www.unfccc.int)

**Leakage** – is GHG emissions outside the project boundary as a result of the project (e.g. displacement of agricultural activities might result in deforestation or intensification of use of non-wooded land elsewhere).

**Long-term average carbon stock** – The mean carbon stock over the long-term in a woodland, averaged over several whole rotations, if clearfelling. For projects where there is no clearfelling the long-term average is assumed to be no less than the carbon predicted to be sequestered by year 100, for a given scenario. For sites where clearfelling is proposed, then the long-term average is calculated over several whole rotations of a given length, where the carbon stock onsite varies from zero at the start of each rotation to a maximum just prior to clearfelling.

**Mitigation** – Implementing activities or policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or enhance carbon sinks.

**Organic Soil** – Soil which contains more than 50cm deep organic (or peat) surface horizon overlaying the mineral layer or rock.

**Permanence** – The issue of ensuring that removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is permanent, and not reversed at a future point in time. Woodland projects carry a risk of irreversibility and as such safeguards must be in place to minimise that risk and to guarantee replacement or compensatory woodland should a reversal occur.

**Project** – individual woodland creation project under the same ownership and management. A project could encompass more than one site.

**Project Design Document (PDD)** – A document created by a project manager to describe how the project meets the requirements of the Code.

**Project Duration** – The time over which project activities are to be implemented, monitored and carbon sequestration claims is to be claimed. Projects can be up to 100 years in duration.

**Project Start Date** – The date when tree planting begins.

**The Register of UK Woodland Carbon Projects** – the official record of the location of projects, the predicted and actual carbon sequestration as well as the owners of that carbon.

**Validation** – The initial evaluation of a project against the standards of the Woodland Carbon Code, undertaken by a certification body accredited by the UK Accreditation Service.

**Verification** – The ongoing evaluation of a project against the standards of the Woodland Carbon Code, undertaken by a certification body accredited by the UK Accreditation Service. Verification will normally be required at 5-yearly intervals, and will assess the carbon sequestration that has actually occurred as well as continuing management to the UK Forestry Standard.

**Woodland** – Land under stands of trees with a canopy cover of at least 20% (25% in Northern Ireland), or having the potential to achieve this. This definition includes integral open space and felled areas that are awaiting restocking (replanting). (This definition is also applicable to ‘forest’).

**Woodland creation** – The direct, human-induced conversion to woodland of land that has not previously been forested according to historical records. The Code sets a threshold of a continuous absence of woodland over the previous 25 years.

