

Assessment of plant biosecurity risks to Scotland from large-scale tree plantings for environmental benefits

Supplementary Information



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Interview framework for large scale planting for environmental benefits

Questions relate to past, ongoing and planned planting schemes. Tense to be altered as applicable.

Qualifiers – Clarify name, job role, organisation.

In relation to large, scale planting at <case study site> which of these roles have you been (or will you be) involved in?

- Site ownership – Section 1
- Setting objectives for the site – Section 2
- Species selection – Section 3
- Sourcing trees/plants – Section 4
- Supplying trees/plants – Section 5
- Planting of trees/plants – Section 6
- Management of trees/plants – Section 7

Section 1 - Site ownership

Q1. What can you tell me about the history of the site, and when you/your organisation took ownership?

Q2. How big is the site, and how uniform is it in terms of the species and habitats?

Q3. Do you set the management objectives for the site? Solely? With others' input? What are these objectives, and are they formalised in plans/contracts?

Q4. How have objectives and tree/plant species changed to date, and are there plans to change them in future? How does this compare or fit with the neighbouring land use and management?

Q5. Who's involved in the management of the site, and what are their roles and responsibilities? e.g. owners, contractors, community, local authority etc.

Q6. Who are the sites main users (who has access)? And for what purposes?

Q7. Do you have any concerns around biosecurity/plant health in relation to large-scale planting on your site? If so, provide details and examples, as well as measures to mitigate.

Q8. Has there been any history of tree/plant P&D instances, or other threats to establishment, on the site? Detail type, timing, extent and impacts (ecological, socio-economic, management).

Section 2 - Site objectives

Q1. What can you tell me about the management objectives for the site?

Q2. Is there – or has there ever been - a formal management plan (or similar) for the site? Who developed and inputted into this? <acquire if possible >

Q3. What role have you played (or will you play) in changing the site's tree/plant species?

Q4. Who else is involved in managing the site? What roles do they play re: trees/plants?

Q5. In relation to large-scale planting (for environmental benefit) can you summarise what has been/is being/will be undertaken? Prompts: funding details, species, number, timing, benefits sought.

Q6. Can you outline how this decision came about? What drove you to pursue large-scale planting?

Q7. Have you considered issues of biosecurity/plant health when planning for large-scale planting? If so, provide details and examples. If not, why not?

Q8. Can you outline who else is involved (people/organisations) in making this a reality? Prompts: supplier, purchaser, decision makers/influencers, contractors, volunteers, anyone else?

Section 3 - Species selection

Q1. What role have you played in the selection of planted species for <the large-scale planting project in question>?

Q2. Prior to attempting to purchase/obtain trees/plants, what kind of species did you hope to acquire?

Q3. What was the rationale behind this preference? How do the selected species tie in with the management plan/objectives? And environmental benefits, specifically?

Q4. When it came to purchasing/obtaining, did you insist on particular species characteristics e.g. nativeness, provenance, size, source etc.

Q5. Was species' susceptibility to threats considered?

1) P&D threats 2) climate change 3) herbivory 4) other establishment threats

Q6. Were these considerations based on any particular experiences, observations or guidance? Give details.

Q7. Were any/all of these considerations recorded formally or otherwise? <acquire if possible>

Q8. Were you able to/do you foresee any difficulty in getting exactly what you want(ed) in terms of species? If not, why not? Explore compromises made and their drivers.

Q9. <For past and present schemes only... >Would you change anything about the species sought if you were repeating the planting? What and why?

Q10. What training/education have you received to help you fulfil your role in species selection? Who provided this and what did it involve? Was there a biosecurity component?

Section 4 – Sourcing trees/plants

Q1. What guidance (if any) were you provided with when seeking to purchase/obtain trees/plants for <the large-scale planting project in question>? If so, how suitable did you consider the selections to be for the site and management objectives?

Q2. Were you able to/do you foresee any difficulty in getting exactly what you want(ed) in terms of species? If not, why not? Explore compromises made and their drivers.

Q3. Where did you acquire the trees/plants from for <the large-scale planting project in question>?

Q4. What influenced this decision? e.g. trust/relationship, location, stock (range, quantity, genetics): range/number of products, cost, dictated by others, speed, quality, biosecurity. i.e. were there other options available that were decided against?

Q5. What training/education have you received to help you fulfil your role in sourcing appropriate trees/plants? Who provided this and what did it involve? Was there a biosecurity component?

Q6. Did you inspect either the supplier's site or the stock prior to obtaining the trees/plants? If so, what were you looking at/for? If not, why not?

Q7. How did the trees/plants travel from the grower/seller to the site?

Q8. Is there anything about the way in which the trees/plants were grown/handled that gave rise to concerns e.g. with poor establishment or intro and spread of P&Ds? If so, what was the result of these concerns?

<For past and present schemes only... >

Q9. Would you change anything about where/how the trees/plants were obtained if you were repeating the process? What and why?

Section 5 - Supplying trees/plants

< In the event of forgotten schemes, questions will be tweaked to reflect common/typical experiences for large-scale planting for environmental benefit in general >

Q1. How many large-scale planting schemes (for environmental benefit) have you been involved in over the last 5 years? Examples. Do you expect/intend for this to be an expanding market for you?

Q2. Do you know how many/what proportion of the trees/plants you supplied for <the large-scale planting project in question>? Do you know of anyone else involved in supplying for the site?

Q3. Are you aware of why you were selected to be a supplier for <the scheme in question>? Detail.

Q4. Where had these trees/plants come from? E.g. grown from seed, purchased from elsewhere?

Q5. Were you made aware of any stipulations/preferences regarding the trees/plants, other than quantity, species and size? If so, what were these?

Q6. Were you able to provide exactly what was desired, or were compromises required? What were these and what drove them?

Q7. Can you give an overview of what you do to minimise a) poor establishment and b) intro and spread of P&Ds? Has this changed recently, or are there plans to change in the near future? If so, how and why? What has driven you to implement OR stopped you from implementing to date?

Q8. What training/education have you received to help you fulfil your role in supplying appropriate trees/plants? Who provided this and what did it involve? Was there a biosecurity component?

Q9. Did anyone connected with the large-scale planting scheme visit or communicate with you to inspect or learn about these measures? If so, what did this involve? Any particular interests or assurances sought?

Q10. How were the trees/plants transported to the site?

Q11. Have you received any feedback from the site owner/manager about the trees/plants you provided? E.g. establishment rate or infection/infestation. Explore details and any subsequent actions.

Q12. How typical was this experience relative to other large-scale planting schemes you've been involved in? What variation do you see around customer requests for these types of scheme?

Section 6 – Planting trees/plants

Q1. What proportion of the trees/plants were you or your org involved in planting? How many people did this involve? Are you aware of anyone else being involved in planting?

Q2. How were the trees/plants a) delivered to the site b) moved across the site to their final destination? Who did this, and what equipment/machinery was used?

Q3. At what point did you or your organisation become and cease being involved? Explain tasks and duration.

Q4. Were the people and/or machines involved also working on other projects elsewhere over the same period?

Q5. What information/guidance were you provided with for carrying out your tasks, and by whom? How does this compare to other info/guidance on similar projects?

Q6. What was your assessment of the condition of the trees/plants a) on first contact and b) once in the ground?

Q7. What measures have been taken to help ensure establishment and good health? What do you do to minimise your own biosecurity impacts? e.g. machine use, boots/tools.

Q8. Is there anything else you think could/should have been done to assist with ensuring high establishment and good health? If so, why was this not done at the time?

Q9. What training/education have you received to help you fulfil your role in establishing trees/plants? Who provided this and what did it involve? Was there a biosecurity component?

Q10. Have you received any feedback or updates on the planting and establishment? Detail? Overall, how successful do you feel establishment has been?

Section 7 – Management

Q1. How many people from your organisation are involved in managing the trees/plants? Are you aware of anyone else being involved?

Q2. How long had the trees/plants been in the ground before your management responsibilities begun?

Q3. What guidance, if any, do you use to assist your management? Who provides this? How much freedom do you have in implementation at this site? How does it compare to other management on similar sites?

Q4. What are you managing for?

Q5. What do you do to a) prevent and b) respond to threats? Prompts: P&D infections/infestations, grazing pressure, environmental stressors, human-related threats?

Q6. Have you experienced any instances of P&Ds or other threats to establishment?

Q7. What level of establishment do you aim for? Has this been achieved?

Q8. What do you do to minimise your own biosecurity impacts? e.g. machine use, boots/tools.

Q9. What training/education have you received to help you fulfil your role? Who provided this and what did it involve? Was there a biosecurity component?

Q10. Has what you are managing for and/or the way you manage trees/plants changed over time? Do you expect it to going forward? How and why? In what ways?

Section 8 – Other (for ALL participants).

Q1. How much contact did you have with people from the other roles described at the beginning <recap>? Were these new or existing relationships? How did communication take place? What was discussed (prompt: P&Ds/biosecurity)?

Q2. Overall, how successful do you think the planting scheme has been? What went well/badly? Could/should anything be done differently in future? If so, what and why?

Q3. What do you see as the biggest threats to establishment and maintaining good tree/plant health for schemes of this type? What can be done to prevent these threats materialising?

Q4. Do you have any other comments, contacts, documents (incl. maps and photographs) relating to the site that might help us create a more complete picture?

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