



Sustainable Timber Procurement Policy

Sustainable Timber Procurement Policy

It is Durham County Council's policy that all timber and wood-derived products are required to be purchased from independently verifiable legal & sustainable sources.

We recognise that the production and manufacture of timber based products has significant economic, environmental and social impacts. Sustainable forest management is about preserving forests as a source of life for all that depends on it. We believe that timber should be harvested in such a way that it does not threaten the range of associated goods and services that forests provide in contributing to human well-being, poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods. A timber purchasing policy is a valuable tool to help tackle the challenges of illegal logging, deforestation and climate change and to help us to meet our sustainability objectives.

Therefore our long term intention is to source all timber products that we procure directly (and those procured on our behalf) from sustainably managed forests. Our policy recognises the responsibility of Durham County Council to ensure that we have a neutral, if not positive effect on the world's forests.

Therefore all timber and other wood products bought by, used by, or incorporated within any projects across Durham County Council have to be from independently verifiable sustainable sources only and traceable from the forest to the final processor through a 'Chain of Custody'.

Recycled wood is preferable, if it meets the technical specification as set out in the UK Government's guidance note on the definition of 'Recycled'. Documentary evidence and independent verification will however still apply to recycled timber but will focus on the previous timber use rather than the forest source.

Contractors and suppliers are required to demonstrate compliance with the policy and provide adequate supporting evidence upon request, see below.

Durham County Council will therefore:

- Procure products from legal and well managed forests which are certified under third party certification schemes which are in compliance with the criteria set in the document "UK Government Timber Procurement Policy: Criteria for Evaluating Category A Evidence". Schemes in compliance include the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme (PEFC).
- Accept other documentary evidence that provides assurance that the source is sustainable as set out in the document titled "UK Government Timber Procurement Policy: Framework for evaluating Category B evidence"

- Also accept Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) licensed timber, when offered, until 2015.
- Refer all Durham County Council buyers and their suppliers to the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET) for free advice and guidance to aid compliance with the policy. Contact CPET on 01865 243766 or see www.proforest.net/cpet for further details on evidence of compliance.
- Specify that the timber in question should be '*fit for purpose*' rather than demanding particular species where possible. This gives suppliers more flexibility in finding sustainable sources of timber.
- Approve subcontractors and suppliers on the basis of an assessment of their procedures and verification processes relating to the sourcing of timber.
- Apply ambitious targets in the implementation and rollout of this policy to increase the volume of timber purchased in compliance with the policy, and to measure our progress against these targets and maintain a transparent audit trail.
- Ensure the policy is applied to all timber and wood products purchased directly and indirectly by Durham County Council.

To ensure this policy is implemented effectively, we will:

- Incorporate this policy's requirements across all functions of the Council
- Embed it in our supply chain & procurement processes
- Bring this policy to the attention of our employees and members of the supply chain e.g. customers, other key stakeholders including regional & national procurement consortia and suppliers and gain their support in its implementation.
- Actively encourage & engage our customers and suppliers in its implementation
- Periodically review the policy to ensure its continuing suitability and that it remains appropriate to ambitions set out in the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy.

George Garlick

Councillor Alan Napier

Chief Executive

Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources

Annex A Glossary of terms

The terms defined in Annex A should accompany the model specification in Annex B and contract condition in Annex C.

1. Definitions

1.1 Timber and wood-derived products: means any product that contains wood or wood fibre, with the exception of "recycled" materials (see below). Such products range from solid wood to those where the manufacturing processes obscure the wood element (e.g. paper).

Timber and wood-derived products supplied or used in performance of the contract that have been recycled or reclaimed are referred to as "recycled" timber, which is defined below.

Timber and wood-derived products supplied or used in performance of the contract that are not recycled are referred to as "virgin" timber when the distinction needs to be made for clarity.

Short-rotation coppice is exempt from the requirements for timber and wood-derived products and falls under agricultural regulation and supervision rather than forestry.

1.2 Legal and Sustainable: means production and process methods, also referred to as timber production standards, as defined by the document titled "*UK Government timber procurement policy: Definition of legal and sustainable for timber procurement*" (available from the Contracting Authority on request and from the CPET website). The edition current on the day the contract is awarded shall apply.

1.3 FLEGT: means Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade, and is a reference to the EU scheme to address the problem of illegally logged timber.

1.4 FLEGT-licensed: means production and process methods, also referred to as timber production standards, as defined by a bilateral Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and a timber-producing country under the FLEGT scheme, where both parties have agreed to establish a system under which timber that has been produced in accordance with the relevant laws of the producing country, and other criteria stipulated by the VPA, are licensed for export by the producing country government. This may also include any timber that has been independently verified as meeting all the producing country's requirements for a FLEGT licence, where a VPA has been signed but the FLEGT licensing system is not fully operational. Evidence from a country that has not signed up to a VPA which demonstrates that all of the requirements equivalent to FLEGT-licensed timber has been met will also be acceptable. CPET will produce further guidance on FLEGT-licensed or equivalent timber in due course.

1.5 Recycled: means recovered wood that prior to being supplied to the Contracting Authority had an end use as a standalone object or as part of a

structure. The term "recycled" is used to cover the following categories: pre-consumer recycled wood and wood fibre or industrial by products but excluding sawmill co-products (sawmill co-products are deemed to fall within the category of virgin timber), post-consumer recycled wood and wood fibre, and drift wood. It also covers reclaimed timber which was abandoned or confiscated at least ten years previously.

1.6 Short-rotation coppice: means a specific management regime whereby the poles of trees are cut every one to two years and which is aimed at producing biomass for energy. It is exempt from the UK government timber procurement policy requirements and falls under agricultural regulation and supervision rather than forestry. The exemption only refers to short-rotation coppice, and not 'conventional' coppice which is forest management and therefore subject to the timber policy.

1.7 CPET: means the UK Government's Central Point of Expertise on Timber, which provides a free telephone helpline and website to support implementation of the UK Government timber procurement policy. Phone: 01865 243766. Website: www.proforest.net/cpet.

Annex B Model Specification Text

1. Requirements for Timber

1.1 All timber and wood-derived products for supply or use in performance of the contract must be independently verifiable and either:

1.1.1 From a legal and sustainable source; or

1.1.2 from a FLEGT-licensed or equivalent source.

2. Requirements for proof of Timber Origin

2.1 Management of the forest or plantation shall be audited at intervals confirming ongoing good forest management and by organisations with appropriate forest management experience that are independent of the organisation that holds timber harvest and/or management rights for that forest.

2.2. The Contracting Authority will accept evidence from any of the following three categories:

2.2.1 Category A evidence: Certification under a scheme recognised by the UK government as meeting the criteria set out in the document entitled "UK Government Timber Procurement Policy: Criteria for Evaluating Category A Evidence" (available from the Contracting Authority on request and on CPET's website). The edition current on the day the contract is awarded shall apply. A list of assessed certification schemes that currently meet the government's requirements can be found on CPET's website. Acceptable schemes must ensure that at least 70% (by volume or weight) is from a legal and sustainable source with the balance from a legal source.

2.2.2. Category B evidence: Documentary evidence, other than Category A evidence and FLEGT evidence, that provides assurance that the source is sustainable. In this context "sustainable" is defined in the document entitled "UK Government Timber Procurement Policy: Evaluation of Category B Evidence: Methodology" (available from the Contracting Authority on request and on CPET's website). The edition current on the day the contract is awarded shall apply. Such Category B evidence may include, for example, independent audits and declarations by the contractor or his contractors. Where Category B evidence is to be relied on, the contractor is required to notify the Contracting Authority of the source or sources of all virgin timber and wood-derived products supplied. Source in this context means the forest or plantation where the trees were grown and all subsequent places of delivery through the supply chain prior to receipt of the timber or wood-derived product by the Contracting Authority. The contractor shall separately identify virgin timber and wood-derived products supplied from forests and plantations that are claimed to be subject to sustainable timber production and shall submit to the Contracting Authority documentation in respect of such wood to confirm that the criteria for sustainable timber production set out in this specification have been met. If mixing is

unavoidable within the supply chain then sources can still be accepted provided that there are adequate controls in place and at least 70% (by volume or weight) is from a legal and sustainable source with the balance from a legal source.

2.2.3 FLEGT evidence, from either or both of the following categories: □

- Evidence of timber products being exported from a timber-producing country that has signed a bilateral Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Community and which have been licensed for export by the producing country's government. This may also include timber products that have been independently verified as meeting all the producing country's requirements for a FLEGT licence, where a VPA has been entered into but the FLEGT licensing system is not fully operational.
- Equivalent evidence from a country that has not entered into a VPA which demonstrates that all of the requirements equivalent to FLEGT-licensed timber has been met.

Annex C Model Contract Condition - Timber and wood-derived products

Please note that terms in square brackets will need to be defined according to the relevant contract in which the model contract condition is used.

1. Requirements for Timber

1.1. All timber and wood-derived products supplied or used by [the Contractor] in performance of [the Contract] (including all timber and wood-derived products supplied or used by sub-contractors) shall comply with [the Contract Specification].

2. Requirements for Proof of Timber Origin

2.1 If requested by [the Contracting Authority], and not already provided at the tender evaluation stage, [the Contractor] shall provide to [the Contracting Authority] evidence that the timber supplied or used in the performance of [the Contract] complies with the requirements of [the Contract Specification].

2.2 [The Contracting Authority] reserves the right at any time during the execution of [the Contract] and for a period of 6 years from final delivery under [the Contract] to require [the Contractor] to produce the evidence required for [the Contracting Authority's] inspection within 14 days of [the Contracting Authority's] written request.

2.3 [The Contractor] shall maintain records of all timber and wood derived products delivered to and accepted by [the Contracting Authority]. Such information shall be made available to [the Contracting Authority] if requested, for a period of 6 years from final delivery under [the Contract].

3. Independent Verification

3.1. [The Contracting Authority] reserves the right to decide whether the evidence submitted to it demonstrates legality and sustainability, or FLEGT-licence or equivalent, and is adequate to satisfy [the Contracting Authority] that the timber or wood-derived product complies with [the Contract Specification]. In the event that [the Contracting Authority] is not satisfied, [the Contractor] shall commission and meet the costs of an "independent verification" and resulting report that will (a) verify the forest source of the timber or wood and (b) assess whether the source meets the relevant criteria.

3.2 In [this Contract], "Independent Verification" means that an evaluation is undertaken and reported by an individual or body whose organisation, systems and procedures conform to *ISO Guide 65:1996 (EN 45011:1998) General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems* or equivalent, and who is accredited to audit against forest management standards by a body whose organisation, systems and procedures conform to

ISO 17011: 2004 General Requirements for Providing Assessment and Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies or equivalent.

4. [Contracting Authority's] Right to Reject Timber

4.1 [The Contracting Authority] reserves the right to reject any timber or wood-derived products that do not comply with [the Contract Specification]. Where the [Contracting Authority] exercises its right to reject any timber, [the Contractor] shall supply alternative timber, which does so comply, at no additional cost to [the Contracting Authority] and without causing delay to [the Contract] completion period.

Signed.....

Name in Capitals (as in tender).....

For and on behalf ofDate.....

Annex D Model paragraph for inclusion in ITT covering letter

The tenderer's attention is drawn to the contract requirements governing the supply and use of timber and wood-derived products in performing the contract. It is UK government policy to require that all timber and wood-derived products originate from either legal and sustainable or FLEGT-licensed or equivalent sources. Timber and wood-derived products in the context of this contract include any product that contains wood or wood fibre supplied to the Contracting Authority or used by the contractor or his agents and subcontractors in performance of the contract. The contract conditions require that all timber and wood-derived products supplied to the Contracting Authority or used by the contractor in performing the contract originate from either legal and sustainable or FLEGT-licensed sources, as set out in the specification. The Contracting Authority may reject any bid that cannot offer to provide independent verification that all timber and wood derived products used in the contract meets this requirement.