

Appendix B: Relevant Environmental Protection Objectives

Plan or Programme	Relevant Environmental Protection Objectives within the Plan or Programme	How the Forestry programme will support these Environmental Protection Objectives
Republic of Ireland		
<p>DAHG (2014) A Draft National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2014-2024</p>	<p>The Strategy sets out six core National Landscape Strategy Objectives with associated actions derived from the European Landscape Convention. Those of most relevance are summarised below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognise landscapes in law 2. Develop a National Landscape Character Assessment 3. Develop Landscape Policies Relevant government departments and agencies including semi-state agencies should ensure that sector-specific policies and strategies and relevant legislation within their remit are fully consistent with the objectives set out in the National Landscape Strategy. 4. Increase Landscape Awareness Develop public awareness programmes to promote an understanding of the nature of landscape, its value as a cultural and visual resource, its role in promoting Ireland's attractiveness as a tourist destination, and also in ensuring economic prosperity and how it should be managed sustainably and beneficially to meet the challenges of climate change adaptation and mitigation, food-security, health and well-being. 5. Identity Education, Research and Training Needs Develop a landscape module at an appropriate National Framework of Qualifications level to be integrated into agricultural training programmes for advisors, farmers and in agricultural colleges. 6. Strengthen Public Participation 	<p>The DAHG Strategy will be directly affected by the Forestry Programme, through measures that will affect the landscape such as the creation of woodland, native woodland conservation and woodland improvement.</p> <p>The aim of the native woodland conservation scheme is to conserve and enhance areas of native woodland to improve the quality and diversity of the landscape, which is in line with the objectives of the National Landscape Strategy.</p> <p>The Forest Service supports the drafting of management plans and is developing an electronic system for their submission, which can include landscape considerations.</p>

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<p>DECLG (2012) National Climate Change Adaptation Framework: Building Resilience to Climate Change</p>	<p>This framework is a first step in a longer-term process which will evolve and strengthen over time as the knowledge base evolves and as the policy response matures. The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ providing the policy context for a strategic national adaptation response to climate change; ▪ promoting dialogue and understanding of adaptation issues; ▪ identifying and promoting adaptation solutions; and ▪ committing to actions to support the adaptation process. 	<p>The Forestry Programme will directly contribute to the objectives of the National Climate Change Adaption Framework through a variety of its measures.</p> <p>The measure for afforestation will provide the opportunity to restructure the mix of species in forests in order to improve resilience to climate change and increase the carbon sequestration potential of Ireland.</p> <p>Additionally this measure under the Forestry Programme will provide more wood to be used as an energy resource, which will reduce carbon dioxide emissions to help prevent further damage to the climate.</p> <p>Measure six of the strategy is to invest in improving the resilience and environmental value of forests through the native woodland conservation scheme. Protecting native woodlands and planting more native tree species will bring many environmental benefits with it, including the enhanced carbon sequestration potential as a result of the long term nature of these species.</p>
<p>DECLG (2011) Draft Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland</p>	<p>The objectives of the draft Framework are to identify and prioritise policy areas and mechanisms where a sustainable development approach will add value and enable continuous improvement of quality of life for current and future generations and set out clear measures, responsibilities and timelines in an implementation plan.</p> <p>This draft Framework broadly follows the thematic approach of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainability of public finances and economic resilience ▪ Sustainable consumption and production ▪ Conservation and management of natural resources ▪ Climate change and clean energy 	<p>The forestry policy directly contributes to achieving the targets outlined by the Draft Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland. The strategy includes measures to plant more forests and enhance the biodiversity value of new and existing forests. These forests provide many goods and services that are produced in a sustainable way, including wood fuel for renewable energy production, biodiverse agro-ecosystems, climate change resilience including flood protection, climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration, a sustainable employment source and recreational opportunities.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable agriculture ▪ Sustainable transport ▪ Social inclusion, sustainable communities and spatial planning ▪ Public health ▪ Education, communication and behaviour change ▪ Innovation, research and development ▪ Skills and training ▪ Global poverty and sustainable development 	
<p>Border Regional Authority (2010) Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022</p>	<p>By 2022, the Border Region will be a competitive area recognised as, and prospering from, its unique interface between two economies. Therefore there is a growing concern to ensure sustainable development taking into account economic, social and environmental aspects</p> <p>The key Strategic Goals required to achieve this vision for the Region are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment and built heritage of the Region; <p>To foster the development of the Region’s most important asset, its people by providing an improved quality of life for all people and communities living, working and visiting the Region;</p>	<p>The forestry policy will indirectly support these guidelines through improving surrounding environment of the Region’s residents. This is anticipated to be done through encouraging a diverse range of woodland types in forest plantations to increase woodland diversity, provide ecosystem services and to create Areas of Biodiversity Enhancement in some individual grant funded afforestation projects. The programme will also improve the quality of life of local communities through increasing the educational and recreational function of forests and ultimately encourage outdoor activities. However there is a possibility of afforestation conflicting with the natural heritage.</p>
<p>Midland Regional Authority (2010) Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region</p>	<p>By 2022, the Midland Region will be a successful, sustainable and equitable region full of opportunities for its expanded population achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring that the natural environment of the region such as water quality, landscape, and biodiversity is protected, 	<p>The forestry policy will directly support these Guidelines as it aims to increase the area of native woodland and to increase the species mix in areas of afforestation in order to increase biodiversity value. The plan does, however, have the potential to conflict with the Regional Planning Guidelines as afforestation</p>

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2010-2022	<p>maintained, and enhanced, where appropriate, as a basis for future sustainable development in the region.</p> <p>Offering a distinctive lifestyle rooted in a high quality living environment, rich in heritage and landscape value.</p>	may result in the destruction of natural habitats.
West Regional Authority (2010) Regional Planning Guidelines for the West Region 2010-2022	<p>By 2022 the West Region will be an innovative and highly competitive region with sustainable settlements located in an outstanding environment. This will be achieved through proper planning and sustainable development, ensuring minimal environmental impact and subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive through the process of Appropriate Assessment. Strategic goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the cultural and natural environment of the Region such as built heritage, community facilities and water quality and biodiversity are maintained and enhanced. <p>To put in place an integrated sustainable transport and access infrastructure.</p>	The forestry policy will directly support these Guidelines as it aims to increase the area of native woodland and to increase the species mix in areas of afforestation in order to increase biodiversity value. The plan does, however, have the potential to conflict with the Regional Planning Guidelines as afforestation may result in the destruction of natural habitats.
Dublin Regional Authority and Mid-East Regional Authority (2010) Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022	<p>The GDA by 2022 is an economically vibrant, active and sustainable international Gateway Region, with strong connectivity across the GDA Region, nationally and worldwide; a region which fosters communities living in attractive, accessible places well supported by community infrastructure and enjoying high quality leisure facilities; and promotes and protects across the GDA green corridors, active agricultural lands and protected natural areas. Core principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dublin as the capital city of Ireland and a major European centre shall grow and progress; ▪ The Dublin and Mid-East Regions will be a major focus for economic growth within the Country; ▪ Access to and through the GDA will continue to be a matter 	The forest policy will indirectly support the Dublin and the Mid-East Regional Authority's Regional Plan, as the NeighbourWood Scheme would add to the attractiveness and accessibility of leisure and community spaces, as well as contributing to green corridors.

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	<p>of national importance;</p> <p>Development in the GDA shall be directly related to investment in integrated high quality public transport services and focused on compact urban form.</p>	
<p>Mid-West Regional Authority (2010) Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022</p>	<p>The vision for the region is as follows:</p> <p>Limerick/Ennis/Shannon would be developed in a coordinated way as a single integrated urban agglomeration that acts as the core driver of the Region and a principal mechanism for attracting investment into the area. This will require that the public authorities and communities in the area work through cooperative processes to achieve common agreed outcomes.</p> <p>Each of the peripheral areas of the Region would develop its own key service centre, encouraging enterprise development, and providing a significant level of social, commercial and community services to the local hinterland, as well as acting as a base for high quality transport links to the core area of the Region.</p> <p>The natural resources of the Region would be managed and developed so that their economic and social potential would be realised while sustaining, protecting and enhancing environmental quality and the quality of the Region's heritage.</p>	<p>The forestry policy will directly support these Guidelines as it aims to increase the area of native woodland and to increase the species mix in areas of afforestation in order to increase biodiversity value. The plan does, however, have the potential to conflict with the Regional Planning Guidelines as afforestation may result in the destruction of natural habitats.</p>
<p>South-East Regional Authority (2010) Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022</p>	<p>By 2022 the South-East will be recognised as a distinct and cohesive region that is prosperous and competitive, where the benefits of economic success are shared equitably throughout the region and throughout society and which offers a good quality of life in an environment rich in heritage and landscape value. This vision will be realised through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combining the strengths of the cities and towns in the region to achieve sufficient critical mass to compete with larger 	<p>The forestry plan will support the South-East Regional Development Plan as afforestation will lead to greater volumes of roundwood being produced, which will strengthen the areas economy as well as provide a more renewable fuel source.</p>

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	<p>urban centres in other regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress towards an accessible region with efficient and fully integrated transport systems. ▪ Broadening and strengthening the economic base of the region and seeking to achieve innovation and enterprise in indigenous and emerging industry sectors, such as green/renewable energy, and greater economic competitiveness and growth. ▪ Providing for world class higher education, research and development and links to the knowledge economy. ▪ Tackling inequality, educational disadvantage and social deprivation by providing improved public services and social and community infrastructure. ▪ Maintenance of the character and vitality of rural areas and conservation of the region's characteristic landscape and heritage assets. <p>Promoting and supporting the creation of a more sustainable self-sufficient region with greater use of renewable energy resources and development of regional food supplies.</p>	
<p>South-West Regional Authority (2010) Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022</p>	<p>By 2022, the South West Region will be realising its economic potential and providing a high quality of life for its people by meeting their employment and housing, educational and social needs in sustainable communities. At the same time it will reduce its impact on climate change and the environment, including savings in energy and water use and by strengthening the environmental quality of the Region. The following key principles underpin this vision statement for the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritise sustainable economic growth and increased competitiveness within the Gateway and Hubs and 	<p>The forest policy will directly support the South-West Regional Plan as afforestation as part of the policy will promote sustainable economic growth through the creation of jobs and provision of a renewable fuel source. The policy will also enhance the natural environment through the increase in native woodland and promotion of a higher species mix in forest plantations. However, there is potential for the plans to conflict if existing habitat is lost during afforestation.</p>

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	<p>encourage balanced growth in the key settlements of the rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote, market and develop the region as an attractive area to live and work with an excellent quality of life and strong sense of place. ▪ Promote security of energy supply and develop renewable energy in the region in a sustainable manner ▪ Deliver an integrated and cost effective transportation and infrastructure system (including Broadband) throughout the region in a sustainable manner ▪ Protect and enhance the natural landscape and heritage assets of the region; and <p>Promote sustainable urban and rural tourism.</p>	
<p>DAFM (2014) The Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014 – 2020</p>	<p>The RDP has 6 priority areas for rural development. These priority areas are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fostering knowledge transfer and innovation, ▪ Enhancing competitiveness, ▪ Promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture, Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems, ▪ Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy, <p>Promoting social inclusion poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.</p>	<p>The forest policy will directly support the DAFM (2014) Rural Development Programme as a result of producing a more sustainable, alternative energy fuel in the form of roundwood and helping to move towards a low carbon economy.</p>
<p>DAHG (2013) Format for a</p>	<p>The strategic conservation priorities for Ireland focus on improving habitats and species that are currently in bad status. However,</p>	<p>The forestry policy compliments the Format for a Prioritised Action Framework as it has an</p>

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<p>Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 for the EU Multiannual Financing Period 2014-2020: Ireland (Draft)</p>	<p>ongoing management is important for other habitats and species to ensure their status does not decline.</p> <p>Meaningful stakeholder involvement is essential for successful management planning and the implementation of conservation management measures throughout Natura 2000 and beyond. Thus, consultation, communication, provision of information and training are considered to be priority measures that are inherently linked to conservation measures for habitats and species.</p> <p>Relevant priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information, training and publicity material at site level to raise awareness of conservation requirements. To be aimed at both the general public and specific sectors with the intention of positively changing attitudes and behaviours. ▪ Implementation of measures to restore/maintain peatlands and riparian habitats. ▪ Maintenance of facilities to encourage sustainable public access and use and to encourage appreciation of Natura 2000, such as trails, car parks and interpretative material. <p>Scientific research to examine socio-economic role, potential and impact of Natura 2000 in providing employment and tourism opportunities</p>	<p>environmental focus and aims to increase species diversity in forest plantations and increase the area of native woodlands. It also aims to improve public access to forests in order to provide recreational space.</p>
<p>DCENR (2013) Ireland's second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan to 2020)</p>	<p>Provides a progress report on delivery of the national energy saving targets implemented under current EU requirements as well as energy efficiency policy priorities up to 2020. It reaffirms Ireland's commitment to a 20% energy savings target in 2020 identifying actions across six areas: public sector, residential, business, transport, energy supply and cross-sectoral – contains 97 actions.</p>	<p>The forestry programme will support the National Energy Efficiency Action plan through the afforestation of new forest plantations which will provide a valuable source of sustainable energy.</p>
<p>DCENR (2012)</p>	<p>The strategy outlines how it is planned that sustainable power,</p>	<p>The forestry programme will indirectly support the</p>

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Strategy for Renewable Energy: 2012-2020	when developed, is maximised as it is returned to the State. Five strategic goals are set out in the document, these include increasing on and offshore wind, building a sustainable bioenergy sector, fostering R&D in renewables, growing sustainable transport and building out robust and efficient networks.	Strategy for Renewable Energy through providing an alternative sustainable roundwood fuel source, however, the provision of more windfarms will not be affected by the programme.
DECLG (2013) Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill	<p>The Government shall make arrangements, by way of plans (national and sectoral low-carbon roadmaps), aimed at achieving transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy in a cost effective way and as soon as possible (and not later than 2050). In making these arrangements, the relevant Ministers are required to consider and have regard to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the ultimate objective of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (set out below); ▪ any related or otherwise relevant greenhouse gas mitigation commitment of the European Union; ▪ any relevant commitment of the State under EU law or any international agreement (this would include, for example, Ireland's target to achieve a 20% reduction in emissions in the non-ETS sectors of the economy by 2020, under the 2009 Effort-Sharing Decision, as well as any future commitments/targets entered into in an EU context), and ▪ the national GHG emissions inventory and projection profile produced each year by the EPA. 	The forestry programme will directly support the transition to a low carbon economy, through creating jobs in the forestry sector as well as producing a sustainable fuel resource. Forestry will also provide ecosystem services that will support the targets of the Climate Action Development Bill such as carbon sequestration and mitigation against the effects of a changing climate.
DEHLG (2009) Guidelines for Planning Authorities 20: The Planning System and Flood Risk	<p>The core objectives of the Guidelines are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding; ▪ Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off; ▪ Ensure effective management of residual risks for 	The forestry programme may indirectly support the DEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities as afforestation and enhancement of existing forests will lead to the associated ecosystem services which include increasing soil stability and mitigating against flood risk.

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Management	<p>development permitted in floodplains;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth; ▪ Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; and <p>Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.</p>	
Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities and National Transport Authority (2011) Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy 2011-2030	<p>The Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy aims to build and strengthen communities: improve accessibility and links between communities within the region and the Island Ireland.</p> <p>It also seeks to improve and sustain natural environment, minimising the impact of transport on air and water quality through reduce greenhouse gases associated with transport, improve efficiency in the use of natural resources, especially non-renewable ones such as land, materials and fuels.</p>	<p>The forestry programme has some similar desired outcomes to the Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy as they both have an environmental focus. However there is little similarity in the way of achieving these, with one exception being that the forestry programme will increase the accessibility of forests (and use of forest roads) for the public.</p>
Fáilte Ireland (2014) Wild Atlantic Way	<p>The WAW is one of Fáilte Ireland signature propositions to rejuvenate Irish tourism. The primary objective of Fáilte Ireland with the Wild Atlantic Way project is to develop a coastal route of sufficient scale and singularity to achieve greater visibility for the west coast of Ireland in both domestic and overseas tourism markets. The target outcomes of the project are to increase visitor numbers to the west of Ireland.</p> <p>The overall aim is to create an overarching tourism brand for the west coast that will achieve greater visibility for the west coast of Ireland in overseas tourist markets. This overarching brand will consolidate a number of existing touring routes and existing roads</p>	<p>The forestry programme will have an indirect effect on the Wild Atlantic Way, through improving accessibility to forests which may also attract tourists.</p>

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	<p>into a single long-distance touring route. Once fully-realised, the project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ create a single west coast of Ireland tourism brand and signature tourism experience that will motivate visitors to travel to Ireland; ▪ assist in increasing visitor numbers, dwell time, spend and satisfaction in destinations along and close to the west coast of Ireland; ▪ re-package the west of Ireland as a destination to overseas and domestic visitors; ▪ highlight and promote existing visitor experiences that accord with the WAW proposition; <p>improve on-road interpretation, infrastructure and signage along and around the route;</p>	
National Transport Authority (no date) Draft National Cycle Network Plan	The Irish Government, the NTA and various State Agencies are committed to ensuring that cycling as a transport mode is supported, enhanced and exploited, in order to achieve strategic objectives and reach national goals.	The forestry programme will indirectly support this plan, as it will improve accessibility to forests and therefore promote recreational activities such as cycling.
NPWS (2011) Draft National Peatlands Strategy	<p>In April 2011 the Government made a number of key decisions relating to the conservation and management of Ireland's peatlands, particularly those sites nominated for designation as Special Areas of Conservation and Natural Heritage Areas.</p> <p>The Strategy is required to give direction to Ireland's approach to peatland management and how to optimize the benefits from peatland resource over the coming decades.</p> <p>The objective of the Peatlands Strategy is to set down a vision, values and principles which will guide Government policy in relation</p>	The forestry programme could potentially conflict with the National Peatlands Strategy as it involves afforestation, which may occur on peatlands.

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	to all Peatlands. The strategy is aimed at peatland owners, users and the broader community which benefits from the services that peatlands provide.	
RPS Consulting Engineers (2012) Shannon Integrated Framework Plan	<p>The aim of the SIFP is to identify the nature and location of future development, economic growth and employment that can be sustainably accommodated within the Shannon Estuary whilst ensuring that the habitat status of the Natura 2000 and other environmentally sensitive sites would not be reduced as a result of the short-term or long-term impact of such developments.</p> <p>Such developments may include, but are not limited to: port functions, shipment, aquaculture/mariculture, fisheries, eco tourism, leisure, industry, energy generation, fuel storage, aviation, minerals/aggregates and agriculture</p> <p>The Framework provides an integrated approach to addressing opportunities for sustainable development in the Shannon Estuary. It will act as the over-arching umbrella strategy for coordinating, planning and managing activities within the Estuary, along its coastline and its fringe lands. The aim is to integrate the final Plan into the three County Development Plans and the Limerick City Plan as a formal variation.</p>	The forestry programme will directly support the Shannon Integrated Framework Plan, as afforestation in the area will create a source of sustainable jobs and fuel. The forestry programme also aims to increase access and promote recreation in forests, which aligns with the aspiration of ecotourism in the plan.
EPA (2009) Shannon International River Basin Management Plan	<p>The Shannon International River Basin District is the largest in Ireland at more than 18,000 km² in area. It is an international RBD as a small portion of County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland drains underground to the Shannon Pot. It covers the natural drainage basin of the Shannon river itself, stretching from the source of the River Shannon in the Cuilcagh mountains in Counties Cavan and Fermanagh to the tip of the Dingle peninsula in north Kerry.</p> <p>The plan establishes four core environmental objectives to be achieved by 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ prevent deterioration in waterbodies currently in good ecological status; 	The Forestry Programme will compliment this Plan through the provision of ecosystem services by Ireland's forest estate. These include the protection of water quality as a result of riparian planting, soil stabilisation and flood risk reduction. The Forestry Programme encourages afforestation as well as conservation of existing forests, both of which will positively contribute to the River Basin Management Plan.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ restore good status in the 57% of rivers, 55% of lakes, 35% of estuaries and 25% of groundwater bodies that are currently below this standard; ▪ reduce chemical pollution; ▪ achieve water related protected areas objectives. 	
EPA (2010) North Western International River Basin Management Plan	<p>The North Western river basin district covers the north west corner of the island of Ireland, but stretches across in a south easterly direction to a large extent also taking in much of the drumlin belt that stretches through many of the border counties - from south Donegal, through Leitrim, Fermanagh, Longford, Cavan, Monaghan, and onwards.</p> <p>The plan outlines the objectives for improving the current condition of the water environment for the North Western River Basin District. These include achieving good status, or better, in 147 out of 221 of their surface water bodies (67%), and good ecological potential or better in 5 of their heavily modified water bodies (2%). 100% of their groundwater bodies will be maintained at good status. These improvements in managing and protecting waterways will be achieved by 2015.</p>	The Forestry Programme will compliment this Plan through the provision of ecosystem services by Ireland's forest estate. These include the protection of water quality as a result of riparian planting, soil stabilisation and flood risk reduction. The Forestry Programme encourages afforestation as well as conservation of existing forests, both of which will positively contribute to the River Basin Management Plan.
EPA (2010) Neagh Bann International River Basin Management Plan	<p>The Upper Bann is one of six major rivers that flow into Lough Neagh in the centre of NI, while the lake drains through the Lower Bann River from the north end of the Lough at Toome to the sea on the north coast of NI. The rivers flowing into Lough Neagh drain about 43% of NI, plus part of County Monaghan in the Republic of Ireland.</p> <p>The plan outlines the objectives for improving the current condition of the water environment for the Neagh Bann River Basin District. These include achieving good status, or better, in 117 out of 270 of their surface water bodies (43%), and good ecological potential or better in 9 of their heavily modified water bodies (3%). 13 out of 14 of their groundwater bodies (93%) will be maintained at good status. These improvements in managing and protecting waterways</p>	The Forestry Programme will compliment this Plan through the provision of ecosystem services by Ireland's forest estate. These include the protection of water quality as a result of riparian planting, soil stabilisation and flood risk reduction. The Forestry Programme encourages afforestation as well as conservation of existing forests, both of which will positively contribute to the River Basin Management Plan.

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	will be achieved by 2015.	
EPA (2009) South Eastern River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015	<p>The South Eastern River Basin District is one of Ireland's largest river basin districts covering about one fifth of the country with a land area of nearly 13,000km² and a further 1,000km² of marine waters. The South Eastern District encompasses all of counties Carlow, Wexford and Kilkenny, most of Waterford, Tipperary and Laois, parts of Kildare, Offaly and Wicklow and a small part of Limerick and Cork. It is bounded to the south by the Celtic Sea, the east by the Irish Sea and has borders with the Eastern District, the Shannon International District and the South Western District.</p> <p>The plan establishes four core environmental objectives to be achieved generally by 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ prevent deterioration; ▪ restore good status; ▪ reduce chemical pollution ▪ achieve water related protected areas objectives. 	<p>The Forestry Programme will compliment this Plan through the provision of ecosystem services by Ireland's forest estate. These include the protection of water quality as a result of riparian planting, soil stabilisation and flood risk reduction. The Forestry Programme encourages afforestation as well as conservation of existing forests, both of which will positively contribute to the River Basin Management Plan.</p>
EPA (2009) Western River Basin Management Plan	<p>The Western River Basin District is a largely rural area with many high quality waters and protected sites that depend on water. The fertile soils of the eastern part of the basin support agriculture whereas further west, the landscape is mountainous with many habitat protected areas. The basin has an extensive coastline and encompasses many offshore islands.</p> <p>The plan establishes four core environmental objectives to be achieved generally by 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ prevent deterioration; ▪ restore good status; ▪ reduce chemical pollution: ▪ achieve water related protected areas objectives. 	<p>The Forestry Programme will compliment this Plan through the provision of ecosystem services by Ireland's forest estate. These include the protection of water quality as a result of riparian planting, soil stabilisation and flood risk reduction. The Forestry Programme encourages afforestation as well as conservation of existing forests, both of which will positively contribute to the River Basin Management Plan.</p>
EPA (2010) Eastern River Basin Management	<p>Around 1.6 million people, 40% of Ireland's population, live in the Eastern River Basin District. The Eastern River Basin District incorporates all or part of twelve local authority areas: Dublin City, Meath, Kildare, Wicklow, Cavan, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, Offaly, South Dublin, Westmeath and small portions of Wexford</p>	<p>The Forestry Programme will compliment this Plan through the provision of ecosystem services by Ireland's forest estate. These include the protection of water quality as a result of riparian planting, soil</p>

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Plan	<p>and Louth.</p> <p>The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwaters which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ prevents further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems; ▪ promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources; ▪ aims at enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment, including through specific measures for the progressive reduction of discharges, emissions and losses of priority substances and the cessation or phasing-out of discharges, emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances; ▪ ensures the progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater and prevents its further pollution, and ▪ contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts. 	<p>stabilisation and flood risk reduction. The Forestry Programme encourages afforestation as well as conservation of existing forests, both of which will positively contribute to the River Basin Management Plan.</p>
Forest Policy Review Group (2013) Forests, products and people: Ireland's forest policy – a renewed vision	<p>The strategic goal is to develop an internationally competitive and sustainable forest sector that provides a full range of economic, environmental and social benefits to society. Recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expansion of the forest resource; ▪ Management of the resource; ▪ Enhanced contribution to the environment and provision of public goods and services; ▪ Develop an efficient and environmentally responsible supply chain; ▪ Development of wood processing and innovative products; ▪ Maintain a healthy forest environment; ▪ Provide education and training across the sector; and ▪ Update policy to meet changing needs and circumstances. 	<p>The Forestry Programme will support the findings of the Forest Policy Review Group, with the Forest Service and DAFM taking on specific tasks to address these recommendations.</p>

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Forest Research Ireland (2014) A Strategic Agenda for Forest Research in Ireland	<p>The purpose of the FOrest Research Ireland (FORI) Report is to capture specific policy, knowledge and production focused research topics and ideas relevant to the needs of forest stakeholders. It is primarily intended to guide the content of DAFM's competitive public good forest research programme (CoFoRD Programme) up to 2017. FORI identifies seven thematic research areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expansion of the Forest Resource - sustainable increase in productive area ▪ Productivity – sustainable improvements in crop productivity and quality ▪ Resource Utilisation - stand modelling, recovery, supply chain, utilisation and optimisation ▪ Adding Value – wood processing and product development ▪ Forest Resource Protection – protecting the resource from biotic and abiotic threats ▪ Ecosystem Services – the benefits people obtain from forest ecosystems ▪ Climate Change - impact, adaptation and mitigation – responding to a changing climate 	<p>The Forestry Programme will support the findings of the FORI Report, with the Forest Service and DAFM taking on specific tasks to address these recommendations.</p>
NPWS (2011) Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016 - Ireland's National Biodiversity Action Plan	<p>This plan outlines the measures Ireland will take in preparing for pressures and losses in the level of biodiversity, and they are presented as 102 actions under a series of 7 strategic objectives. The objectives cover the conservation of biodiversity in the wider countryside and in the marine environment (within and outside protected areas), mainstreaming of biodiversity across the decision making process, the strengthening of the knowledge base on biodiversity, and increasing public awareness and participation.</p>	<p>The Forestry Programme will work in line with the BAP through enhancing the biodiversity value of Ireland's forest estate. Biodiversity of forest ecosystems is central to the Forestry Programme and features in many of its measures.</p> <p>Afforestation as part of the strategy will promote the non-market public services of forested ecosystems such as biodiversity. An additional aim within this objective is for at least 30% of new woodlands to be broadleaf species, which is favourable to many species and will further promote biodiversity.</p> <p>The primary aim of the Native Woodland Establishment Scheme is to enhance forest</p>

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		biodiversity. This will involve financial backing for farmers and landowners with regard to the establishment of new and native woodlands on greenfield sites, which will have beneficial effects on biodiversity.
DEHLG (2008) Water Framework Directive Western River Basin District. Programme of Measures and Standards for Forest and Water	Forestry was identified as one of the key pressures that needs to be addressed as part of the Water Framework Directive in the National Summary Characterisation Report. The programme involved field research of the Western Basin District of Ireland to assess the impact of forestry on water quality. The supplementary measures under the Water Framework Directive relevant to this river basin and to forestry include: Management of related instruments, to improve flow of information and to incorporate new information into legislation; Limit acidification which is caused as a result of forestry, common on peat soils, through a variety of methods such as reducing afforestation on first and second order streams, introduce structural diversity into forests and increase residence times; eutrophication measures which include avoiding afforestation of peat sites, having a species mix and enhancing sediment control; hydromorphological measures to regulate high and low flows through enhanced drainage network management; and pesticide use measures to reduce pesticide usage and developing alternative methods to pest management.	The Forest Policy proposals will be of benefit to the Forest and Water Programme of Measures (POM). The forest policy report proposes the initiation of knowledge transfer programmes which is in line with the management of related instruments POM. The proposals also encourage the introduction and maintenance of species diversity in forests which helps to reduce acidification and eutrophication. Additional afforestation proposed as part of the Forest Policy will bring about additional ecosystems services such as water regulation, which is featured as one of the WFS programme of measures.
DAFF (2007) National Strategic Plan: The Fisheries Sector 2007-2013	The Plan seeks to improve the environmental standards of aquaculture and reduce its environmental impact. In addition, it proposes actions for inland fisheries to implement environmental management systems, efficient waste management and technical innovation. Environmental training objectives for those involved in the fishing/aquaculture industry are also discussed. The Plan is currently being revised for 2014-2020 but the draft is not available to assess.	The FP will avoid afforestation in sensitive fisheries areas, and thus prevent in-combination effects on water quality that might complicate management issues for the inland fisheries and aquaculture industries. The FP is thus indirectly supportive of the Plan.
OPW (2011)	The programme delivers on core components of the National Flood	The objective of the Programme is mainly to generate

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National Catchment and Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme (CFRAM)	Policy and the requirements of the EU Floods Directive. It comprises of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment which identified Areas for Further Assessment. In addition, CFRAM commissioned a number of studies to assess flood risk, identify flood hazard areas, identify viable risk management measures, and finally to produce a strategy Flood Risk Management Plan.	knowledge which will inform the preparation of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The outputs of this Programme would certainly benefit the strategic element of the FP in terms of locations of riparian buffers and general afforestation. Equally, the general aim of increasing levels of afforestation from the FP will inform the preparation of this Risk Management Plan at local and national levels.
DAFM (2014) Draft National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan	<p>The plan has two broad aims: 1) Conservation and Management of Raised Bog SACs and 2) Addressing the needs of Turf-Cutters & Land-Owners. These will be met through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection 1: Cessation of drainage of raised bog habitat or surrounding wetland habitats; • Protection 2: Cessation of peat harvesting and turf cutting; • Protection 3: Cessation of planting of commercial forestry; • Protection 4: Cessation of spread of fires; • Protection 5: Cessation of other human activities such as water abstraction from groundwater and quarrying which can have a significant impact on the raised bogs by lowering the regional groundwater level; • Restoration 1: Drain blockage on high bog; • Restoration 2: Drain blockage in marginal areas; • Restoration 3: Removal of forest plantations; • Restoration 4: Marginal dams; • Restoration 5: Bunding on high bogs; • Restoration 6: High bog and cut-over bog excavation/reprofiling; • Replacement 1: Re-designation of appropriate NHAs; • Replacement 2: Designation of appropriate non-designated 	The forestry programme could potentially conflict with the Draft National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan as it involves commercial afforestation and drainage, which may occur on these and surrounding habitats.

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	sites.	
Northern Ireland/UK		
DARD (2012) Strategic Plan 2012-2020	Focuses on a number of goals, underlying those actions, which are independent and will address key issues in support of achieving DARD's vision of ' <i>a thriving and sustainable rural economy, community and environment</i> '. Goals include enhance animal, fish and plant health and animal welfare, help deliver improved sustainable environmental outcomes.	The forestry programme indirectly supports the Strategic Plan, as forestry is a source of sustainable jobs in the rural economy and the forestry programme aims to enhance existing forest and plant new ones.
DARD (2010) Renewable Energy Action Plan	Aims to provide a framework which enables the land based and rural sectors to realise the potential opportunities in the development of renewable energy so as to protect the environment reducing emissions and ensuring sustainability of natural resources. Focus is on assisting meeting targets for renewable energy production at a regional, national and EU level in a balanced and sustainable way. Other key objectives of the development include energy security, emissions reductions and wider economic advantages.	The forestry programme indirectly influences the Renewable Action Plan as it will provide renewable fuels that are alternative to traditional unsustainable fuel sources. This will help to enhance energy security by providing and long term solution to sourcing fuel, as well as promoting jobs in the local area.
DARD (2007) Flood Mapping Strategy for Northern Ireland	Sets out a structured programme of fluvial and coastal flood risk mapping (and associated tool development) that is based on current knowledge of the mapping requirements of the Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS15) and the proposed EU Floods Directive. This aims to reduce wildlife and ecosystem damage from flood events. It also aims to increase public awareness of flood risk areas, differentiate spatial distribution of risk within the floodplain to support planning and asset management processes.	The forestry programme may indirectly support the Flood Mapping Strategy, as forests provide the ecosystem service of regulating flood risks. The mapping strategy may show where best to located new forests created under the forestry programme.
Defra and DOE (2012) A Climate Change Risk Assessment for Northern Ireland	The objective of the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) is to inform adaptation policy by assessing the current and future risks and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate for NI to the year 2100 to the environment. The main finding is that extreme weather is still predominant among potential risks related to climate change	The forestry programme indirectly supports the Climate Change Risk Assessment, as the ecosystem services provided by forests can help to mitigate against climate change. These include carbon sequestration and reducing the effects of extreme

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	but that other risks, such as water scarcity and species being able to track climate space, are becoming increasingly important. Several sections focussing on environmental implications of climate change comprising ecosystems, wildlife and health & wellbeing.	weather effects.
DOE (2012) Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Action Plan	This document sets out a Cross-Departmental Action Plan to tackle the established strategies together, including how Northern Ireland is and will continue to reduce its carbon footprint so as to its improve environmental performance. Specifically how the Programme for Government target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2025 will be delivered.	The forestry programme will indirectly influence the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions Plan, as the planting of new forests as part of the programme will increase carbon sequestration as well as providing a lower carbon fuel source than traditional non-renewable sources.
DOE (2002) Biodiversity Strategy	<p>Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity in Northern Ireland over the period to 2016, identifying 40 habitat types as priorities for conservation action. These will be protected from development and proposals that could harm their integrity, continuity, links or ecological relationships. Proposal of protection of natural resources strategy will target effective protection of the environment through setting exemplary standards in the area and integrating conservation of biological diversity into policy making.</p> <p>A new strategy is currently being drafted.</p>	The forestry programme will indirectly support the Biodiversity Strategy, as it includes plans to increase the species diversity in new and existing forests and to increase the area of native woodland.
Defra, Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly Government and DOE (2010) Air Pollution: Action in a Changing Climate	<p>Further action needed to meet current air quality limits for PM10 and NO2 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accelerating clean technologies – including retrofit, low emission vehicles, buildings efficiency, euro emission standards etc.; ▪ Encouraging further behavioural changes – including modal shift, traffic management, safer driving, cycling, walking; ▪ Local measures and delivery including parking controls, bus management arrangements, strengthening local air quality delivery; ▪ Strategic options such as Low Emission Zones, local transport planning and very low carbon vehicles. 	The forestry programme is unlikely to actually affect any part of the UK. However woodland trees in both rural and urban areas are able to intercept air pollutants, whilst the NeighbourWood Scheme would additionally encourage local recreation, potentially reducing car use.

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	Beyond this, we will be working across the UK Government and with the devolved administrations to ensure that agreed methodologies for assessing the costs and benefits to air quality are built into the evaluation of climate change impacts of policies.	
Defra, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and DOE (2007) The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	The strategy sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues; sets out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved; introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles; and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives.	The forestry programme is unlikely to actually affect any part of the UK. However woodland trees in both rural and urban areas are able to intercept air pollutants, whilst the NeighbourWood Scheme would additionally encourage local recreation, potentially reducing car use.
DRD (2010) Regional Development Strategy 2035	This document provides an overarching strategic planning framework influencing spatial development for the Region up to 2035, facilitating and guiding the public and private sectors. Taken into account are key drivers environmental and social and issues aimed at achieving environmental performance and sustainable development.	The forestry programme will not impact on or be affected by this NI strategy.
Europe		
EC (2011) Biodiversity Strategy	Strategy is designed to halt the loss of biodiversity, restore ecosystems so far as feasible, and step up efforts to avert global degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020. It also aims to speed up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy. These targets can be achieved through a number of strategic objectives including ecosystem based approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation, conserving and enhancing natural resources using them in a sustainable way, and nature based innovation restoring ecosystems and conserving	The forestry programme directly supports the Biodiversity Strategy as it promotes the planting of a diverse species mix and an increase in native woodlands. It is therefore fighting against biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems as per the strategy. Additional forestry planted under the programme may also help to provide ecosystem services that mitigate against climate change, such as carbon sequestration, enhancement of soil stability, regulation of flood waters and provision of a habitat

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	biodiversity.	network for species adaptation and migration. This may be considered as a green infrastructure or ecosystems approach to climate change under the strategy.
EC (2009) Sustainable Development Strategy	A framework for a long-term vision of sustainability in which economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection go hand in hand and are mutually supporting. Particular environmental protection objectives include increasing the use of clean energy and natural resources to combat climate change, reducing noise and air pollution through promotion of sustainable transport, and conserving and managing the overall use of water and air.	The Forestry Programme contributes towards the objectives of the Sustainable Development Strategy. The industry spans across the key areas of concern (economic growth, environmental protection and social cohesion) as it uses the environment to drive economic growth and is also a recreational resource. This is mainly through the ecosystem services that are provided by Ireland's forests which include carbon sequestration, protection of water quality, clean air provision, renewable energy production and biodiversity benefits.
EC (2007) EU Floods Directive	Directive aims is to reduce and manage risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. This involves identifying the relevant river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding, drawing up flood maps and establishing flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness between 2011 and 2015.	The forestry programme may indirectly compliment the EU flood Directive, as additional forestry planted under the programme may also help to provide ecosystem services that mitigate against climate change, regulation of flood water. In addition, the mapping could be used to inform where best to locate new forests to help mitigate flood risk.
Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament Water Framework Directive (2000)	<p>Commits European Union member states to achieve good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies by 2015.</p> <p>The Directive aims for 'good status' for all ground and surface waters (rivers, lakes, transitional waters, and coastal waters) in the EU. The ecological and chemical status of surface waters are assessed according to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biological quality (fish, benthic invertebrates, aquatic flora) ▪ Hydromorphological quality such as river bank structure, 	The forestry programme will directly support the Water Framework Directive, as forests can filter surface run off of nutrients to help protect watercourses. They can also stabilise soils to prevent sediment from entering waterbodies.

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	<p>river continuity or substrate of the river bed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical-chemical quality such as temperature, oxygenation and nutrient conditions <p>Chemical quality that refers to environmental quality standards for river basin specific pollutants. These standards specify maximum concentrations for specific water pollutants. If even one such concentration is exceeded, the water body will not be classed as having a “good ecological status”.</p>	
<p>Habitats Directive Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora</p>	<p>Europe’s natural habitats are continuing to deteriorate and an increasing number of wild species are seriously threatened. Much of this is as a result of development and agricultural intensification.</p> <p>The main aim of the Habitats Directive is to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring Member States to take measures to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species listed on the Annexes to the Directive at a favourable conservation status, introducing robust protection for those habitats and species of European importance. In applying these measures Member States are required to take account of economic, social and cultural requirements, as well as regional and local characteristics</p>	<p>The forestry programme directly supports the Habitats Directive as it promotes the planting of a diverse species mix and an increase in native woodlands.</p>
<p>Birds Directive Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds)</p>	<p>The directive recognises that habitat loss and degradation are the most serious threats to the conservation of wild birds. It therefore places great emphasis on the protection of habitats for endangered as well as migratory species especially through the establishment of a coherent network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) comprising all the most suitable territories for these species. Since 1994 all SPAs form an integral part of the NATURA 2000 ecological network.</p> <p>The main provisions of the Directive include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The maintenance of the populations of all wild bird species 	<p>The forestry programme directly supports the Directive as it promotes the planting of a diverse species mix and an increase in native woodlands. It therefore protects and maintains habitats as per the Birds Directive.</p>

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	<p>across their natural range with the encouragement of various activities to that end;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The identification and classification of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance. (Together with Special Areas of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive, SPAs form a network of European protected areas known as Natura 2000). ▪ The establishment of a general scheme of protection for all wild birds; ▪ Restrictions on the sale and keeping of wild birds ▪ Specification of the conditions under which hunting and falconry can be undertaken; ▪ Prohibition of large-scale non-selective means of bird killing; ▪ Procedures under which Member States may derogate from the provisions of Articles 5-8 — that is, the conditions under which permission may be given for otherwise prohibited activities. ▪ Encouragement of certain forms of relevant research Requirements to ensure that introduction of non-native birds do not threatened other biodiversity. 	
EC (2013) A new EU Forest Strategy: for forests and the forest-based	<p>The Forest Strategy has the following priority areas:</p> <p>Sustainable forest management contributes to major societal objectives</p>	<p>The forestry programme directly supports the Forest Strategy, particularly with regards to supporting forest based industries, producing biomass and protecting and enhancing ecosystems and the services they provide.</p>

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sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting our rural and urban communities; ▪ Fostering the competitiveness and sustainability of the EU's Forest based Industries, bio-energy and the wider green economy; ▪ Forests in a changing climate; and ▪ Protecting forests and enhancing ecosystem services. <p>Improving the knowledge base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What forests do we have and how are they changing? ▪ New and innovative forest and added-value products <p>Fostering coordination and communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working together to coherently manage and better understand our forests ▪ Forestry from a global perspective <p>Under priority 4 "forest protection and enhancement of ecosystem services" the Strategy makes reference to Natura 2000 underlining that Member States "should achieve a significant and measurable improvement in the conservation status of forest species and habitats by fully implementing EU nature legislation and ensuring that national forest plans contribute to the adequate management of the Natura 2000 network by 2020.</p>	
EC (2013) Adaptation Strategy	The overall aim is to enhance the preparedness and capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change at local, regional, national and EU levels, developing a coherent approach and improving coordination e.g. between national adaptation strategies and	The forestry programme may indirectly effect the Adaptation Strategy as existing and additional forestry planted may help to provide ecosystem services that mitigate against climate change, such as carbon

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	national risk management plans. Priority will be given to adaptation flagship projects that address key cross-sectoral, trans-regional and/or cross-border issues. Projects with demonstration and transferability potential will be encouraged, as will green infrastructure and ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation, and projects aiming to promote innovative adaptation technologies.	sequestration, enhancement of soil stability, regulation of flood waters and provision of a habitat network for species adaptation and migration. This may be considered as a green infrastructure or ecosystems approach to climate change under the strategy.
EU (2013) Environmental Liabilities Directive (2013/30/EU)	Directive (originally 2004/35/EC and amended three times) establishes a framework for a “polluter pays” based approach to preventing and remedying environmental damage, meaning damage to protected species and natural habitats, damage to water and damage to soil. This directive was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008.	The forestry programme contains a number of provisos to avoid damage to protected species, habitats, water, and soil and so is complementary to this Directive. It also includes a system of penalties for those who fail to abide by environmental legislation and guidelines.
EC (2012) A Blueprint to Safeguard Europe’s Water Resources (COM/2012/0673)	<p>Communication (the “Water Blueprint”) reviews the status of Member States’ existing river basin/catchment management plans and proposes a number of suggestions as to how the ‘good water status’ required by the WFD can be met. Those relevant to forestry include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Riparian buffer strips and other green infrastructure solutions to reduce flood hazard, erosion, and sedimentation/pollution of watercourses. - Upstream measures to reduce pollutant inflow to watercourses should be prioritised. 	The FP is strongly complementary to the Water Blueprint in the use of riparian buffers. In addition the FP prioritises upstream solutions to prevent adverse impacts on water quality as a result of afforestation activities.