



# Appendix: Land Management Plan Brief

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# 1. Key background information

## Introduction

The South Knapdale Land Management Plan (LMP) covers a total area of 4235Ha, incorporating three forest blocks:

- Coulaghailtro ~1641Ha
- Torinturk ~1494Ha
- Meall Mhor ~1100Ha

The South Knapdale area of Argyll is located north of the Kintyre peninsula and south of the Crinan Canal. The area of the LMP extends no further than the northern shores of West Loch Tarbert at its lower extent and Artilligan Cottage at its upper extent. The B8024 envelops the LMP area, linking it to Tarbert and the A83.

This management plan will replace and renew the previous South Knapdale Land Management Plan (Scottish Forestry (SF) File Ref 033/W/S/12(4)). This new plan will identify issues raised within the plan area and provide a management approval for the three forest blocks for the next ten years.

Since the previous plan, Inverneil Forest block has been incorporated into the Knapdale LMP as it borders the Knapdale Forest block; while Meall Mhor Forest block has been included within the South Knapdale LMP along with Torinturk and Coulaghailtro.

It is intended that this strategy of management will give each of these forests a more equal allocation of resources and operations - realistic of what FLS can achieve. Since the forests are located in close proximity to each other they share the same timber haulage routes; similar management objectives and landscape character, combining the forests into 'South Knapdale' was a logical choice. The LMP is also in synergy with the South Knapdale Community Council.

## Silvicultural Potential

All three blocks of the plan area are within the *Plateau Moor and Forest* Landscape Character Type (Nature Scot, NS). This landscape type is characterised by upland plateau with rounded ridges, craggy outcrops and an irregular slope profile. With an underlying geology of Dalradian rocks and igneous intrusions, narrow glens dissect the uplands and lochs and bog are found in low lying hollows.

Elevation ranges of each block:

- Meall Mhor, from sea level in the eastern coastal edge of the northern area of the block to 484m at the top of Meall Mhor;

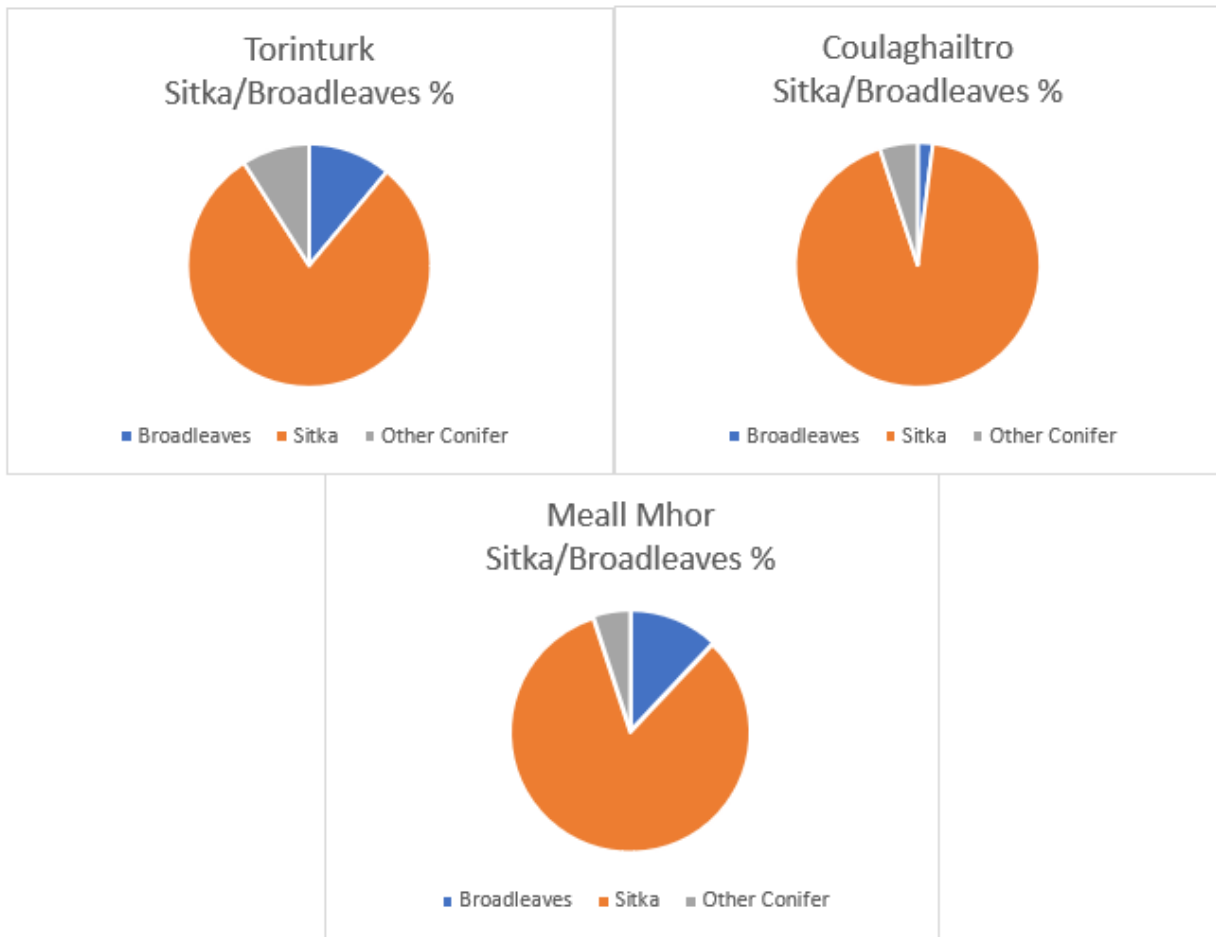
- Torinturk, from sea level along the southwestern edge with West Loch Tarbert to 319m at Cruach an Lochan; and
- Coulaghailtro, the elevations range from 40m to 267m at Cruach Lagain in the northern area of the block. Prevailing wind is from the south-west.

The climate data for Coulaghailtro and Torinturk blocks indicate warm, wet and highly exposed conditions; while Meall Mhor is cool, wet and severely exposed. All three blocks are close to the sea and have a low continentality of 4. The annual mean temperature for the region is in the range 10 °C to 11°C, with the prevailing wind direction being west southwest. Climate change predictions suggest that the climate will become generally warmer and wetter, with more extreme rainfall events and storms.

DAMS data: Coulaghailtro has an 80/20% split between scores 17-21 in upper more exposed slopes and 14-16 in the lower sheltered areas; Torinturk has a 50% split; and Meall Mhor has an 60/40% split. Across all three blocks there are no scores within the lowest category (0-11).

## Existing Crop

Approximately 70% of the LMP area is under woodland cover, with Sitka spruce accounting for 86% of the planted species and broadleaves covering 7% of the forested area. The charts shown below demonstrate that Meall Mhor and Torinturk are broadly similar in conifer/broadleaves composition; while Coulaghailtro currently has a more mono species conifer structure.

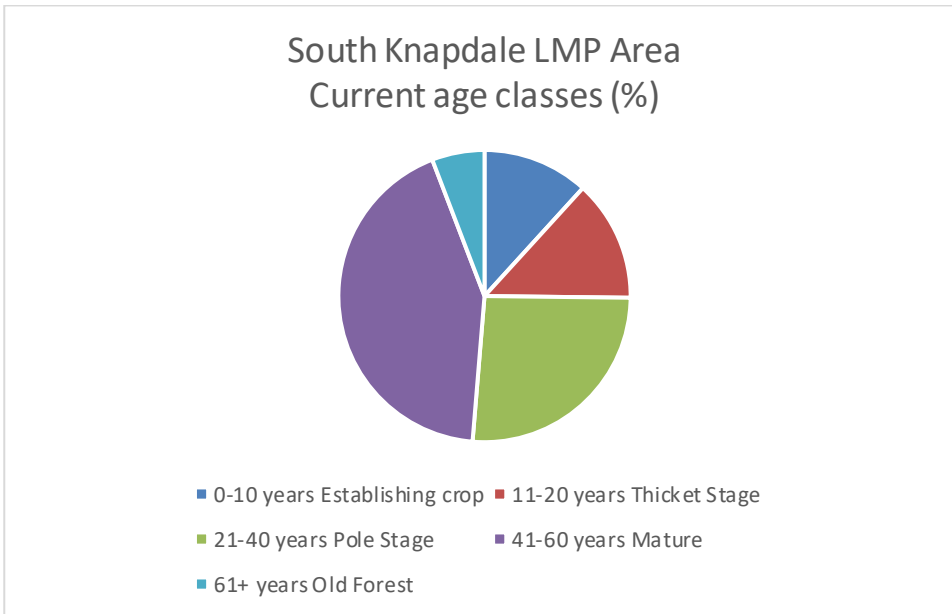


**Pie charts for each forest block showing percentage split of conifer, broadleaves and other conifer**

The current split for the whole LMP area in terms of age classes is detailed in the table below and shown in the pie chart:

Age	Area (Ha)	Area (%)
0-10 years Establishing crop	350.4	12
11-20 years Thicket Stage	400	13
21-40 years Pole Stage	778.4	26
41-60 years Mature crop	1277.3	43
61+ years Old Forest	173.5	6

**Table detailing age classes**



**Pie chart showing age of trees for LMP area, as a percentage**

Timber production remains at the core of all three of the forest blocks functionality.

## Operational Access

Coulaghaitro and Torinturk are linked by an established timber haul route. Since its establishment the blocks have been opened up to restructuring of the established productive crop.

There is currently no operational access into the southern area of Coulaghaitro.

The B8024 Kilberry Loop Road – Ormsary – north to A83 Inverneil – severely restricts any timber haul on this route. These restrictions border Torinturk to the south-west and Coulaghaitro to the south and west.

## Natural Environment

Priority habitats including blanket bog, ancient woodland and upland heath are found within all three blocks. Meall Mhor contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Artilligan and Abhainn Srathain Burns, which is located over two areas of deeply cut wooded gorges of coastal oak and birch woodlands. The lower third of Torinturk and the east side of Meall Mhor east the new powerline, contains significant areas of Ancient Woodland Sites (AWS) that link with other pockets of ancient woodland and Tarbert Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Soils comprise mainly peaty gleys and flushed Blanket bogs. There are areas of deep peat across the LMP area, which will be appropriately appraised to determine if they are requiring restoration or will be left to sequester carbon.

The Abhainn Learg an Uinnsinn/Allt Caoi-rain borders the north-west edge of Torinturk and the south-eastern edge of Coulaghailtro, is classified as 'Good' quality (SEPA). Any run-off from operations and from any watercourses feeding into the river has the potential to affect this.

## Cultural Environment

There are multiple designations for heritage throughout the LMP. Two Scheduled Monuments (SMs) are located in Torinturk: Cnoc Dubh na Leitreach, two prehistoric burial cairns; and Dun a Choin Duibh, a prehistoric domestic and defensive dun. While all three blocks have a range of undesignated heritage comprising sheepfolds, dykes, farmsteads, shieling huts and enclosures.

## Community and Visitor Use

Torinturk and Meall Mhor have the most community and visitor use, with Coulaghailtro less so. In Meall Mhor there has been significant infrastructure development in the form of a new electrical powerline running north south through the length of the block, however a core path route from the A83 to the mast on the highest summit remains well used.

In Torinturk a core path circular route leads to two Scheduled Monuments: Cnoc Dubh na Leitreach and Dun a Choin Duibh.

## Neighbouring reservoirs/fisheries

Most properties in the area are served by private water supplies (PWS), with all three blocks having PWS infrastructure. In addition, there are two drinking water protected areas in Coulaghailtro, one of which is a Scottish Water public catchment for the village of Kilberry; and one other Scottish Water public catchment is located on the southern edge of Meall Mhor that serves Tarbert.

There is a fish farm offshore below Meall Mhor in Loch Fyne.

## Wildlife

A range of species are present across the LMP area including priority species such as Black grouse, Pine marten, Badger, as well as Red squirrels and deer.

## 2. Strategic drivers

To realise the vision as set out in the Scottish Forestry Strategy 2019-2029, six priorities for action have been identified for implementation:

- Ensuring forests and woodlands are sustainably managed
- Expanding the area of forests and woodlands, recognising wider land-use objectives
- Improving efficiency and productivity, and developing markets
- Increasing the adaptability and resilience of forests and woodlands
- Enhancing the environmental benefits provided by forests and woodlands
- Engaging more people, communities and businesses in the creation, management and use of forests and woodlands

To demonstrate how we will have regard to the Forestry Strategy in our work, we have identified the relevant Forestry Strategy 'Priorities for Action' in our Corporate Outcomes section of the second FLS Corporate Plan 2022-2025. These, alongside key issues and site specific challenges, have informed our draft land management objectives, as illustrated in Table 12 below.

## 3. Land management plan objectives

- Rationalise and identify core areas of good quality timber with existing access. Ensure replanting to maximise diversity of species during restock.
- Restructure coupes to consider appropriate scale of the land, landform and efficiency of site operations.
- Sustainable road construction: Construct and upgrade roads only where necessary for the purpose of this plan period.
- Review, protect and restore high and medium ecological potential Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWs) through removal of invasive species, halo thinning, deer management and establish native broadleaf trees to aid temperate rainforest habitat restoration.
- Riparian and Priority Open Habitat: Remove invasive non-native species and manage deer numbers to enable natural regeneration and natural successional development of native broad leaf species to occur along riparian habitats. Natural regen and over grazing to be managed to maintain priority open habitat.
- Ensure the buffer around Scheduled Monuments (SMs) and other sites of local heritage interests are managed.
- Identify water sources and catchments, protect during harvesting and restock with appropriate plant species and carefully consider coupe design.
- Maximise opportunities to integrate FLS forest blocks with adjacent landscape to enable and promote habitat connectivity e.g consider forest edge design, riparian corridors and temperate rainforest habitat. Where appropriate consider working in Partnership with landowners and the wider community.
- Where appropriate restructure and consolidate forests in the vicinity of utilities to minimise disruption to forest operations and access.
- Review the age structure of the forest in exposed areas and consider felling coupe design and subsequent restock design and species mix.





**Table 12 – Relationship between relevant corporate outcomes and the site specific draft LMP objectives**

Corporate Outcomes Relevant to LMP	Operational Actions To Deliver Outcome Relevant to LMP	Draft LMP Objectives
<p><b>Outcome 1: Supporting a Sustainable Economy</b></p> <p>FLS supports a sustainable rural economy by managing the national forests and land in a way that encourages sustainable business growth, development opportunities, jobs and investments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Managing the national forests and land in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) to ensure that timber and other products produced by FLS are guaranteed to be from a sustainably managed resource.</li> <li>● Developing our forest planning processes to ensure long-term sustainable productivity of the national forests and land. Providing a sustainable supply of timber to Scotland’s timber processing sector. Implementing the Restocking Strategy for the national forests and land and develop a new plant and seed supply strategy.</li> <li>● Supporting Scottish tourism and the visitor economy through the core path provision.</li> <li>● Support the venison processing sector through our deer management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain sustainable timber production (maintained timber income, clearfell/restock).</li> <li>● Plan roads/tracks to give access to less accessible crops.</li> <li>● Plant the right trees on the right site, taking into account future climate changes and risks and pests &amp; diseases.</li> </ul>

Corporate Outcomes Relevant to LMP	Operational Actions To Deliver Outcome Relevant to LMP	Draft LMP Objectives
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Looking after Scotland’s national forests and land</p> <p>Scotland’s national forests and land are looked after; biodiversity is protected and enhanced; and more environmental services are provided to people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Managing the national forests and land to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> <li>● Maintaining and enhancing our work on peatland restoration.</li> <li>● Collaborating with partners on integrated landscape-scale approaches to habitat management and restoration.</li> <li>● Continuing to implement the Larch Strategy in order to reduce the rate of expansion of Phytophthora ramorum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to restore and maintain areas of bog habitat (reduce carbon release, diversify habitat).</li> <li>● Protect, expand and enhance the Ancient Woodland Sites.</li> <li>● Protect and enhance protected/priority species &amp; habitats.</li> <li>● Develop a programme for pre-emptively removing larch.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Scotland’s national forests and land for visitors and communities</p> <p>Everyone can visit and enjoy Scotland’s national forests and land to connect with nature, have fun, benefit their health and wellbeing and have the opportunity to engage in our community decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintaining access for core paths to promote leisure in the outdoors, focussing on improving entry level experiences for everyone to enjoy and gain health benefits.</li> <li>● Continuing to remove barriers to ensure that people from all backgrounds can and do access the full range of benefits of the national forests and land.</li> <li>● Continuing to engage communities in decisions relating to the management of the national forests and land.</li> <li>● Continuing to support community empowerment by enabling communities to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide scope and opportunity for potential increased recreational use by local community and tourists.</li> </ul>

Corporate Outcomes Relevant to LMP	Operational Actions To Deliver Outcome Relevant to LMP	Draft LMP Objectives
	<p>make use of the national forests and land to benefit their communities.</p>	

## 4. Stakeholders

Argyll & Bute Council- Planning/Access/Roads

Nature Scot (NS)

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

South Knapdale Community Council

Tarbert and Skipness Community Council

Argyll Fisheries Trust

Historic Environment Scotland (HES)

Royal Society of Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Argyll Timber Transport Group (ATTG)

Confederation of Forest Industries (Confor)

Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate (SGRPID)

West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS)

Scottish Southern Energy (SSE)

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Scottish Water

Deer Management Group

Visit Scotland

Action West Loch

Kintrye Rainforest Alliance

Argyll & the Isles Coast & Countryside Trust (ACT)

Neighbouring landowners/internal properties

Scottish Forestry (SF)