

## **Woodland Carbon Code executive board minutes**

Wednesday 19 March 2025 via Microsoft Teams

**Present:** Pat Snowdon, Vicky West, Andy Baker, Jonathan Speed, Susan Szymborski-Welsh, Jamie Smith (Scottish Forestry), Fiona Hay (Welsh Government), Chris Waterfield (Forestry Commission), Ben Searle (Northern Ireland Forest Service)

**Apologies:** Mark Broadmeadow (Forestry Commission)

### **Outstanding actions**

Pat provided an update on outstanding actions.

**Action 1:** Pat to check how public sector schemes are managed under the Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market's assessment framework.

**Update:** Ongoing. The Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market has confirmed it is not currently able to assess standards provided by governmental organisations.

**Action 3:** The Woodland Water Code team to provide an update for the Nature Markets Strategy Board in December.

**Update:** This will be carried over to the next Nature Markets Strategy Board meeting in May.

**Action 4:** Pat to arrange for Leon's work to be shared at a Nature Markets Strategy Board meeting.

**Update:** Pat will try to arrange this for the meeting in May.

**Action 5:** Pat to propose dates for a workshop to explore changes to the additionality test.

**Update:** This could be included as part of communications around the standard update. The team are currently working on an integrated communications plan.

### **1. UK Land Carbon Registry**

Vicky provided an update on the project to retender for a registry provider. She outlined the timescales for moving to a new provider. The tender is now open for submissions and the team hopes to agree a contract by summer 2025.

Vicky also highlighted work by S&P Global to update the current platform.

### **2. Standard update**

Vicky discussed plans to release a new version of the Woodland Carbon Code standard later this year. She outlined the proposed changes and discussed plans for consulting on them as part of wider communications and engagement activity.

**Action 6:** Pat to inform the Nature Market Strategy Board about plans for the standard update by correspondence.

**Action 7:** Vicky to share detailed plans about the consultation with the Executive Board at least a week in advance of its launch.

### **3. Governance**

Vicky provided an update on the governance of the code to align with global standards. The team is developing an organisation chart and conflict of interest forms and updating the terms of reference for each board.

**Action 8:** Board members to review the executive board terms of reference and complete the conflict of interest forms.

### **4. Risk register**

Vicky discussed capacity for the team to deliver and for audiences to engage with the registry changes and standard update over the coming months. Pat highlighted that some timescales are outside the team's control.

### **5. Nature Markets Strategy Board**

Pat informed the group that the next Nature Markets Strategy Board meeting will take place in May.

Members agreed that the strategy board can help to share messages on key topics such as additionality.

The group discussed whether the name of the strategy board reflects its remit, with Chris asking whether the board will be responsible for other nature market standards. Pat suggested they could have a role in considerations around the development of a woodland water code.

### **6. Annual report**

Susan and Vicky shared plans to publish an annual report for the code. The report will include financial information, an overview of key projects and case studies.

The Executive Board requested that we discuss case studies with them but otherwise were happy with the content.

### **7. Crofting issues**

Jonathan discussed proposed requirements for validating projects on tenanted crofts and common grazings in Scotland.

The requirements would help to increase the number of Woodland Carbon Code projects on crofts and common grazings in Scotland.

The proposals have been developed in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including the Crofting Commission and Scottish Government's crofting policy team. They will be consulted on as part of the standard update later this year.

Chris and Fiona highlighted that the Woodland Carbon Code team could also review the requirements for common land in England and Wales in future.

Pat thanked Jonathan for his work on this and for his work during his fixed term contract.

## 8. Additionality

Andy provided an update on the consultation about the code's additionality test.

The team has analysed the responses and developed proposals to update the test as part of the Woodland Carbon Code standard update later this year. This will allow stakeholders to provide feedback on the proposals as part of the wider consultation.

Jamie asked how often the test will be reviewed and updated. Andy agreed this is an important question and invited views from the group. Jamie suggested that a longer review date would help to provide stability for users, while Fiona suggested more frequent reviews would help the code to be responsive to changes in grants systems etc. Andy suggested finding a reasonable timeframe for regular reviews.

Chris added that consistency, transparency and communication are important when considering changes.

The group agreed to continue the discussion on the additionality test by correspondence.

**Action 9:** Andy to develop a paper on the proposals around additionality and share with the group.