

An economic evaluation of the market and non-market functions of forestry

PROJECT TEAM

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OBJECTIVES

- Provide strategic information by indicating the relative benefits of forest management practice directed at the outputs of recreation, biodiversity, landscape, water quality and carbon sequestration;
- Estimate the relative public benefits of public forestry and private forestry, including farm forestry;
- Determine the direct and indirect contributions of the tradable goods and services of forestry, including timber, game hunting, a small number of marketed leisure activities, cut foliage and forest food (berries and mushrooms) to the national, regional and local economies;
- Demonstrate the net public benefit of forestry in comparison with other land uses;
- Examine those factors which determine public benefits and determine if benefit transfer estimates from international literature are applicable to Ireland;
- Place values in a public cost-benefit framework by comparing policy cost with the social benefits and combine this information with the private costs and benefits motivating forestry uptake over time.

PROGRESS

Work has concentrated on reviewing the literature on valuing the non-market benefits of forestry and on reviewing work completed to date in this area.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED

Discussions groups will be organised with members of the public, including regular and irregular forest visitors. The objective of these discussions is to obtain information on what it is that motivates a value for forests or a desire to visit forests. The output from these discussions will also inform the development of a household questionnaire survey.

Forest users within a selection of forests will be surveyed. Their opinions of various types of forests and different approaches to forest management will be ascertained.