

Forestry Commission signs framework agreement with Infoterra Ltd to provide accurate digital map of woodland coverage across Scotland, England & Wales

6 March 2008 - Infoterra Ltd, a leader in the provision of geo-spatial products and services, has been named preferred supplier in a framework agreement with the Forestry Commission to provide a highly accurate and detailed digital map of woodland cover across Scotland, England and Wales.

The agreement provides for Infoterra to contribute to two major research projects being undertaken by the Commission. One is the update of its National Inventory of Woodland and Trees (NIWT), which quantifies and locates the woodland resource across all three countries; the other will be used in Forestry Commission Scotland's Native Woodland Survey, which is working to compile for the first time a definitive dataset on the extent, location and nature of native woodland across Scotland.

Using the latest geo-spatial information, the Infoterra team will provide a digital map of more than 2 million hectares of woodland. This map will give the Forestry Commission an accurate understanding of woodland coverage – where, what type and how much woodland exists - which will help it to assess change and develop plans to meet new EU Directives and other national and international policy commitments.

This up-to-date information, when compared against older data, will help to track environmental change over the last decade in key areas such as native woodland extent, habitat loss and gain, and carbon storage.

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Mark Lawrence, head of Woodland Surveys at the Commission's Forest Research agency, which is leading the NIWT project, said "Britain's growing area of forest and woodland is being called on to meet an ever-increasing and more complex range of environmental, economic and social objectives, so it's vital for us to have the most comprehensive inventory of woodland data to help us deliver those objectives. We are therefore looking forward to getting down to work with Infoterra on this key national project."

Dr Zoe Laird, of Forestry Commission Scotland, who is leading the Native Woodland Survey, added "The Native Woodlands Survey of Scotland is an unprecedented national field survey. Nothing like it has been possible before, but the detail offered by this mapping process provides us with the opportunity to establish a comprehensive dataset on Scotland's native woodlands. This will be used to inform future decisions on how we manage this valuable and important asset."

Dr Andy Wells, Director of Sales at Infoterra Ltd, added: "We believe that one of the key benefits for the Forestry Commission of working with a geo-spatial specialist such as Infoterra is that it leaves the Commission free to concentrate on its core activities while we focus on delivering the information which can help it to achieve its goals. By updating the NIWT, the Forestry Commission will have a powerful resource, which we can help to integrate with other nationwide datasets to unlock further value. Infoterra looks forward to continuing its partnership with the Forestry Commission over the course of this agreement."

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About Infoterra Ltd.

Infoterra Ltd is a leading provider of geographic information products and services. Its portfolio of geographic information solutions includes airborne and satellite data acquisition, geo-information creation, database management and out-sourced hosting. Infoterra provides geo-spatial knowledge to companies worldwide to help them make informed decisions. The company has major customers in utilities, engineering, insurance, agriculture, defence and oil, gas and mineral exploration.

Infoterra is committed to achieving environmental excellence, and the company has secured the internationally accepted ISO 14001 accreditation awarded to organisations that have successfully put in place an effective Environmental Management System.

Infoterra Ltd. is part of the Infoterra Group, which comprises companies in France, Germany and Spain, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Astrium Ltd, an EADS company.

www.infoterra.co.uk

PRESS RELEASE



About the Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission is the government department for forestry in Great Britain. It works to improve lives through the many benefits provided by sustainably managed woods and forests, including sustainable timber production, public recreation, nature conservation, and rural and community development. It does this by supporting woodland managers with grants, tree felling licences, regulation and advice; promotes the benefits of forests and forestry; and advises Ministers in the UK, Scottish and Welsh Assembly Governments on forestry policy. It manages more than 1 million hectares (2.5 million acres) of public forest land owned or leased by Ministers to provide the above benefits. For further information, visit www.forestry.gov.uk.

About Forest Research

Forest Research is an agency of the Forestry Commission that conducts world-class scientific research and technical development relevant to forestry for a range of internal and external clients. For further information, visit www.forestresearch.gov.uk.

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