



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Open Call for Proposals for Forestry Promotion Projects for 2025/2026

Application Form and Evaluation Plan

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF COMPLETED APPLICATIONS:

**Monday 28 April 2025
at 5pm**

in PDF format via email to

ForestrySupportFunding@agriculture.gov.ie

**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



Forestry Promotion Projects 2025/2026


Application Form

For Office use

Reference No:

Title of Project:	Irish Forestry and Forest Products - Debunking the Myths
Name of Organisation:	Forest Industries Ireland (FII)
Address:	C/O Wood Marketing Federation, Coillte, Newtownmounkenny, Co. Wicklow
Contact Name:	Des O'Toole
Contact Telephone No:	01-2011111
Email Address:	des.otoole@coillte.ie
Signature:	
Date:	24/04/2025

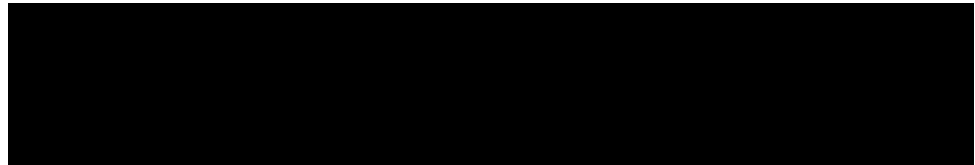
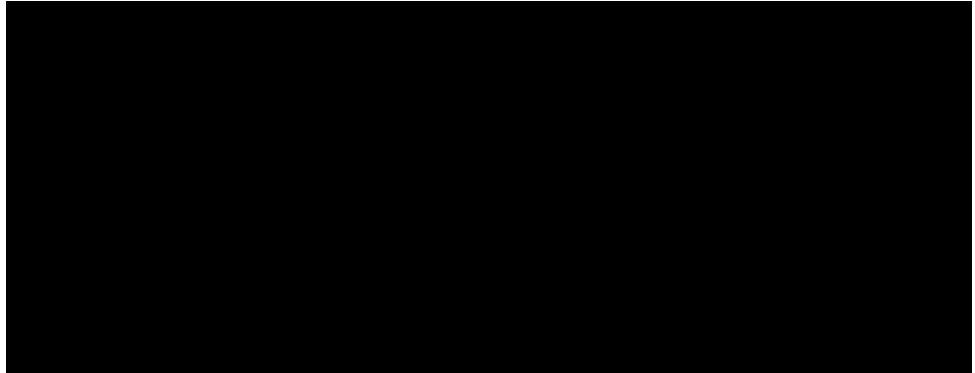
Overview of proposed project

Short description of proposal – (50 words or less for use in reporting)	By addressing and debunking common misconceptions regarding the Irish forestry and forest products sector, we can foster a better understanding of the complexities and importance of the forestry and forest products sector among key target stakeholders. This project seeks to highlight and challenge the misconceptions. Through this project we will foster informed discussions and promote a better understanding and appreciation for forests and forest products and their vital benefits.
Theme: 1, 2, or 3	1 and 2
What is the target audience for this project?	General public, industry stakeholders, private landowners, design practitioners (architects, engineers) and the building trade
Quality and experience of those involved in the promotion activity (to include CVs of all principals)	We have assembled a strong and capable project team. Our project partners are:  and Coillte. We have the capability and a proven track record of delivery under previous DAFM calls. If we are successful in this tender, our project will be project managed by Des O'Toole and Eoin O'Driscoll.

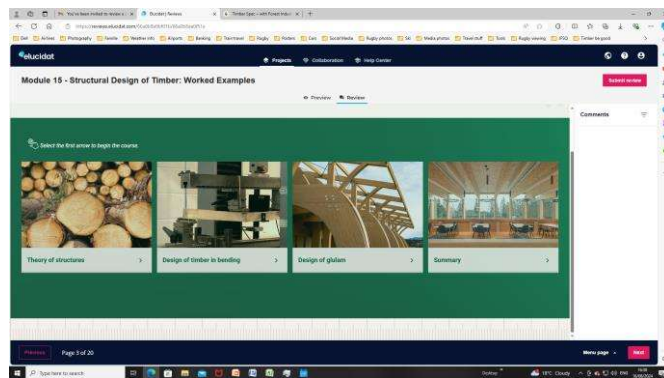
involved in the project)

[Forest Industries Ireland \(FII\)](#)

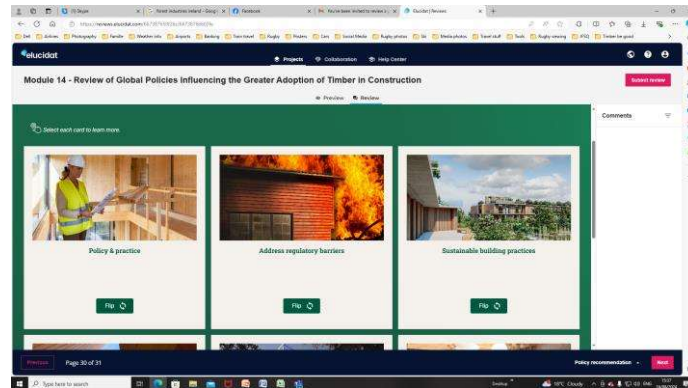
FII is the Ibec affiliated representative body for the forestry and forest products sector in Ireland. In recent years, it has developed Timber Spec, a series of CPD modules regarding the use of forest products in Ireland.



CPD on structural timber design, a snapshot



CPD policy module, a snapshot



Timberspec - Uptake by Module


Timber Spec User Data Report - Mar Report 2025

	Apr 2023 – Dec 2024	Jan - Feb 2025	Mar 2025	2025 Total
LMS Registrations	444	59	21	80
Course Starts	740	157	46	203
Course Completions	425	74	19	93

Course Completions	Apr '23 – Dec '24	Jan - Feb '25	Mar '25	2025 Total
01 - An Introduction to Timber Specification	79	14	4	18
02 - Understanding Timber Sustainability	43	9	1	10
03 - Timber in the Landscape	24	5	2	7
04 - Sustainability in Healthy Buildings	23	4	1	5
05 - An Introduction to Timber Frame	43	10	3	13
06 - Designing Timber Frame Structures	33	0	0	0
07 - Specification of Structural Timber	25	8	1	9
08 - Understanding Timber Durability	23	5	0	5
09 - An Introduction to Cross Laminated Timber	34	7	0	7
10 - Specifying Timber Panel Products	16	0	0	0
11 - Introduction to Timber and Bioenergy	22	0	0	0
12 - Timber Pallets and Logistics	60	5	0	5
13 - Timber Design to Eurocode 5	New Course	1	0	1
14 - Review of Global Policies Influencing the Greater Adoption of Timber in Construction	New Course	1	0	1
15 - Structural Design of Timber: Worked Examples to Eurocode 5	New Course	0	2	2
16 - Timber Structure Design Interventions	New Course	0	1	1
17 - LCA in Theory	New Course	0	1	1
18 - LCA in Practice	New Course	0	1	1
Timber Retail Essentials	New Course	3	2	5

Year to Date

	2024	01-25	02-25	03-25	2025 Total
LMS Registrations	179	47	12	21	80
Course Starts	363	71	86	46	203
Course Completions	223	29	45	19	93

	 <p>Coillte Coillte was established in 1989. It operates three high potential businesses: forestry, land solutions and wood based panels (i.e. Medite Smartply). Its mission is to balance and deliver the multiple benefits of our forests to Irish society. Coillte are Ireland’s largest forest owner. In addition, they are Ireland’s largest producer of roundwood, the raw material which its sawmill customers process into high quality timber. Sitka Spruce is its main commercial tree species in Coillte forests.</p> <div style="background-color: black; height: 80px; width: 100%; margin: 10px 0;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 80px; width: 100%; margin: 10px 0;"></div> <p>In addition we have managed other forestry promotion projects for DAFM, COFORD; Coillte; the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); Forest Industries Ireland (FII), the Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA), the Irish Bio-energy Association (IrBEA), Teagasc Forestry and the Irish Wood Marketing Federation.</p>
<p>Set out key performance indicators with dates of delivery for this project and the extent to which the proposal meets DAFM requirements for the theme</p>	<p>Project Duration : 12 months</p> <p>1 x CPD module launched on Timberspec (c. 8 months from date of award)</p> <p>1 x Social media promotional campaign (to extend 6 months + beyond the life of the project) designed around debunking the common myths through facts, figures and highly engaging and visual content.</p>
<p>Outline how the project will deliver value for money for the Department of</p>	<p>By addressing and debunking common misconceptions, we can foster a better understanding of the complexities and importance of forestry and forest products among key target stakeholders. Debunking misconceptions related to forestry and forest products is important for several reasons:</p>

<p>Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informed Decision-Making: Clear, accurate information allows stakeholders—including policymakers, landowners, consumers, and the public—to make informed decisions regarding forest management and the use of forest products. 2. Promoting Sustainable Practices: Many misconceptions can lead to a resistance against commercial forestry. Educating the public regarding SFM and Irish forests can encourage an acceptance and support for the use of forest management methods that protect the environment while still allowing for economic benefits from forests. 3. Enhancing Public Perception: Challenging myths can improve the public perception of forestry and can help Irish society to recognise its role in improving biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and local economies. 4. Supporting Economic Growth: Misunderstandings about commercial forestry can hinder investment and job creation in the sector. 5. Encouraging Responsible Consumption: Educating consumers about the sustainable benefits of wood and forest products can shift preferences toward responsibly sourced materials, which supports sustainable forestry and helps reduce the environmental impact. 6. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health: Corrections to myths can foster support for practices that maintain or enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services, leading to healthier, better managed forests. 7. Combating Climate Change: Misconceptions can lead to policies that do not effectively address climate change. By clarifying the role of forests in carbon sequestration, we can promote the policies that leverage forests as a climate change solution. 8. Community Engagement: Addressing misconceptions fosters an informed dialogue among community members, empowering them to better engage in forestry-related issues and decision-making processes. 9. Policy Development: Accurate information is essential for developing effective policies and regulations that can balance economic interests with environmental protection. 10. Enhancing Collaboration: By building a common understanding of forestry, the various stakeholders—including governments, NGOs, and industry—can work together toward sustainable land use and management practices.
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The incentive Effect Declaration – please confirm:

Open Call for Proposals for Forestry Promotion Projects for 2025/2026 – Application Form

The work described herein, would not have been undertaken if it was not for the financial support provided under State Aid rules. Without this aid, there would be no change to current activities.

X

Detailed Funding Proposal Table

Note: If you would prefer to present this information in your own format, or include additional detail of timelines and deliverables, please do so. This information will be compared against receipts received at payment stage so should correspond as closely to the format of the receipts as possible.

Responsibility	Action Proposed	Frequency once-off/ number/ ongoing/ other	Expected Delivery Date/s	Cost (Excl. VAT)	VAT Rate	% sought from DAFM	Total € funding sought from DAFM <u>inclusive</u> of VAT
Subject Matter Experts	Content development / Editing / Quality Checking / PM	4 payments	Q1 2026	15,000	0%	100%	15,000
		2 payments	Q2 2026	4000	23%	100%	4,920
		n/a	Q2 2026	6000	23%	0%	0
		n/a	Q2 2026	2000	23%	0%	0
		2 payments	Q2 2026	10,000	23%	50%	6,150
		2 payments	Q2 2026	6000	23%	50%	3,690
		n/a	Q2 2026	1500	0	0%	0
		Photography / Video	Edit and use existing assets (imagery/video) where possible from FII, Coillte and DAFM.	once off	Q2 2026	500	23%
Total Funding Sought from DAFM							29,914

Declaration by applicant of consent from Data Subjects (where applicable)

The applicant as “Data Controller” in respect of any personal data provided by it in its proposal, is required to confirm that all personal data (CV’s for example) relating to “Data Subjects”, (where “Data Controller” and “Data Subject” has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws), as provided to them (the Applicant) in the course of preparing the proposal, has the consent of those “Data Subjects” to the processing of such personal data by the Applicant and DAFM for the purposes of participating in this call for proposals or that the applicant otherwise has a legal basis for providing such personal data to DAFM for the purposes of its participation in this call for proposals.

Name of “Data Controller”	Compliant with requirements under GDPR Yes/No or N/A
Des O’Toole	Yes

Please return completed application form by email to: ForestrySupportFunding@agriculture.gov.ie or by post to Promotions Unit, Forestry Division, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co Wexford by **Monday 28 April 2025.**

Appendix 1 Evaluation Plan to form part of the application

The Evaluation Plan should be prepared before the project starts. The Plan should detail what will be considered ‘success’ for the project and how it will be measured. The information supplied on this plan will not be used as part of the assessment of the project during the selection process.

Evaluation Plan

Title of project:

Forestry and Forest Products - Debunking the Myths

Author of plan:

Des O’Toole

Date plan drawn up:

24/04/2025

1. Project Objectives: These should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely)

Objectives

- To debunk the ‘select’ myths in relation to the Irish forestry and forest products.
- To improve public perception related to forestry and reduce barriers to afforestation.
- To drive awareness and understanding of the benefits of homegrown timber as a carbon solution for the built environment and to reduce barriers to its use and specification.
- To enhance the relationship between our sector and the public.

Deliverables

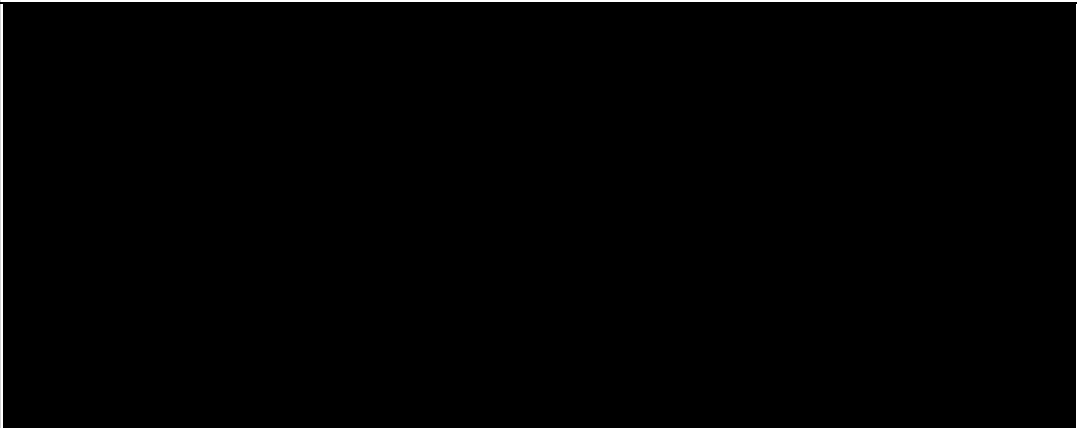
- Development and deployment of a free to access Digital E-Learning Module to be hosted on www.timberspec.ie
- Implementation of a social media promotional campaign (to extend 6 months + beyond the life of the project).

Timeframe

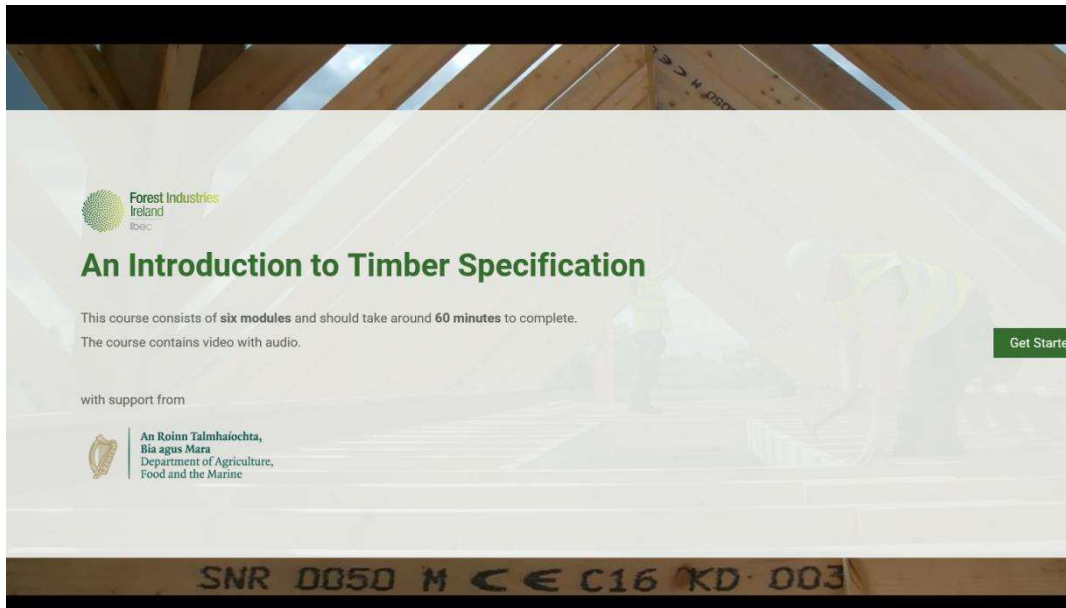
12 months

2. Project Plan

Identify and describe the key elements of the project and the information to be collected. The Outcomes and Impacts may be more difficult to identify but should be considered and incorporated into the project planning in so far as is possible.

Inputs	<p><i>Human, financial, organizational, and community resources</i></p> 
Activities	<p><i>What the project is going to do. What processes, tools, events, technology and actions form part of the program implementation.</i></p> <p>Key Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Management An industry steering group will provide oversight - Development of Technical Content Experts in the relevant fields will be employed to develop the content. The project manager will provide guidance and a design template. - Development of eLearning Content & Testing This work package takes the technical content and redevelops it an interactive eLearning format and migrates it onto an eLearning platform for free public access to content. Hosted at www.timberspec.ie - Marketing and Dissemination Promotion of the CPD module among key target stakeholders. Where applicable CPD modules will be formally accredited with the relevant professional bodies. <p>Some common misconceptions, many of which we will aim to debunk are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deforestation is widespread: Many believe commercial forestry leads to significant deforestation. This overlooks overlooking sustainable forest management practices, replanting obligations and the active afforestation drive underway by DAFM. 2. Homegrown timber is poor quality and Sitka spruce is bad: Sitka is a commercial species grown for its quality timber which is produced to stringent

	<p>European standards. It competes favourably with imports on grade, quality and price for most applications.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. We need to move away from the commercial forestry model: Commercial forestry provides many economic and environmental benefits and is a significant employer in rural Ireland 4. Forestry regulation is full of red tape: We will explain that regulations and processes are in place to ensure sustainability, environmental protection, and adherence to best practices. These safeguards are designed to protect biodiversity, water quality, and soil health. 5. There are limited resources to support the grower: We will emphasise the availability of resources and support from government agencies, forestry organisations, and private consultants. These entities can provide guidance through the regulatory landscape, reducing the perceived complexity of afforestation and other forestry issues/practices. 6. Harvesting operations are bad for our environment: Harvesting operations, when managed correctly, do not cause environmental harm; sustainable practices can support forest health. 7. Forests lack biodiversity: Forests encompass diverse ecosystems, including plant and animal habitats, not just timber. 8. Forestry is not a science: Many underestimate the scientific principles guiding modern forestry practices. 9. Commercial forestry ignores local communities: Most companies engage with local communities to ensure benefits and sustainability. 10. Forestry is outdated: Modern forestry incorporates advanced technology and practices for better resource management. 11. Pesticides are prevalent in forestry: Many commercial forestry operations now avoid or minimise chemical use and this use is highly regulated. 12. Forestry is detrimental to wildlife: Well-managed forests can support biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Over 20% of the Coillte forest estate is managed for biodiversity. 13. Harvesting operations lead to soil erosion: Proper forestry practices can minimise erosion and maintain soil health. 14. Trees take a long time to grow back: Ireland's climate is ideally suited to growing trees. 15. All forest lands are protected: Not all forests are designated as conservation areas; some are managed for resource extraction. 16. Cutting down trees is bad and clear-fells are permanent: For every tree we cut, we are obligated to replant more
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	<p>17. Sustainable forestry lacks productivity: Sustainable practices can be economically viable and productive.</p> <p>18. The only goal of forestry is profit: Many forestry initiatives prioritise ecological health and community and recreation benefits alongside profit.</p> <p>19. Timber is not durable and burns so is unsuitable for many structural uses: The behaviour of timber in fire is predictable and timber can meet and exceed our current building regulations performance requirements when designed and detailed correctly.</p>
<p>Outputs</p>	<p><i>Essential data collected on the activities carried out, to enable assessment of whether the programme delivers to the intended audiences and at the required level.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x eLearning modules + 1 social media campaign • The module will have the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highly engaging to allow the learner ○ User friendly to allow seamless navigation ○ Interactive and engaging storyboarding ○ Accessibility on any device (mobile/laptop) ○ Incorporation of learning checks to validate learning outcomes ○ Extensive use of video, animation, infographics, images, icons, flip cards and voice over ○ User training ○ Quality assurance and ongoing technical support for a defined period <p><u>Sample Screen Shots from Timberspec</u></p> 

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Welcome to An Introduction to Timber Specification

This course provides an overview of the forestry industry in Ireland and provides a basic guide to timber specification.

Select the first module, Benefits of Wood, to get started. Once you have viewed all modules, move on to the conclusion



Knowledge Check

You are talking with a customer and he is curious to know if the strength of a piece of timber varies depending on how being used. You decide that the best way to explain it is through showing versus telling.

Which image would you show the customer to explain a wood's strength?

Select the best answer

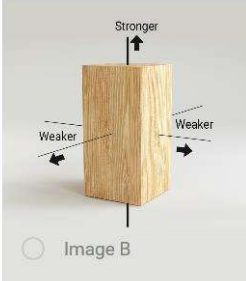
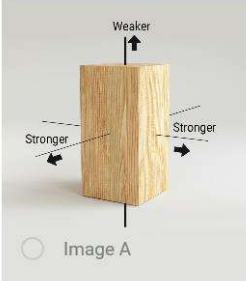



Image A Image B

Submit 

Strength Grading

Strength varies between species, within a forest and within a log itself. Therefore, timber needs to be graded.



Sawn timber is sorted using grading methods such

- Bending stiffness
- Ultrasound
- X-ray

X-ray scanners are popular among Irish mills and measure density, knot size and knot location.

Grading machines are set to a pre-defined strength grade to EN 338 and boards that meet or exceed the grade are stamped with the pre-defined grade.

C16 is the common grade for home grown timber.



Sample Myths

Challenges Limiting Timber Use

Strength and Durability Misconceptions

Some believe timber lacks the strength and durability of other building materials like steel or concrete. However, timber has an excellent **strength-to-weight** ratio, particularly in mass timber form. Its use has been demonstrated in large-scale, multi-story buildings, including the tallest building to date > 85m. Contrary to this misconception, when kept dry and with robust design detailing, timber is a highly durable material. There will always be the **C24 v C16 argument**

	<div style="background-color: #444; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Challenges Limiting Timber Use</h2> </div> <div style="padding: 10px;"> <h3 style="color: #808000;">Fire and the Building Regulations</h3> <p>Fire behavior is extremely complex, yet when timber buildings are designed and detailed to international fire safety standards, they can be as safe and predictable as other materials. Building regulations currently do not reflect the advances in timber based MMC.</p>  </div>
Outcomes	<p><i>Results expected with target audience. Short to medium term changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, aspirations and behaviour of individuals.</i></p> <p>We need to remove barriers and showcase the positive attributes of our sector. By addressing and debunking common misconceptions, we can foster a better understanding of the complexities and importance of forestry and forest products among key target stakeholders. This project seeks to highlight and challenge the misconceptions. Through this project we will foster informed discussions and promote understanding and appreciation for forests and forest products and their vital benefits.</p>
Understanding	<p><i>The fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organizations, communities or systems (outside the programme participants) as a result of programme activities</i></p> <p>It is expected that this project will have the following medium/long term impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve reputation - To effectively promote our sectors credentials and enhance its reputation with target audience • Strengthen relations - To engage and strengthen relationships with target audience • Increase Reach - To raise national awareness of our industry and the products it produces and proactively reach a more mainstream audience • Improve Understanding - To improve awareness of homegrown timber and its benefits

3. Project Evaluation

A project evaluation will be required to be submitted with the final funding claims for all successful projects. The Project Evaluation will take the same form as the Project Plan, with an update to be provided under each of the five headings above.

Consideration should be given at Evaluation Planning stage to the following:

- What will the main areas of focus of the impact evaluation be, how will it be evaluated and who will carry it out?
- Methods used to collect data for the evaluation (KPIs, tools e.g. surveys/questionnaires, who from, is specialist input required?)
- What resources will be needed to carry out the evaluation (finance, people, information)?
- How will the results of the evaluation be reported and disseminated and who will be consulted?
- Learnings, follow-up actions and implementation.
- Where appropriate, the Department will require projects to share an online questionnaire with participants.