



Exploring the fundamental science, social science
and cultural importance of forested landscapes

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM | BIFOR

The Forest Edge
Doctoral Scholarship Programme



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“Forest existence, form, and function emerge from detailed interactions within and across scales, from molecules, to individual organisms, to communities and societies.”

Trees in the UK

FOREST VALUE

UK forest industries - **£4.2bn Gross Value Added** per annum
17,000 direct jobs and **~100,000** downstream jobs.

TRADE GAP

1M tonnes of hardwoods (oak, ash, beech, sycamore, walnut) are imported annually.

Annual UK **trade deficit** in wood-based construction materials is **~£1bn**

→ Zero-carbon UK housing difficult - requires **responsible sourcing and transport offsetting**

SKILLS GAPS

50-80% of UK woodland and forest **unmanaged** (any managed sustainably?)

“Most Wanted” **skills**: plant pathology, taxonomy, soil science, environ. microbiology

KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Value Capture Frameworks

and one-world living

Carbon sink – mature woodlands inc. soil

Resilience to biotic and abiotic challenge



Visions of a sustainable UK include substantial areas of managed woodland

Sustainable
Energy/water/food/biodiversity

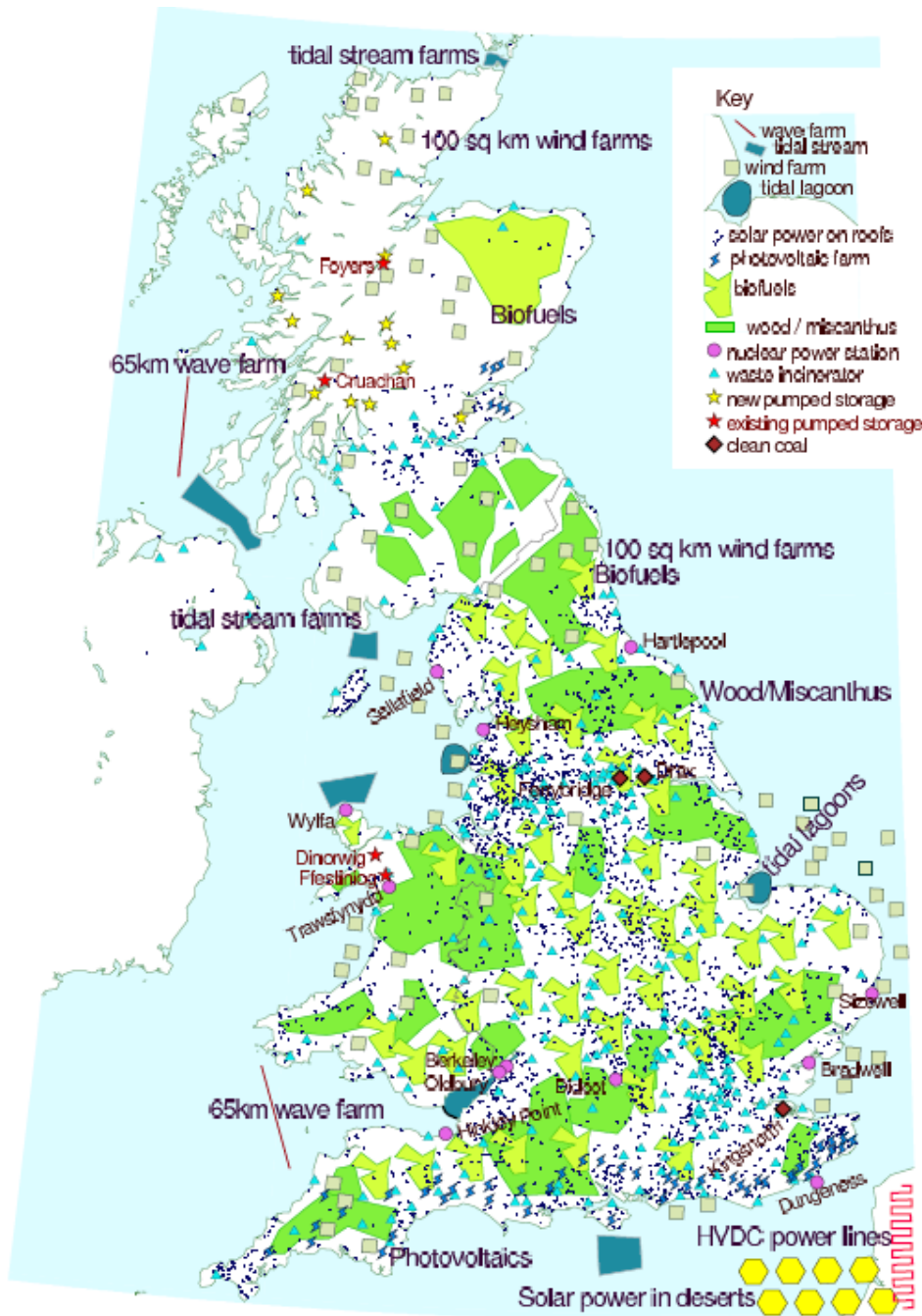
Forestry Commission Strategy:

Protect
Improve
Expand

MacKay, 2009: Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air, UIT, Cambridge, UK

Green areas: woods and short-rotation coppice

Yellow-green areas: biofuel cropping



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- 20 studentships over 4 years
- A management board drawn from across the university's colleges
- Disciplinary depth/interdisciplinary challenge

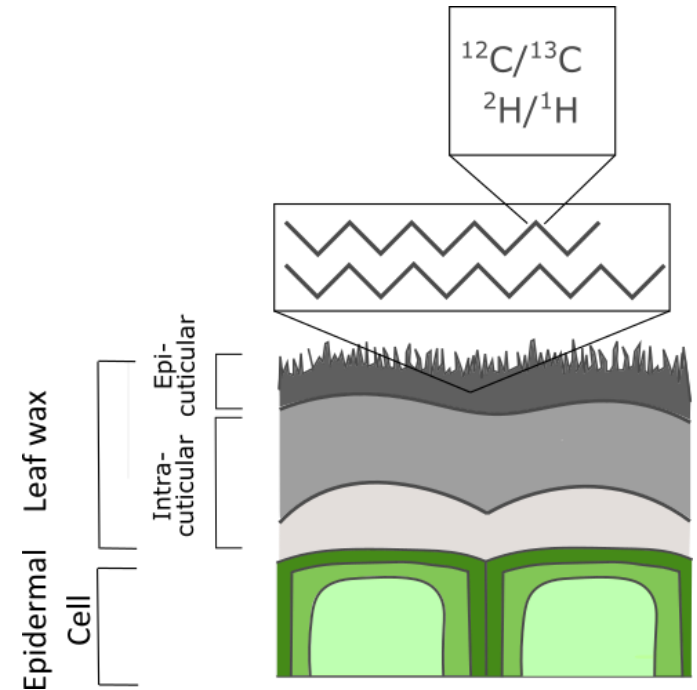
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Cohort 1 projects

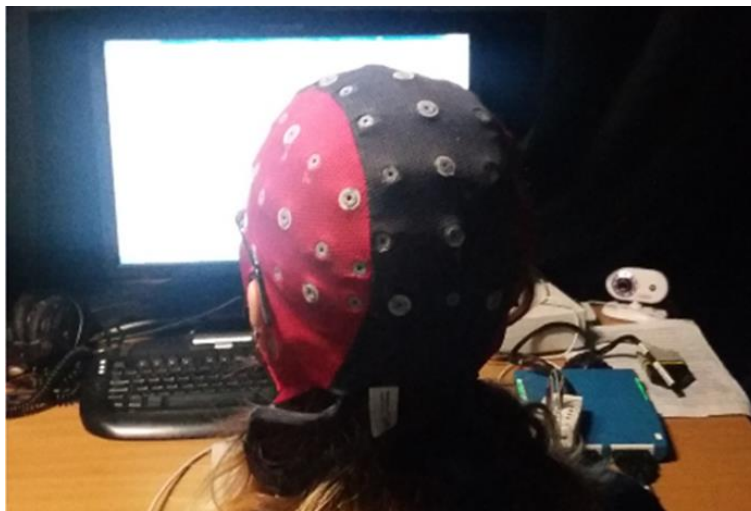


Bridget Warren - Development and application of novel ecological and environmental proxies based leaf wax lipids



Ruben Foquet - Mangrove forest conservation and restoration: what are the keys to success

Jenny Knight - Exploring perceptions and preferences of Land Managers and how this impacts planning forested landscapes for NFM



Ezster Toth – Focus on Cognition:
Can forests balance the brain?

Polly Jarman - Young people's experiences of and learning in urban woodlands: comparing formal and informal 'Forest Schooling' in the UK and Peru



Ben Howard - Coppice management to reduce nutrient loads in forest streams

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- Unique scheme, but NOT operating in isolation
- Doctoral Training Programmes (DTPs) are multi-university groups funded by the research councils.
- Lots of overlap with DTPs.
- “Dr Forest” Doctoral Researcher conference
 - Bridging 2nd-phase DTPs (CENTA2, ENVISION...)

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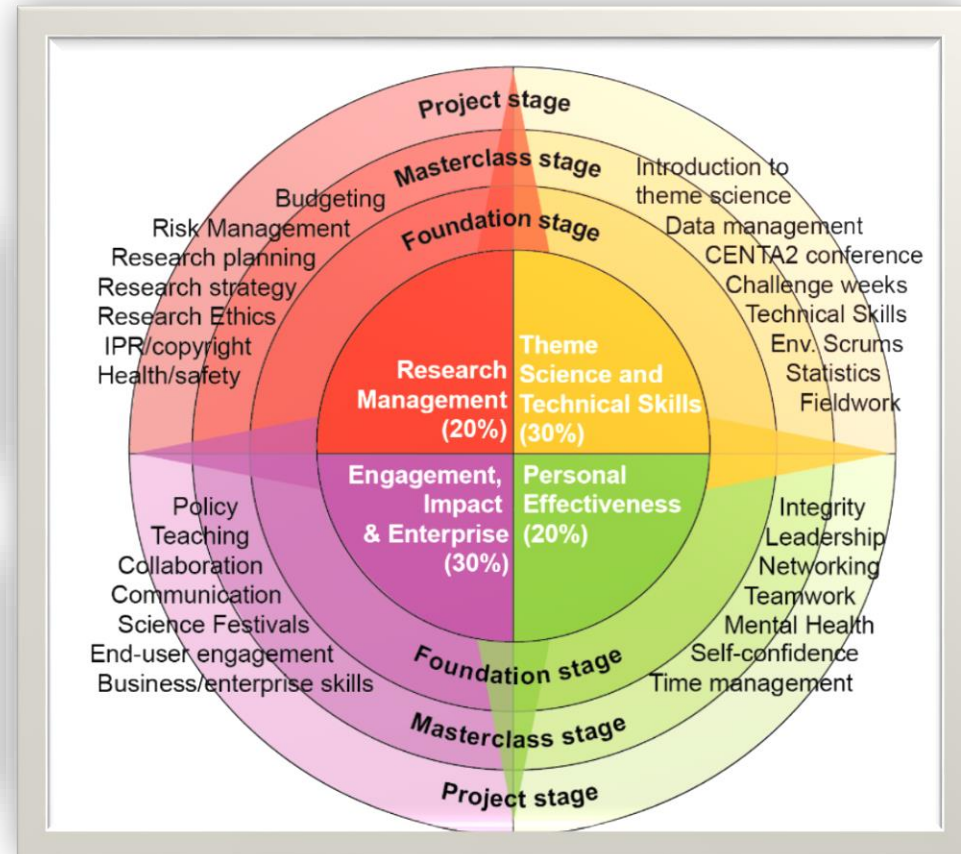
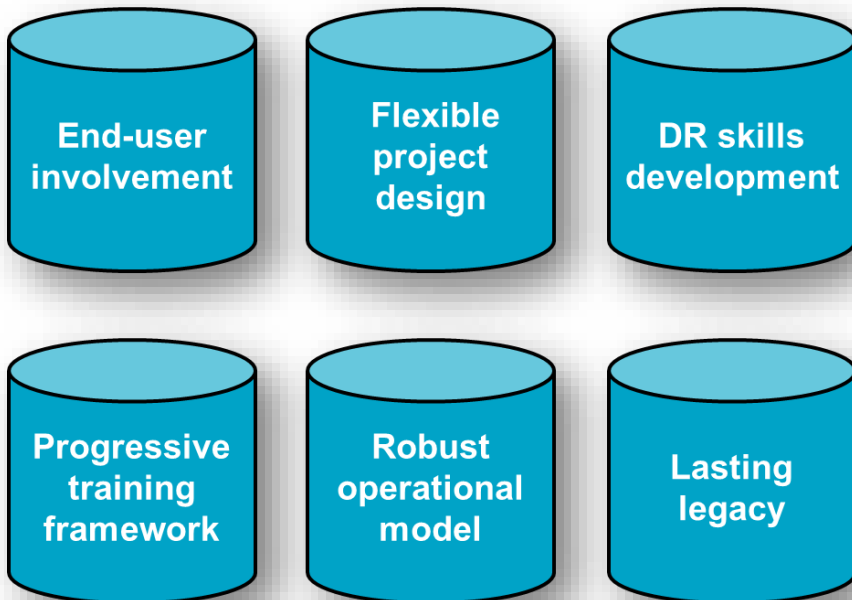


University of
Leicester

Loughborough
University



- 19 end-user (industry, etc.) = 29 Partners
- Value: ca. £22.5m → 5 cohorts at 33 DRs
- End-user collaboration for DR training



CENTA2 Director & Management

Any questions or ideas please email:

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- 
- Cutting edge research
 - Skills delivery
 - Defining & exploring new interdisciplinary ideas



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