

Official Statistics: UK softwood removals and deliveries by country, 2015-2016

This release gives the results of further analysis of data previously released in Forestry Statistics 2017, combining data on softwood removals by country with data on UK softwood deliveries.

Speech: Reflection on Progress and Challenges in Kosovo

Thank you Mr President

And thank you Special Representative Tanin for your briefing and the Secretary-General's report.

Mr President, as Ambassador Çitaku reminded us, this month marks ten years since Kosovo became a sovereign state. Let us reflect on the progress that has been achieved in this time. The people of Kosovo have participated in three Parliamentary elections since declaring independence in 2008, as well as two country-wide mayoral and municipal elections. Kosovo has also shown solid economic growth, and is now among the top ten countries for starting a business according to the World Bank's Doing Business 2018 report, jumping from 60th to 40th place in that same report's ranking for ease of doing business. And recent action towards full integration of Kosovo's judiciary within the EU-facilitated dialogue underscores a real commitment to progress and stability. This is not the same country it was 10 years ago when UNMIK was first established.

This is not to say Kosovo is without its challenges: building a democracy takes time. The genuinely competitive local elections in the majority of municipalities in Kosovo were a welcome sign of healthy democratic competition, but we continue to be concerned by allegations of intimidation in Kosovan-Serb municipalities.

Additionally, we welcome the public statement by President Hashim Thaçi on February 1st that the Kosovo Specialist Chambers "cannot and will not be abrogated", and we hope to see the initiative in the Kosovo Assembly formally removed in the coming days, ensuring that the Chambers' important work to maintain justice and the rule of law will continue.

We continue to urge Kosovo authorities to take all possible steps to swiftly

resolve the murder of Oliver Ivanović, which has increased the local tensions in North Mitrovica.

However, these concerns should not diminish the progress that has been made by Kosovo. Kosovo can continue to build on its progress by transitioning UNMIK institutions to Kosovan institutions or other international organizations. While we appreciate UNMIK's years of work in Kosovo, it is time for a leaner, more efficient Mission to focus on more tightly defined priorities that take into account all of the progress Kosovo has made in the last ten years.

Kosovo's challenges are far less severe than those of the fledgling nation that UNMIK first arrived to. And thus, it does not require a UN Mission of this size. Moreover, yesterday in the open debate in this Council which you chaired, the UK called for a Security Council that focuses on present and future challenges; with all of the world's pressing challenges, checking in on Kosovo's good progress every three months with these meetings is simply not a good use of this Council's time. In closing, let me reiterate the longstanding UK position that it is past time for this Council to meet less frequently on this issue.

Thank you.

Notice: Wolf Minerals (UK) Limited: application made to abstract water NPS/WR/024246

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

Closed consultation: Offshore

[renewables decommissioning guidance for industry: proposed updates](#)

Updated: Summary of consultation responses published.

The date for responses has been extended to 16 March to ensure we capture as many views on the draft guidance notes as possible in determining the final version of the document.

We're seeking views on a series of proposed updates to our [guidance for industry on decommissioning of offshore renewable energy installations under the Energy Act 2004](#).

This consultation applies to England and Wales, but we welcome responses from organisations based elsewhere who have views on how the proposed changes may impact the offshore renewable energy industry.

The last version of this guidance was published in 2011, and sections now need to be updated. This update focuses in particular on issues relating to the provision of decommissioning cost estimates and associated financial security, to assist and inform developers.

We want views on this first draft from industry, regulators, and other interested parties, on the potential impacts – for example on the offshore renewables sector, the environment, or on other users of the sea. We are also testing early ideas on future updates to our guidance that require further development before being incorporated.

Finally, we are interested in hearing from those organisations impacted by decommissioning about their experiences of the regime to date.

[News story: Update on investigation into Whitstable oyster farm activity](#)

The Marine Management Organisation has provided an update on [the investigation it began in early 2017](#) under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This related to alleged unlicensed depositing of oyster trestles on a privately owned area of Whitstable Beach by the Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company or its manager Mr Green.

After investigation and careful consideration the MMO has concluded there was insufficient evidence to prove a criminal offence in relation to its remit

under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The MMO licensing team has also considered the facts and circumstances of the deposit of trestles on Whitstable Beach and has concluded based on an [independent navigational risk assessment commissioned by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency](#) that the array of trestles do not currently constitute an obstruction or danger to navigation. This activity benefits from an exemption relating to shellfish propagation and cultivation under [the Marine Licensing \(Exempted Activities\) Order 2011 as amended \(Article 13\)](#).

The MMO is dealing with the issue [in line with its compliance and enforcement strategy](#) and does not intend to take further, retrospective legal action.

The MMO has a difficult task in managing competing uses of the marine area and appreciates there has been much public debate about the issue. It previously met with a number of local representatives, including the former MP for the area, on the matter. As it is important that the MMO carries out its duties and obligations impartially and fairly it did not feel it appropriate to open this process to a wider audience during an ongoing investigation.

Whilst this investigation has concluded the MMO will continue to monitor the situation and consider issues raised on a case by case basis.