

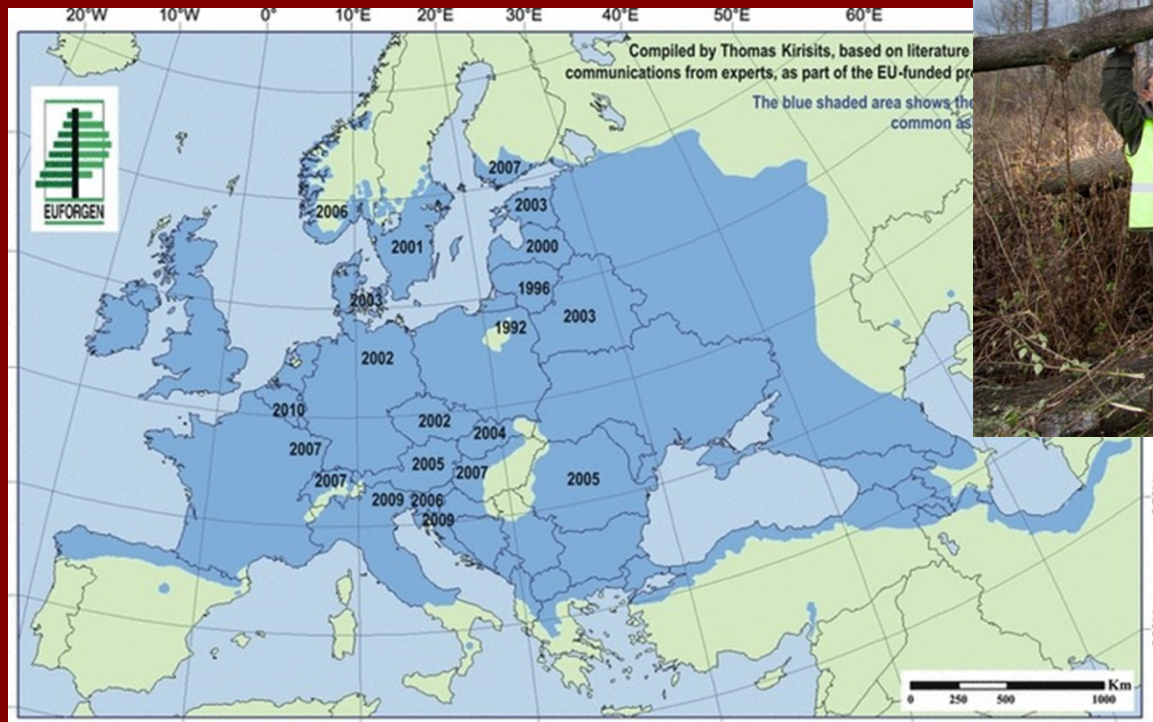
Lee Dudley MICFor CEnv
Dr Matt Elliot
Woodland Trust

Tree disease threats and UK Sourced and
Grown Assurance – a biosecurity
assurance scheme to improve standards



The Journey

Hymenoscyphus fraxineus



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How We Reacted

- Researched what the nurseries thought the problem was.
- The Woodland Trust looked at their role in disease importation.
- Concluded spot-buying was part of the problem (not the only cause)
- That contract growing was a better way
- Seed collection became important to us



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In Summary Core Contracts

- Took risks away from the nursery.
- Placed those risks on the Trust
- Which we could accept because we would achieve higher levels of biosecurity for our native trees.
- A fair swap.



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Seed Supply

- We are seeking to build and strengthen of the seed supplier market
- The supply of available seed to meet UK's growing demand means we will try to encourage more suppliers to come in to the market.
- We are researching sustainable seed supply and seeking out ways of improving quality stock for minor native species by monitoring phenotypes.



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Supply Chains

The Old

WT spot bought
UK trees



Nurseries
Supplied the
Trees



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Supply Chains

The Old

WT spot bought
UK trees



Nurseries
Supplied the
Trees

Genuine UKSG

Genuine UKG

Partially UKSG

Partially UKG

Non-UKSG

Imported Seed

UK Seed, plants
sometimes abroad

Non UK Seed, plants
sometimes grown
abroad

Non UK Seed, plants
grown abroad



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Supply Chains

The New

WT orders the
seed
(Contract)

Seed Supplied
to the nursery –
WT see the
Seed Certificate

Seed
Germinated and
Grown by
Contract
Nurseries

Trees Audited
annually for
traceability,
quality and
quantities

Contract
Nurseries
Deliver (with
Seed Certificate)



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Consequently WT are now FRM
Registered

Scale of Contracts

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
1,713,336	3,192,200	2,965,600	4,029,900	11,901,036

Value in the region of £2.3 million



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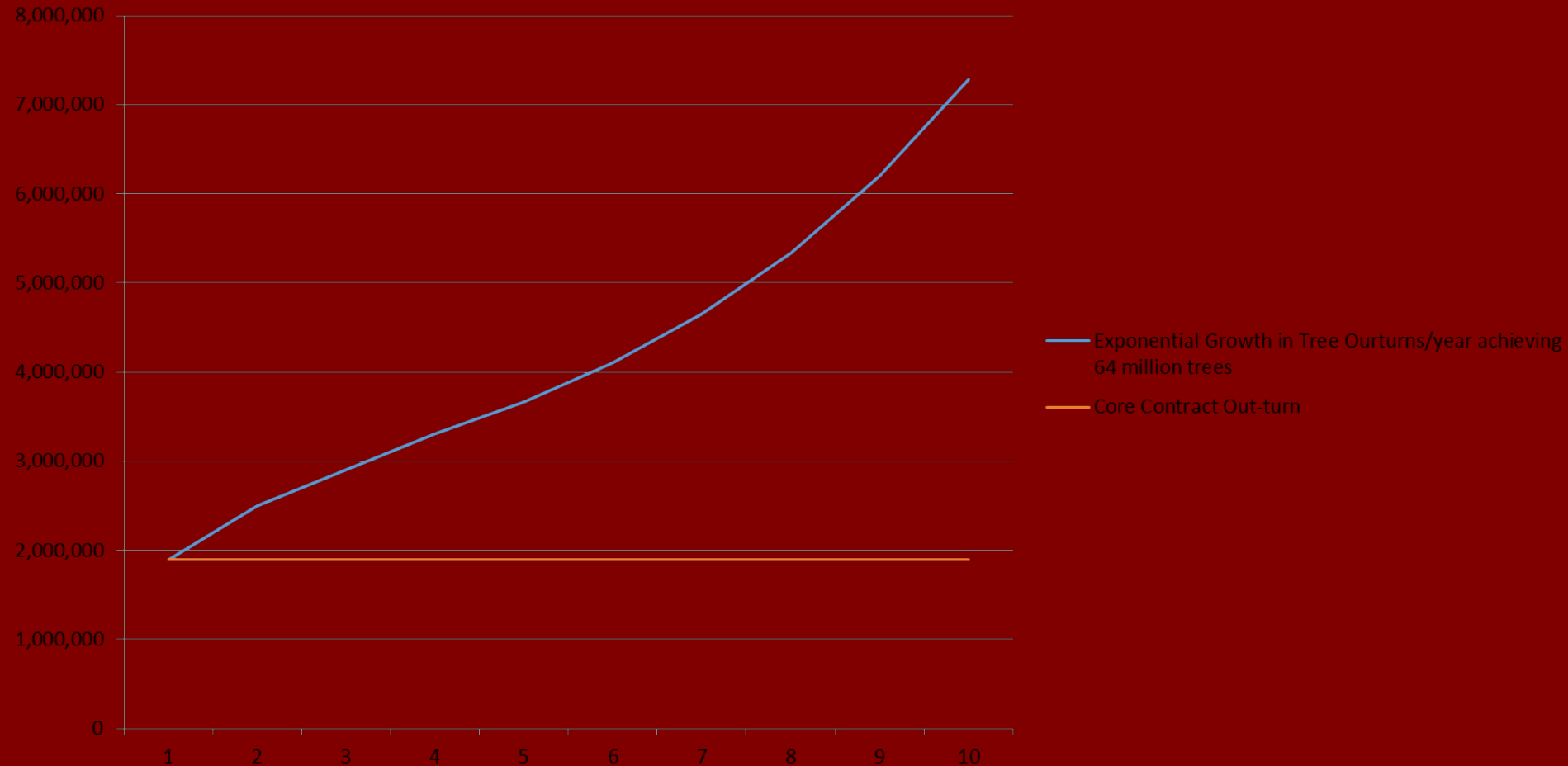
An introduction to UKSG Assurance Scheme

1. Summary – we moved away from spot-buying to contract grow for three years
2. But the vagaries of germination and production problems meant we needed to spot-buy – How could we do this, without risking buying imported material?

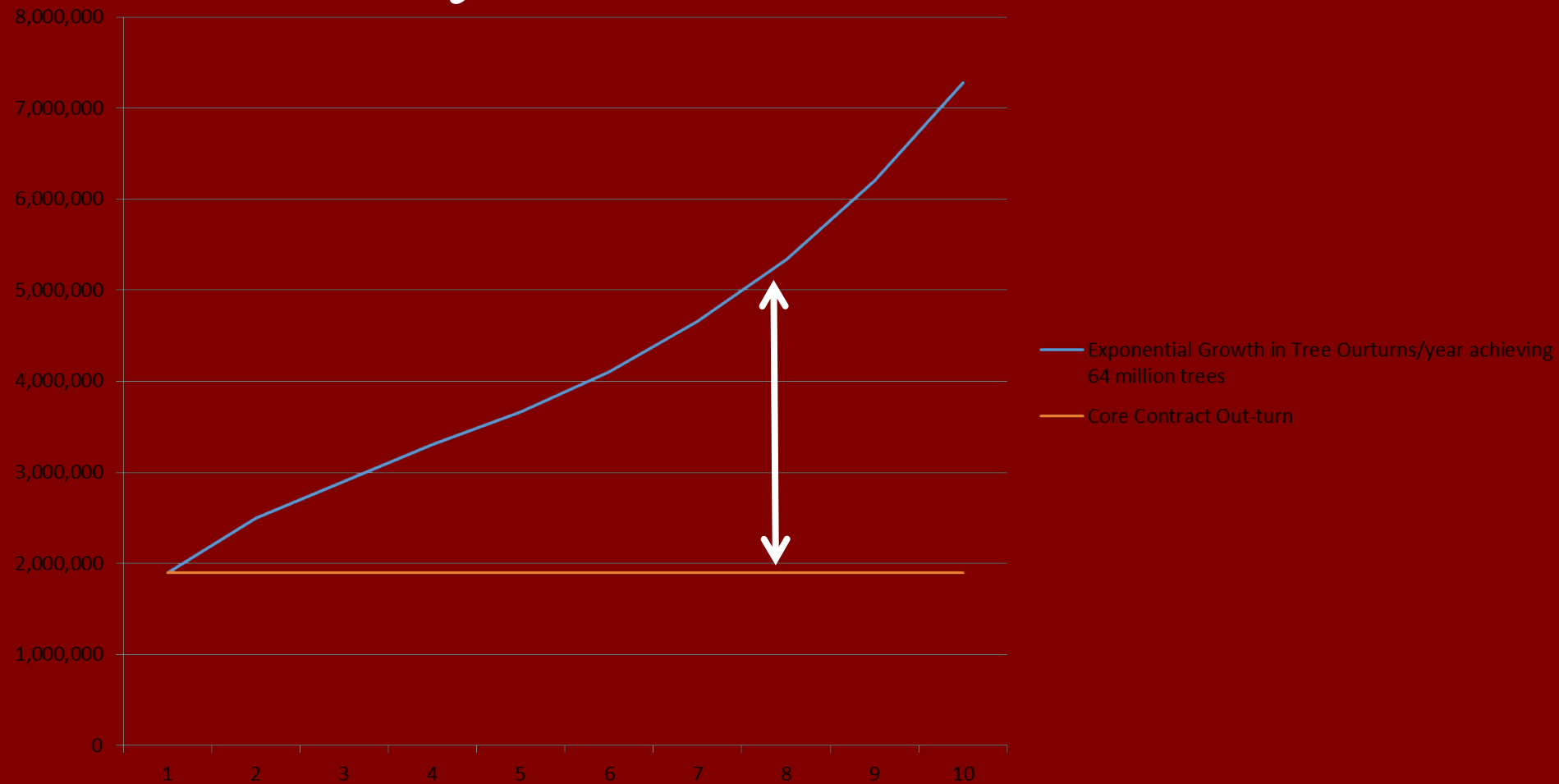


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Why UKSG Assurance?



Why UKSG Assurance?



Why Specifiers and Buyers should think UKSG

First and foremost better biosecurity

Good for the nursery

A new initiative to market

Low burden and no cost



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UKSG Assurance

- Not an industry scheme
- We advocate it to all buyers and specifiers
- 30 Nurseries Approached
- 2 Declined
- 6 Set as low priority
- 2 Closed down.....
- 19 Audited and passed
- 1 requires corrective actions
- Estimated number of plants assured - 56.8 million



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Assurance

- 2 Welsh
 - 6 Scottish
 - 11 English
-
- 5 Small Enterprises
 - 6 Medium
 - 8 Large



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What is Assessed?

Staff training/CPD

Traceability

Continual Improvement

Seed receipts – FRM areas

Stock Control

Seed handling

Biosecurity / pest and disease management

Plant quality and quantity

Care of soil and water



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A Word on Climate Change

- Climate change is real
- So is the risk of importing severe disease and pests
- UKSG (if viewed simply) could be perceived as an approach that will hinder climate change adaptation through restricting species choice.



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Climate Change – Our Position

- Native woodland of diverse structure and tree species appropriate to the site will provide the greatest chances for adaptive change.
- This may mean planting more minor species where these are appropriate to the site and using a mix of UK provenances rather than just local provenance planting stock.



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Climate Change – Our Position

Therefore if

- More forests and woods are created and
- greater connectivity of habitats can be achieved then
- UKSG specification will maintain sufficient genetic diversity to adapt to climate change.
- The Woodland Trust do intend to directly or indirectly create more connected forests and woods



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Prioritising Pest and Diseases

- There is still time with climate change to adapt.
- There is little time with disease and pest importation.



Advocating Pest and Disease Control & Management

Does not mean we are ignoring climate change.



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Prioritising Pest and Diseases

The Trust will:

- Work to increase resilience of natural ecosystems to increase genetic permeability
- Use trees and woodland to support the resilience of urban and rural areas to climate change
- Raise awareness of climate change, including through campaigning.
- Promote Woodland Carbon to companies and press Government to enable the wider adoption of woodland creation as a means of abating carbon emissions.



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Summary

- Ash dieback had a huge impact on the Woodland Trust as a native tree charity
- We reacted with creativity and taken a journey with so many lessons learnt
- We have established a mechanism for buyers and specifiers to use
- We hope with this that future pest and disease importation can be minimised

Dr Matt Elliot

So what's next?

- Ash dieback disease has had an impact on how we view tree production in a biosecurity context
- It highlighted that plant trading networks are complex and ambiguous
- The systems that have developed over the last 30 years have promoted mass production and free movement over biosecurity concerns
- It is now a very complex problem to solve

Xylella

- *Xylella fastidiosa* is a disease which has once again exposed the biosecurity frailties of international trade
- This bacterial disease has had devastating effects in olive groves in Italy and is also now found in southern France, Corsica, Spain (Alicante), Mallorca, Menorca and Ibiza
- There was also an outbreak in Germany on a number of plants which had been moved in trade
- There are over 150 hosts for the disease, the high risk ones being Prunus, Polygala, olive, rosemary, lavender and Nerium
- In the event of an outbreak in the UK there would be a massive impact on the affected nursery and any other nurseries within the buffer zone, which is currently 10km

Xylella



“These eradication actions are difficult to implement. We try, but we have 400 infection areas. And we have to eliminate all vegetal life in a 100m radius around them. This means burning it all. Just imagine in terms of area what we are talking about. And it is increasing,”

Omar Beidas, section chief officer of Plant Health at the Balearic Government

What can be done?

- Many organisations are now calling for restrictions on the importation of the high risk hosts from the infected countries
- We have a position statement on plant imports from a woodland conservation perspective:
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2017/07/biosecurity/>
- Initiatives such as our UKSG scheme aim to both raise awareness of the problems and reduce imports
- We have the expertise and capacity to have a much more UK-centric production system than we currently do, it's up to us to build this capacity by promoting UK plants over imports

Thank you
for listening

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