

## **Stephen Colhoun Forestry Services Ltd**

Hi,

I Stephen Colhoun have been involved in forestry for 32 years, first as an employee and then as an employer. In 1997 to 2002 as a soul trader, setting up Stephen Colhoun Forestry services Ltd in 2002 employing up to 47 employees at peak.

Any impact in the interruption of felling licences would not only affect me and my family but also the families of my employees also suppliers of chemicals, fertilizers, fencing supplies, feul etc.

Forestry is an integral part of rural Ireland which even during the recession I was still employing people who lost their jobs in construction ie family members and more recently the pandemic.

Forestry also is playing a big part of our carbon foot print here in Ireland and globally in the form of renewables and also in the whole eco system.

When people talk about forestry as being bad for the environment in terms of conifers, they fail to see the positive impacts it has in terms of wildfire, every plantation for the 1st 30 to 40% of its life is a sanctuary to birds , insects, frogs, bee's and as the forest matures to foxes, badgers, deer's, birds, and the forest floor itself is alive with insects which in a time of intense farming this is the only sanctuary wildlife has, as chemicals and intense grazing regimes are part of everyday life on the farm.

If the argument is that conifers are not eco-friendly the above proves its simply not true and the fact also is that the vast majority of sites wouldn't sustain a hardwood plantation nor would it be viable either.

A hardwood plantation on blanket peat would simply perish and would never get off the ground. Conifers grow where nothing else will.

Yours Sincerely,

From a very concerned Forestry Contractor/Employer in Rural Ireland.