An introduction to vegetation cutting approaches across peatland habitats

Iain Diack, Natural England
Why cut?
To generate a useful product
To maintain a particular successional stage
To prevent dominance of competitive species - restoration
To prevent dominance of competitive species – maintenance/restoration
Cutting firebreaks
Are there any negative impacts of cutting?

• Major immediate effect on vegetation structure and complexity
  • fauna
  • scale-dependent

• Effects on substrate
  • Compaction
  • Rutting
  • Consequent hydrological effects

• Prevents/slows natural successional processes

• Carbon accumulation?
Conclusions

• Has given rise to highly valued habitats
• Can be an alternative to grazing or other vegetation management method
• Full impacts not understood
• Expensive
• Generates large amounts of material
• Less demand for traditional products
• Opportunities for new uses/products for cut material