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COMBINATIONS OF SYSTEMS

A combination of systems implies the application over the same area of two or more different forms of felling and regeneration in close connexion with each other. It does not include the application of different systems on separate self-contained areas under the same general scheme of management, if the different systems are worked independently of each other. For example, in a tract of hilly country the higher ridges might be worked under the selection system, for protective reasons, the bulk of the area under some even-aged high forest system, and the outer fringes under coppice with standards for the supply of local demands; this would not constitute a combination of systems. In a combination of systems the different forms of felling may take place either simultaneously, as when group and uniform fellings are carried out at the same time, or consecutively, as when regeneration is started by means of uniform fellings and completed subsequently by means of strip fellings passing over the same area.

Generally speaking, if there is no special difficulty in securing regeneration, and if the conditions of the locality permit of it, one definite well-recognized system is always preferable to a combination of systems. The latter tends to complicate working and control, and may lead to serious lack of continuity when changes of managers occur. Nevertheless difficulty in securing regeneration, or complications due to mixtures of species or to frequent changes of soil, aspect or species, may lead to special measures being taken to secure regeneration by every means possible, whether by groups, strips, uniform fellings, clear fellings or otherwise. The almost diagrammatic application of the uniform system over large areas in many of the oak and beech forests of western France is due to a great extent to favourable climatic conditions and the facility with which natural regeneration can be obtained. On the other hand, in the coniferous forests of central Europe, where conditions are less favourable, combinations of systems are frequently met with, such as group with uniform fellings often followed by strip fellings, together with clear fellings with artificial regeneration in the case of storm-broken patches.

In countries and types of forest in which silvicultural systems
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have not yet reached such a high state of development as they have in many parts of Europe, and in which problems of regeneration have not yet been fully solved, it may be impossible to lay down definite rules for the conduct of fellings and regenerative operations; in such cases combinations of systems afford the latitude which is necessary if there is to be a reasonable chance of success. The term 'concentrated regeneration fellings' is a convenient one to adopt in the case of a combination of fellings of various kinds carried out with the object of regenerating definite areas within a limited period of time.