

## ICL STATEMENT

### 0.- BACKGROUND

Records suggest peat has been harvested at Nutberry Moss since the 1850's; initially for the whisky industry and, since the 1950's, for growing media (GM) production for UK horticulture. Peat has been extracted from Lochwood Moss for some 30 years to supply the UK Horticulture Industry. Neither is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Nutberry Moss was purchased by ICL in 2011; carefully managed, the extracted peat supplies the adjacent Nutberry Moss Works, which employs 20 full time staff.

### 1.- REGULATIONS

At the end of the extended licence periods, **ICL will comply – as always – with any planning obligations restoring both mosses in line with the planning consent.** ICL is not in breach of any regulations in connection with peat harvesting.

### 2.- USES & ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

**Local Market** - ICL supplies GM to UK professional horticulture and forestry – professional growers of trees and ornamental plants and also fulfils an estimated 80% of the requirements of UK professional plant raisers (propagators of vegetable and salad plants predominantly for mechanical planting).

#### **Investment and proactive approach to search alternatives:**

- ICL has invested and is committed to supporting the UK Government's voluntary target to phase out peat use in professional GM by 2030.
- **ICL is at the forefront of exploring sustainable alternatives** to peat and as an industry partner has committed resources in the recently completed 5-year Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) project: Responsible Sourcing and Manufacturing Scheme, part-funded by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

<https://ahdb.org.uk/cp-138-transition-to-responsibly-sourced-growing-media-use-within-uk-horticulture>

- As an active member of the Growing Media Association, ICL supports the Growing Media Association Initiative's '**Responsible Sourcing Calculator**', helping professional growers choose more sustainable GM materials, it takes in to account areas such as biodiversity, renewability, energy, water use and pollution.

To produce quality plants, edible crops and trees requires a consistent performing substrate with the requisite water and nutrient holding capacity and air-filled porosity. While the AHDB project 138 tested many alternatives, only three were deemed suitable considering factors such as performance, consistency and sustainability.

- Production challenges for growers, reducing or eliminating peat, vary greatly depending on the stage and type of crop. In 2015 ICL launched its own branded professional grade peat-free GM which is gaining traction, particularly with growers of trees and hardy nursery stock.
- With the volume of suitable professional grade peat alternatives insufficient to meet current UK demand, ICL completed a significant capital investment in 2020 at its Scottish site, building a new manufacturing plant utilising a locally sourced peat alternative for incorporation into its professional GM mixes.
- ICL has also invested in significant Research and Development resources pioneering new, innovative wetting agents and controlled release nutrient technologies to optimise performance of peat-reduced/peat-free professional GM (which tends to have lower water holding capacity and higher nitrogen leaching characteristics).

While fully supporting and working with the latest research to phase out peat usage in professional GM by 2030, ICL in the meantime continues to support UK professional horticulture and forestry by, where possible, sourcing local peat rather than importing from mainland Europe.

27<sup>th</sup> April 2020