

Forestry Facts & Figures 2020

A summary of statistics
about woodland and
forestry in the UK

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- FE/FLS/NRW/FS = Forestry England/Forestry and Land Scotland/
Natural Resources Wales/Forest Service. Private sector = all other
woodland, including some other publicly-owned woodland.

▲ = Conifers ● = Broadleaves

- Figures in the tables are individually rounded, so the constituent
items may not sum to the total given.
- One green tonne is equivalent to approximately 0.98 m³ underbark
softwood or 0.88 m³ underbark hardwood, and to approximately 1.22 m³
overbark standing softwood or 1.11 m³ overbark standing hardwood.

Woodland area

3,206,000 hectares of UK woodland

FE/FLS/NRW/FS (000 ha)



England	151	64	215
Wales	98	19	117
Scotland	426	41	467
Northern Ireland	55	7	62
UK	730	131	861

Private sector (000 ha)

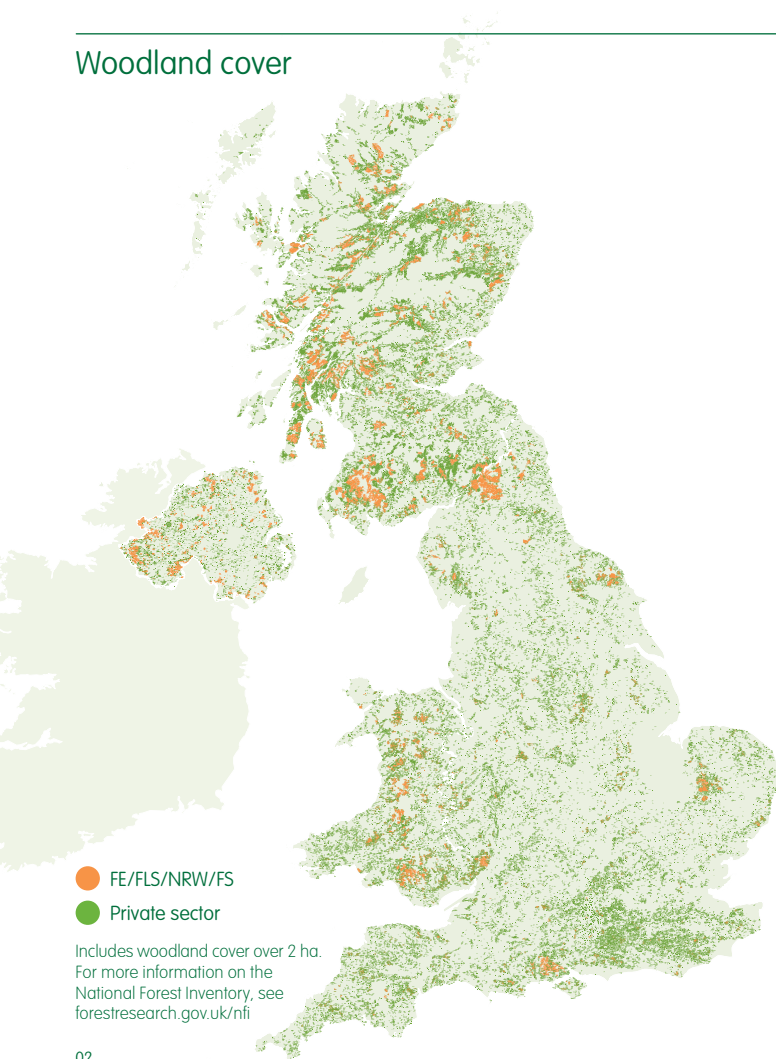
England	190	907	1 097
Wales	54	138	192
Scotland	653	347	1 000
Northern Ireland	8	48	56
UK	905	1 440	2 345

All woodland (000 ha)

England	340	971	1 311
Wales	152	158	309
Scotland	1 079	388	1 467
Northern Ireland	64	55	118
UK	1 635	1 571	3 206

Areas as of 31 March 2020.

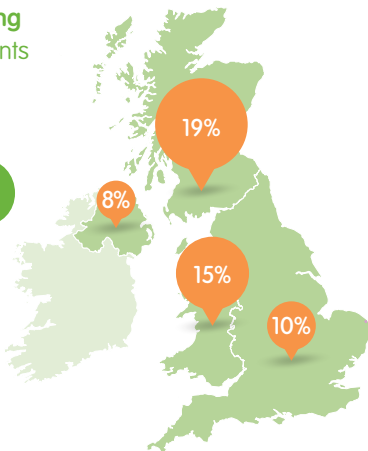
Woodland cover



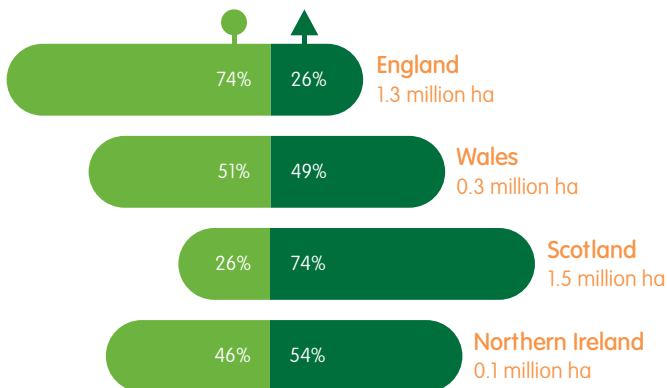
Woodland area is **increasing**
in the UK and now represents

13%

of total land area



Conifers account for around **one half** of the woodland area
in the UK overall, but the proportion varies in each country.



A close-up photograph of a wood surface, showing a series of concentric, wavy growth rings in a warm, reddish-brown hue. The lines are closely spaced and follow a curved path across the frame, creating a sense of depth and texture.

FSC/PEFC-certified woodland in the UK
has been independently audited against
the **UK Woodland Assurance Standard**

ukwas.org.uk

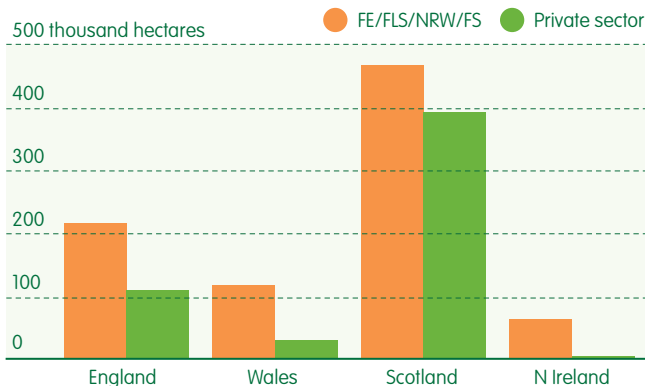
Certified woodland

43%

UK woodland area certified
to FSC/PEFC schemes*

100%
Public sector

23%
Private sector



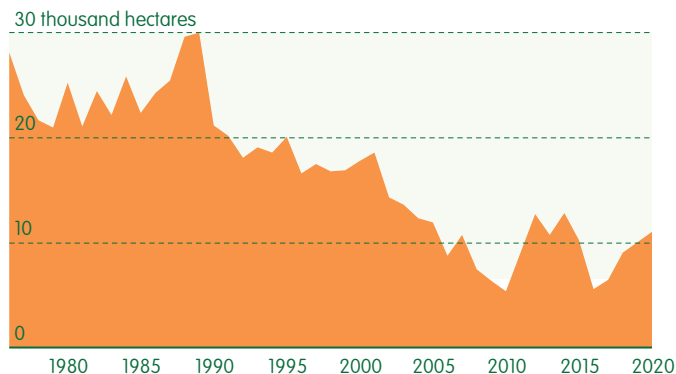
FSC = Forest Stewardship Council; PEFC = Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

New planting

13,700

hectares of **new woodland**
were created in the UK
in 2019–20

New planting (000 ha)



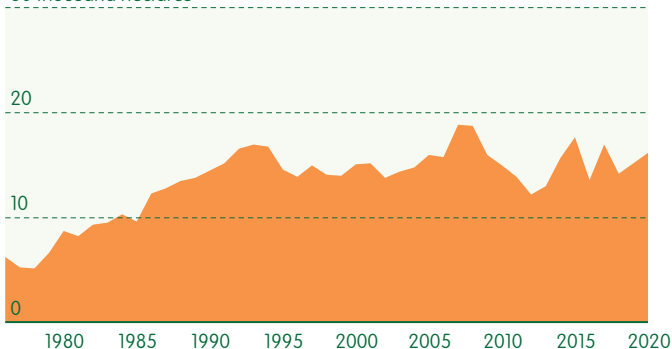
	England		Wales		Scotland		NIreland		UK		Total	
	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●
2016	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.1	1.9	2.7	0.0	0.1	1.9	3.7	5.6	
2017	0.1	1.0	0.2	0.2	3.2	1.5	0.1	0.1	3.6	3.0	6.5	
2018	0.2	1.3	0.1	0.1	4.7	2.5	0.1	0.1	5.1	3.9	9.0	
2019	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.3	7.3	3.9	0.1	0.1	8.1	5.4	13.5	
2020	0.2	2.1	0.0	0.0	7.4	3.6	0.1	0.1	7.8	5.9	13.7	

Restocking

14,800 hectares of publicly funded **restocking** were reported in the UK in 2019–20

Restocking (000 ha)

30 thousand hectares



	England		Wales		Scotland		N Ireland		UK		Total	
	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●
2016	2.2	1.1	1.2	0.6	6.0	1.8	0.7	0.1	10.1	3.6	13.7	
2017	2.0	1.0	1.2	0.5	9.1	2.0	1.1	0.2	13.4	3.7	17.1	
2018	1.6	0.5	1.0	0.7	8.1	1.5	0.9	0.1	11.5	2.8	14.3	
2019	1.3	0.4	1.0	0.7	9.1	2.1	0.7	0.1	12.1	3.2	15.4	
2020	2.1	0.6	0.9	0.6	8.2	1.7	0.7	0.0	11.9	2.9	14.8	

Around 82% of UK softwood production
is from **certified woodlands**

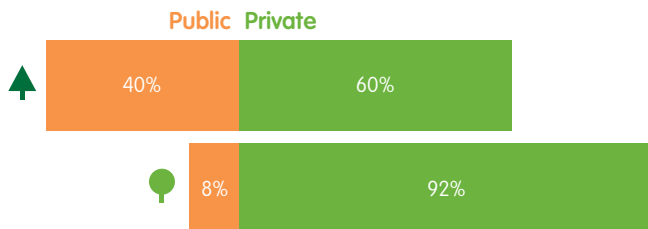


Photo courtesy of Forestry and Land Scotland.

Timber and wood products

UK wood production

60% of the softwood produced in 2019 came from **private sector** forests



Wood production (000 of green tonnes)

Softwood ↑	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
FE/FLS/NRW/FS	4 691	5 011	4 761	4 522	3 937
Private sector	5 968	5 734	6 075	6 827	5 864
Total	10 659	10 745	10 836	11 349	9 801

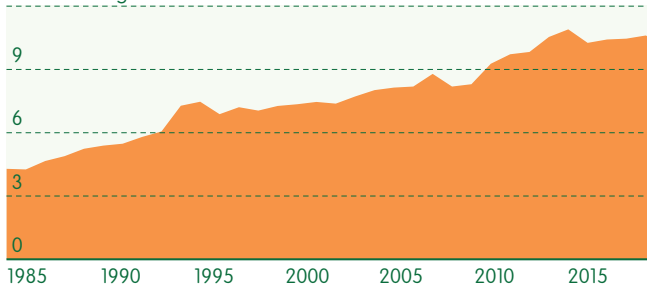
Hardwood ●

FE/FLS/NRW/FS	73	68	85	88	68
Private sector	492	528	652	746	801
Total	565	596	737	835	869

UK deliveries

Softwood

12 million of green tonnes

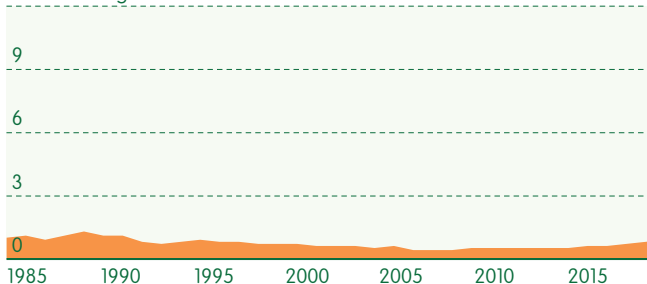


(000 of green tonnes)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sawmills	6 164	6 507	6 571	6 322	5 883
Pulpmills	435	423	442	486	464
Wood-based panels	1 334	1 248	1 059	1 210	1 316
Fencing	288	277	283	255	262
Woodfuel	1 600	1 550	1 600	1 900	1 900
Other	164	178	170	174	183
Roundwood exports	276	231	331	264	201
Total	10 261	10 415	10 456	10 611	10 210

Figures are based on processing industries' purchases of softwood grown in the UK and estimates for woodfuel. Woodfuel reported here is derived from stemwood and includes estimated roundwood use for biomass energy. Other includes shavings and poles.

Hardwood

12 million of green tonnes



(000 of green tonnes)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sawmills	75	74	65	67	76
Pulpmills	0	0	0	0	0
Wood-based panels	0	0	0	1	0
Woodfuel	400	400	600	700	700
Other	91	122	71	68	93
Total	565	596	737	835	869

Figures are based on processing industries' purchases of hardwood grown in the UK and estimates for woodfuel and other uses. Woodfuel reported here is derived from stemwood and includes estimated roundwood use for biomass energy. Other includes round fencing and roundwood exports.

UK production of wood products

Sawnwood

3.5 million m³



Paper & paperboard

3.9 million tonnes




Wood-based panels

3.2 million m³



	Sawnwood (000 m ³)	Wood-based panels (000 m ³)	Paper & paperboard (000 tonnes)
2015	3 493	3 080	3 970
2016	3 667	3 033	3 677
2017	3 761	3 176	3 858
2018	3 659	3 079	3 894
2019	3 456	3 246	3 851

Total production from UK mills, including products using imported material. Excludes other wood products (e.g. fuelwood and round fencing), roundwood and intermediate products (e.g. sawmill products, pulp and recovered paper).



There was a **6% reduction**
in sawnwood, a **5% increase**
in wood-based panels and a
1% decrease in paper and paperboard
between 2018 and 2019

Imports and exports



£8.3 billion

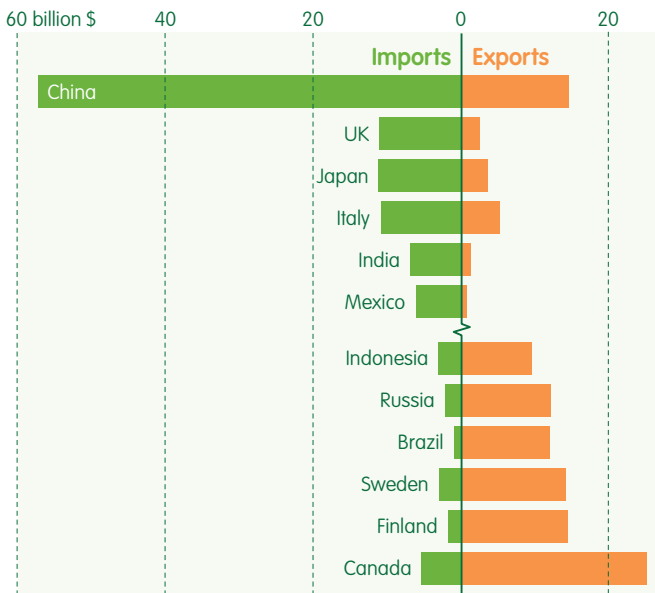
imported to UK

£1.7 billion

exported from UK



Largest net importers and exporters of forests products in 2018



2nd The UK is the second largest net **importer** of forest products in the world

Volumes (000 m³)

Imports	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sawnwood	6 323	6 794	7 663	7 213	7 040
Other wood	11 107	11 158	11 569	13 595	15 368
Wood-based panels	3 215	3 410	3 800	3 878	3 650
Pulp & paper (000 t)	7 560	7 092	6 798	6 663	6 168
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	1 335	1 034	1 044	925	867
Wood-based panels	286	314	374	295	384
Pulp & paper (000 t)	5 712	5 700	5 528	5 317	5 160

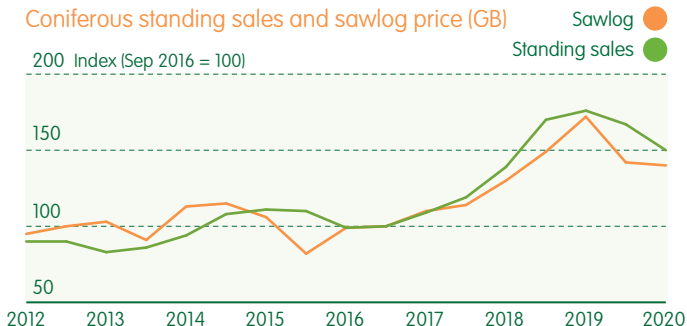
Values (£ million)

Imports	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sawnwood	1 311	1 423	1 636	1 743	1 598
Other wood	868	1 000	1 051	1 239	1 492
Wood-based panels	957	1 010	1 155	1 201	1 134
Pulp & paper	4 375	4 003	4 004	4 075	4 076
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	80	76	102	110	100
Wood-based panels	75	91	109	103	123
Pulp & paper	1 441	1 307	1 651	1 597	1 491

'Other wood' includes roundwood, wood charcoal, chips, particles, residues and wood pellets. 'Pulp & paper' includes paperboard and recovered waste paper. Wood-based panels include veneer sheets. Sawnwood includes sleepers from 2017.

Economics

Coniferous standing sales and sawlog price (GB)



Index in real terms. Source: Timber Price Indices: Data to March 2020.

Gross value added in forestry and primary wood processing (£ million)



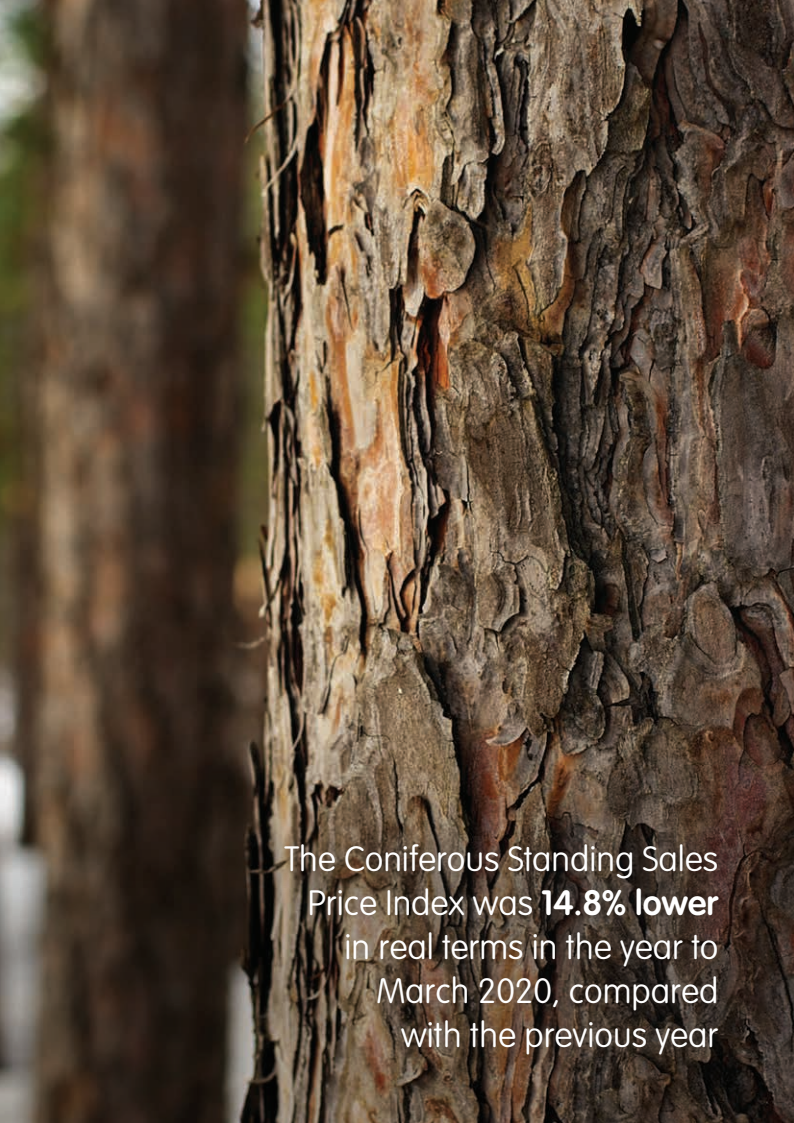
£0.67 billion
Forestry

£1.88 billion
Primary wood
processing



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Forestry	540	658	596	698	673
Sawmilling	356	474	413	420	579
Panels	436	323	316	363	453
Pulp & paper	596	738	610	707	845
Total	1 928	2 193	1 935	2 188	2 550

Excludes secondary wood processing and other wood-using industries.
Source: Annual Business Survey (Office for National Statistics).

A close-up photograph of a tree trunk, showing the intricate texture of the bark. The bark is deeply fissured and peeling in several places, revealing a lighter, orange-brown inner layer. The overall color palette is dominated by various shades of brown, from dark, almost black, to light tan and orange. The lighting is natural, highlighting the rough, uneven surface of the wood.

The Coniferous Standing Sales
Price Index was **14.8% lower**
in real terms in the year to
March 2020, compared
with the previous year



Employment in forestry
covers a range of activities
from **planting** to **harvesting**

Employment



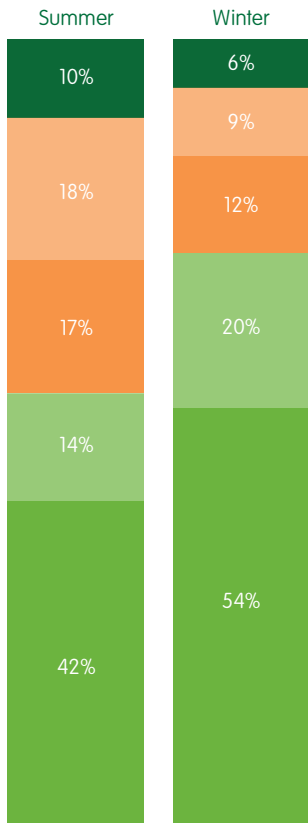
Employment in UK forestry and wood processing

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Forestry	16 000	17 000	17 000	16 000	16 000
Sawmilling	9 000	8 000	9 000	9 000	10 000
Panels	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	6 000

Excludes pulp and paper processing, secondary wood processing and other wood-using industries. Source: Annual Business Survey (Office for National Statistics).

Woodland visits

Frequency of visitors to UK woodland



63%

of the UK population
visited woodland
in 2019

61% of 16–34 year olds

71% of 35–54 year olds

56% of 55+ year olds

Several times per week
Several times per month
About once a month
Less often
Never

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry surveys. Average visit frequencies from last three surveys. Woodland visits are in the last few years.



**Health and exercise and
fresh air** were important reasons
for people visiting woodlands

International comparisons

International forest area

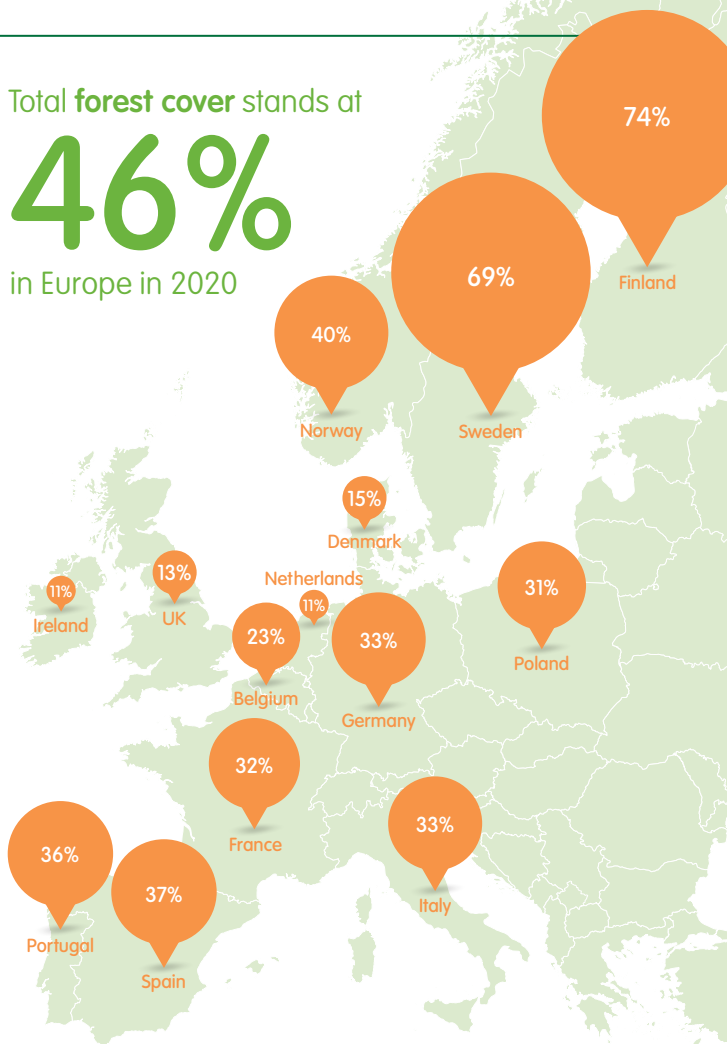
	Forest area (million ha)	Total land area (million ha)	Forest as % of land area
Europe	1017	2 213	46
UK	3	24	13
Finland	22	30	74
France	17	55	32
Germany	11	35	33
Italy	10	29	33
Spain	19	50	37
Sweden	28	41	69
Other EU	52	159	33
Total EU	159	400	40
Russian Federation	815	1 638	50
Africa	637	2 989	21
Asia	623	3 109	20
North & Central America	753	2 133	35
Oceania	185	849	22
South America	844	1 746	48
World	4 059	13 039	31

Source: FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020. EU excludes the UK. Cyprus is included in EU total but is part of FAO's Asia region. These figures are outside the scope of National Statistics.

Total forest cover stands at

46%

in Europe in 2020



International wood removals

4 billion m³

of wood was removed from forests in the world in 2018



(million m ³)	Industrial roundwood	Woodfuel	Total roundwood
Europe	650	180	830
EU	378	122	500
UK	9	2	11
Africa	79	700	779
Asia	442	719	1160
North & Central America	561	160	721
Oceania	77	10	87
South America	248	180	428
World	2057	1948	4005

Source: FAO. Data relates to calendar year 2018. EU excludes the UK. Cyprus is included in EU total but is part of FAO's Asia region. These figures are outside the scope of National Statistics.

International production of wood products

Sawnwood
492 million m³



Wood-based panel
404 million m³



Paper & paperboard
408 million tonnes



● Production
○ Apparent consumption

	Sawnwood (million m ³)		Wood-based panels (million m ³)		Paper & paperboard (million t)	
	●	○	●	○	●	○
Europe	169	115	90	86	106	93
EU	108	87	60	58	89	73
UK	4	11	3	7	4	9
Africa	12	17	3	5	3	8
Asia	141	197	241	238	192	200
North & Central America	135	128	48	58	88	87
Oceania	9	8	3	3	4	4
South America	27	19	18	13	16	17
World	492	486	404	404	408	408

Source: FAO. Data relates to calendar year 2018. EU excludes the UK. Cyprus is included in EU total but is part of FAO's Asia region. These figures are outside the scope of National Statistics.

A close-up photograph of several bright green oak leaves with distinct lobed edges. The leaves are in sharp focus in the foreground, while the background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a dense forest or garden setting. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture and veins of the leaves.

In 2019, 85% of the UK public agreed that
**action should be taken to protect trees
from damaging pests and diseases**

Environment

Woodland type

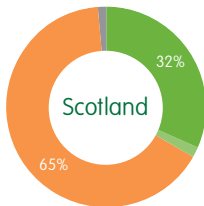
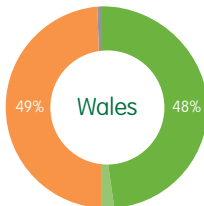
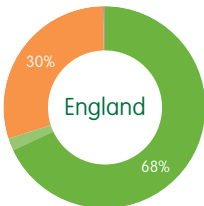
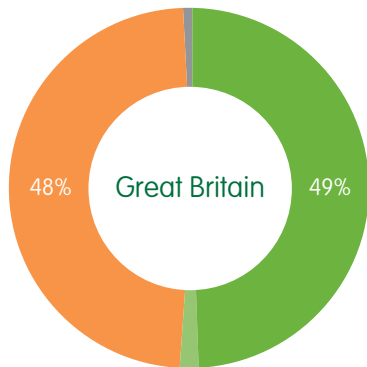
Native trees account for around **one half** of total woodland area in Great Britain, but this varies in each country.

Native

Near native & fragments

Non-native

Not determinable

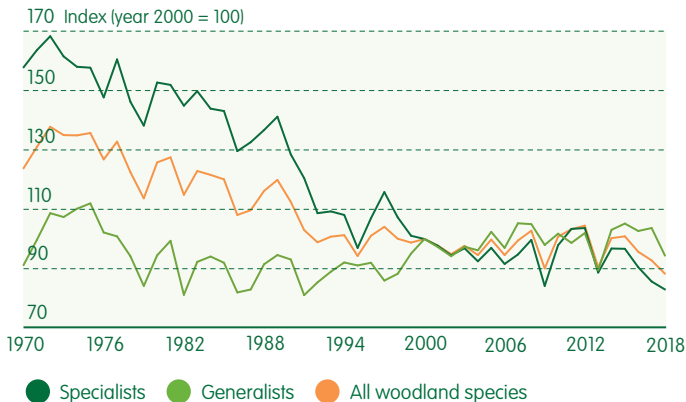


The total area of native woodland in Great Britain is estimated to be around
1.5 million hectares

Source: National Forest Inventory.

Woodland bird populations

Specialist bird populations have **almost halved** in the past 50 years



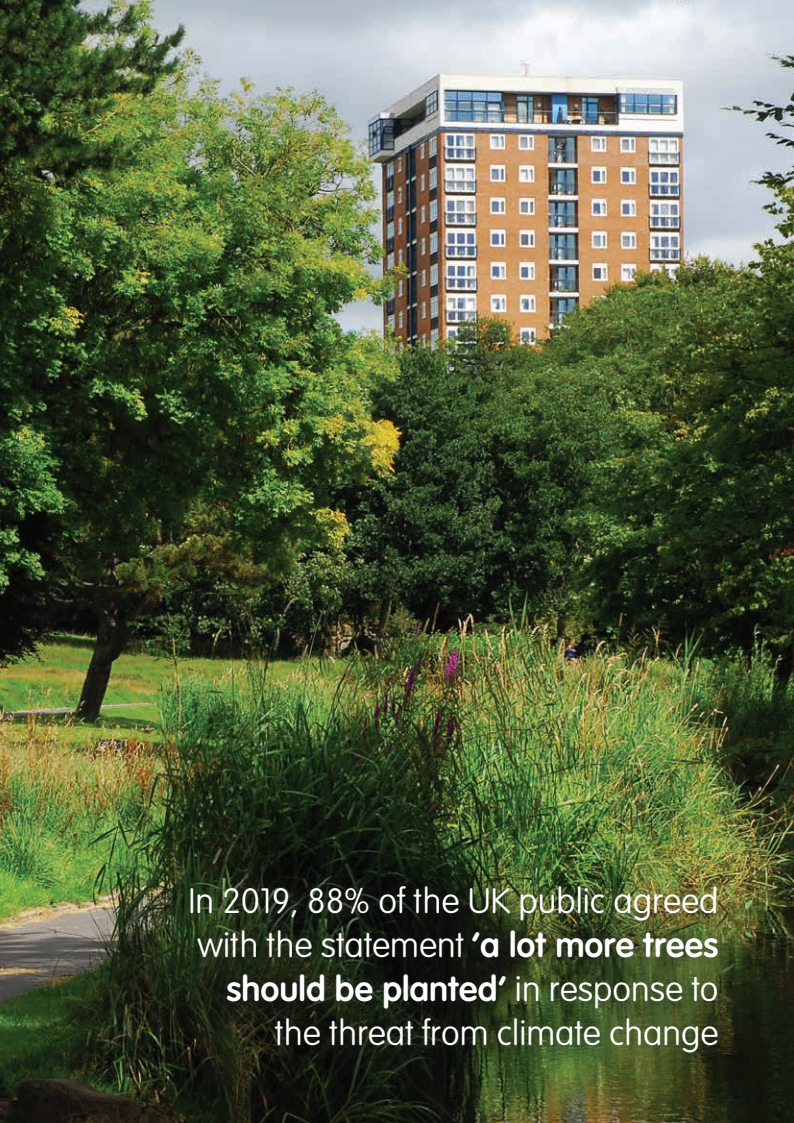
Carbon

The carbon stored in UK forest **soils** accounts for almost 70% of the carbon stock.

Soil
Living trees
Deadwood & litter



Carbon stock in UK forests is estimated to have increased, from around **3.2 billion tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalent in 1990 to **4.0 billion tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2020.



In 2019, 88% of the UK public agreed with the statement **'a lot more trees should be planted'** in response to the threat from climate change

Forestry Facts & Figures is an annual summary of forestry statistics compiled by Forest Research on behalf of the forestry authorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The full 2019 publication, including details of the sources used and downloadable spreadsheets of data, can be found online at **www.forestresearch.gov.uk/statistics**

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. For more information visit **www.statistics.gov.uk**

Statistician: Sheila Ward. Enquiries relating to this publication should be addressed to: **statistics@forestresearch.gov.uk**

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