

Forestry Facts & Figures 2023

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/Northern Ireland Forest Service. Private sector = all other woodland, including some other publicly owned woodland.

▲ = Conifers ● = Broadleaves

- 1 ha = 1 hectare (approximately 2.47 acres).
- 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

3,251,000

hectares of
UK woodland

FE/FLS/NRW/FS (000 ha)



England	143	70	214
Wales	89	26	115
Scotland	410	57	468
Northern Ireland	54	8	62
UK	697	161	858

Private sector (000 ha)

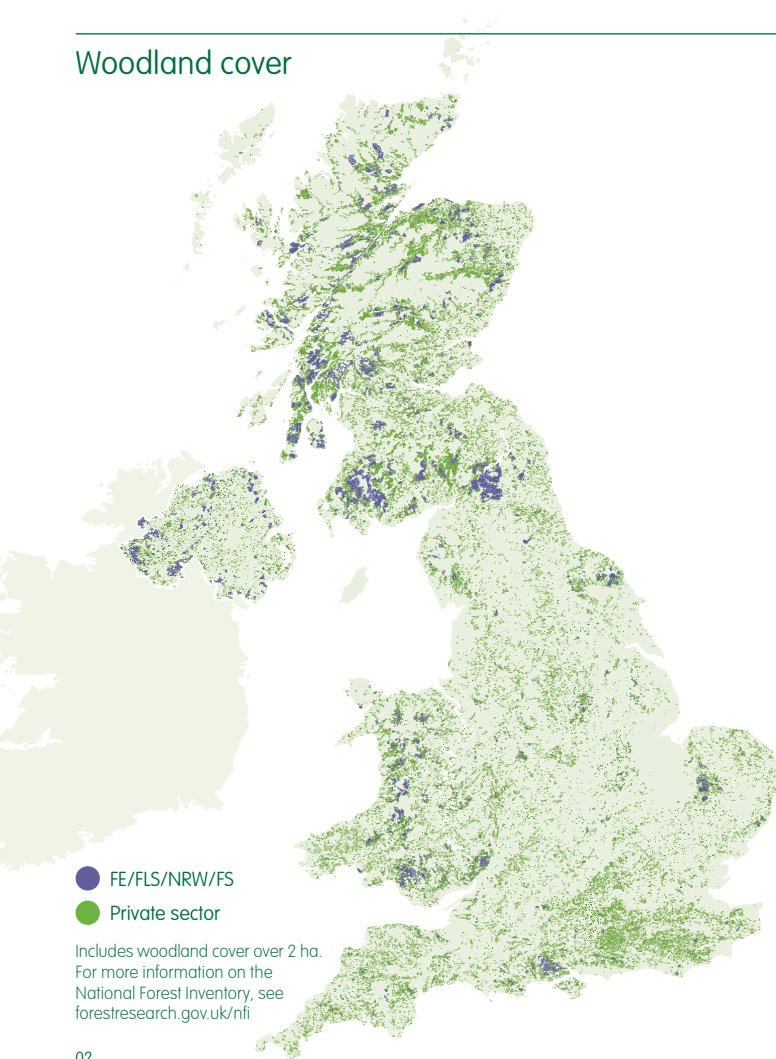
England	160	952	1 112
Wales	50	147	197
Scotland	650	377	1 027
Northern Ireland	9	47	56
UK	869	1 524	2 393

All woodland (000 ha)

England	303	1 023	1 326
Wales	139	173	312
Scotland	1 060	434	1 494
Northern Ireland	63	55	118
UK	1 566	1 685	3 251

Areas as at 31 March 2023.

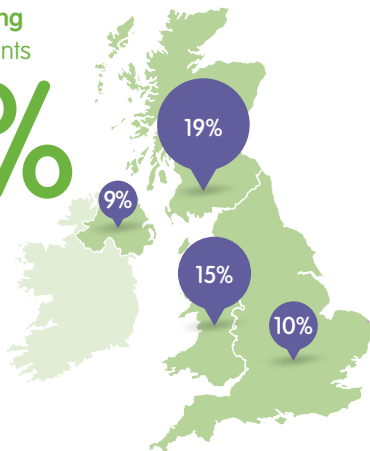
Woodland cover



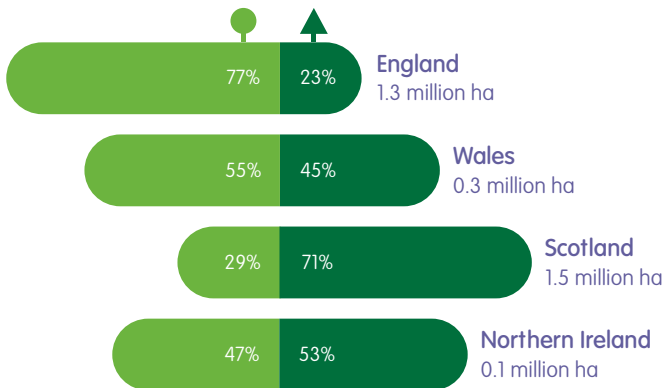
Woodland area is **increasing**
in the UK and now represents

13.4%

of total land area



Broadleaves account for just over **one half** of the woodland area in the UK, but the proportion varies in each country.





1.44 million hectares of woodland in the UK
are **FSC/GiB/PEFC** certified

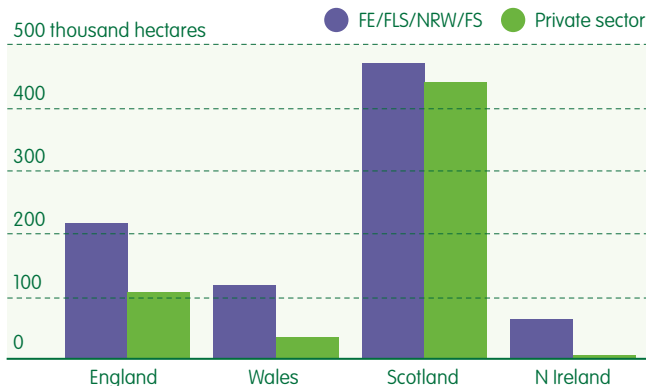
Certified woodland area

44%

UK woodland area certified
to FSC/GiB/PEFC schemes*

100%
Public sector

24%
Private sector

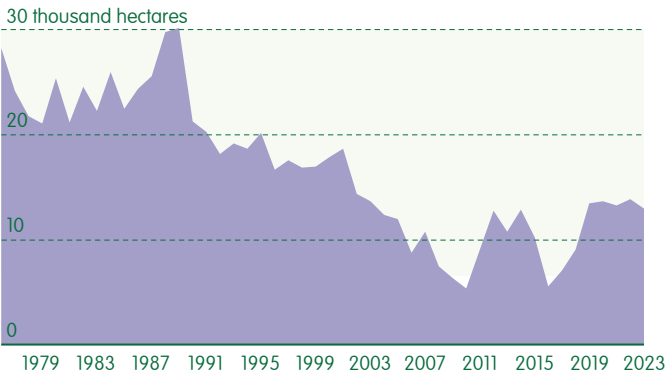


*FSC = Forest Stewardship Council; GiB = Grown in Britain;
PEFC = Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

New planting

12,960 hectares of **new woodland** were created in the UK in 2022/23

New planting

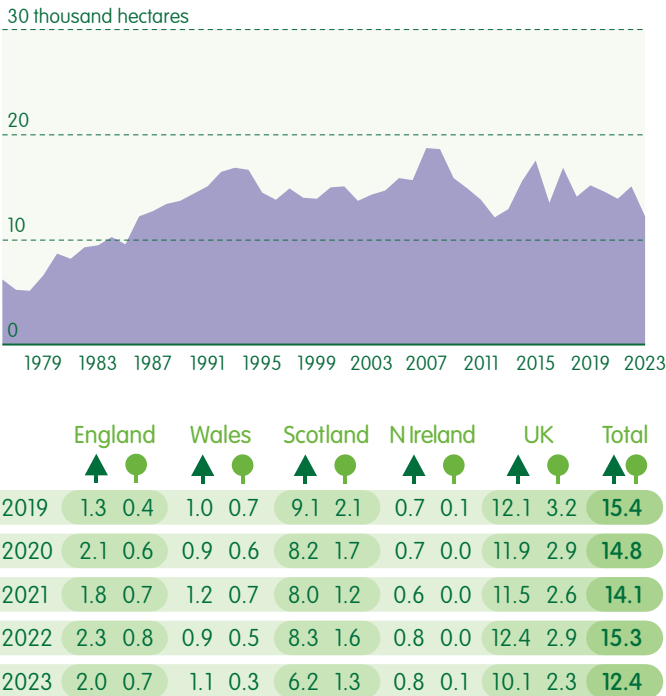


	England		Wales		Scotland		N Ireland		UK		Total	
	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●
2019	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.3	7.3	3.9	0.1	0.1	8.1	5.4	13.5	
2020	0.2	2.1	0.0	0.0	7.4	3.6	0.1	0.1	7.8	5.9	13.7	
2021	0.2	1.9	0.1	0.2	6.9	3.7	0.1	0.2	7.3	6.0	13.3	
2022	0.3	2.0	0.2	0.4	6.3	4.1	0.1	0.4	6.9	7.0	13.9	
2023	0.3	2.9	0.5	0.7	5.5	2.7	0.1	0.4	6.3	6.6	13.0	

Publicly funded restocking

12,390 hectares of publicly funded **restocking** were reported in the UK in 2022/23

Restocking



There was a **7% decrease** in new planting and a **19% decrease*** in restocking in the UK in 2022/23

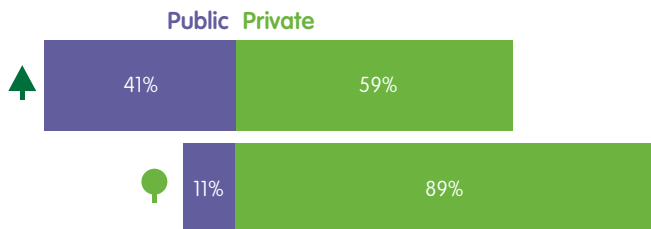
*Data for restocking of private sector woodland in England in 2022/23 is not currently available.



Timber and wood products

UK wood production

59% of the softwood produced in 2022 came from **private sector** forests



Wood production

Softwood ▲

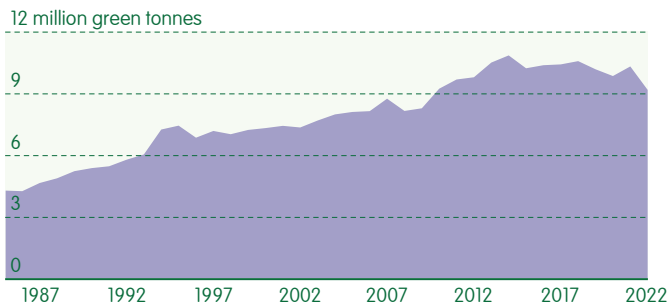
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
FE/FLS/NRW/FS	4 395	3 842	4 504	3 888	3 709
Private sector	6 827	5 884	5 437	6 407	5 443
Total	11 223	9 726	9 940	10 295	9 152

Hardwood ●

FE/FLS/NRW/FS	88	67	87	96	90
Private sector	746	801	742	727	745
Total	834	868	829	832	834

UK deliveries

Softwood

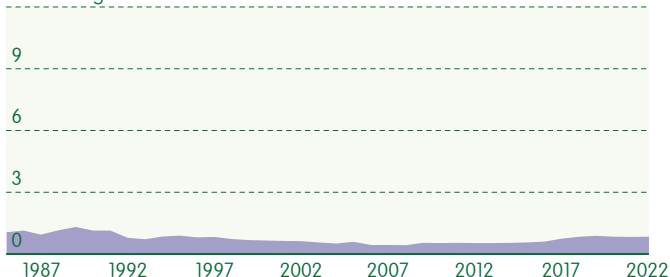


(000 green tonnes)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sawmills	6 337	5 898	5 837	6 268	5 452
Pulpmills	486	464	383	399	403
Wood-based panels	1 210	1 316	1 248	1 508	1 229
Fencing	255	262	258	247	232
Woodfuel	1 900	1 900	1 850	1 600	1 600
Other	174	183	188	176	176
Roundwood exports	264	201	140	168	132
Total	10 626	10 225	9 904	10 366	9 224

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 green tonnes



(000 green tonnes)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sawmills	66	75	62	60	59
Pulpmills	0	0	0	0	0
Wood-based panels	1	0	2	3	5
Woodfuel	700	700	700	700	700
Other	68	93	66	60	70
Total	834	868	829	823	834

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

3.1 million m³



Paper & paperboard

3.5 million tonnes

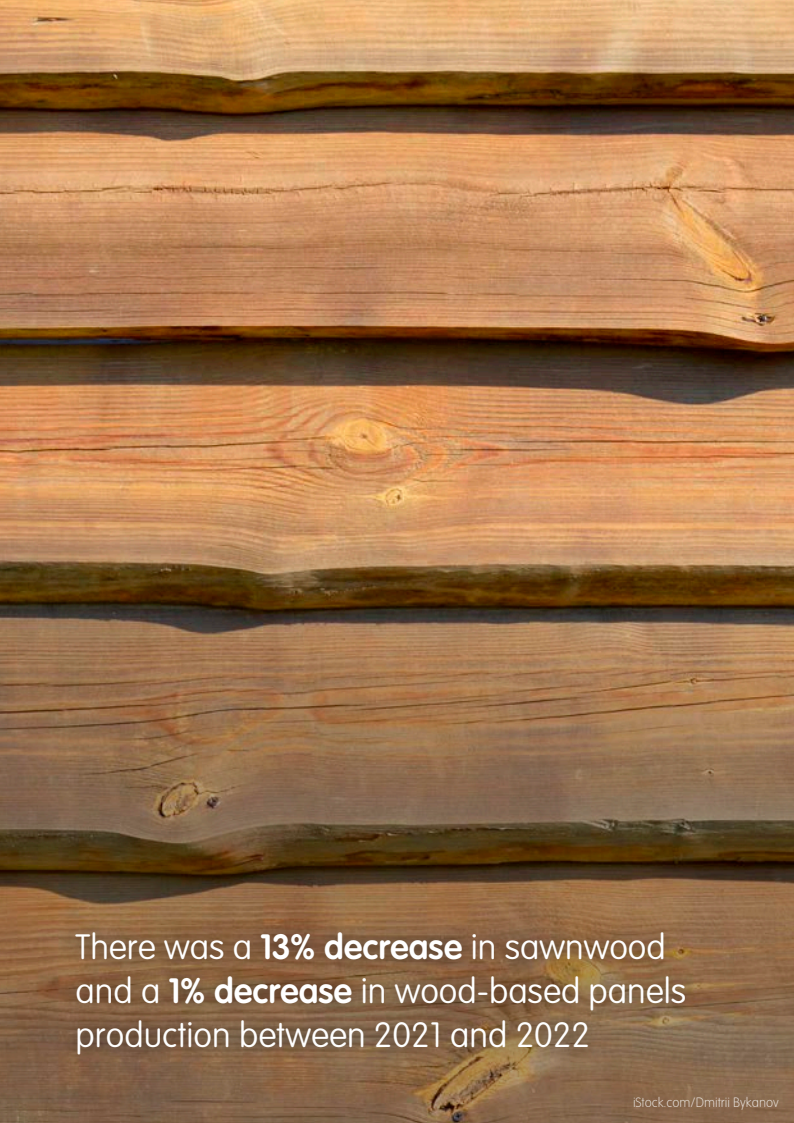


Wood-based panels

3.5 million m³

	Sawnwood (000 m ³)	Wood-based panels (000 m ³)	Paper & paperboard (000 tonnes)
2018	3666	3079	3894
2019	3463	3246	3851
2020	3348	2952	3631
2021	3611	3486	3642
2022	3145	3466	3462

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 **13% decrease** in sawnwood
and a **1% decrease** in wood-based panels
production between 2021 and 2022

Imports and exports



\$11.7 billion

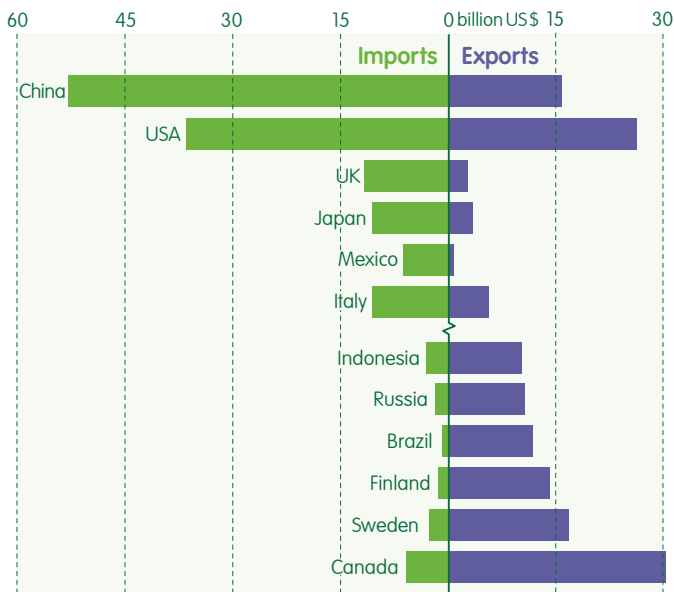
imported to UK

\$2.7 billion

exported from UK



Largest net importers and exporters of forest products in 2021



3rd

The UK is the third largest **net importer** of forest products in the world

Volume (000 m³)

Imports	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sawnwood	7 213	7 040	7 218	8 159	6 506
Other wood	13 594	15 252	15 571	15 111	12 394
Wood-based panels	3 878	3 650	3 267	3 794	3 235
Pulp & paper (000 t)	6 663	6 130	5 329	5 114	6 042
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	925	867	538	581	472
Wood-based panels	295	384	389	321	371
Pulp & paper (000 t)	5 317	5 160	4 617	5 352	5 144

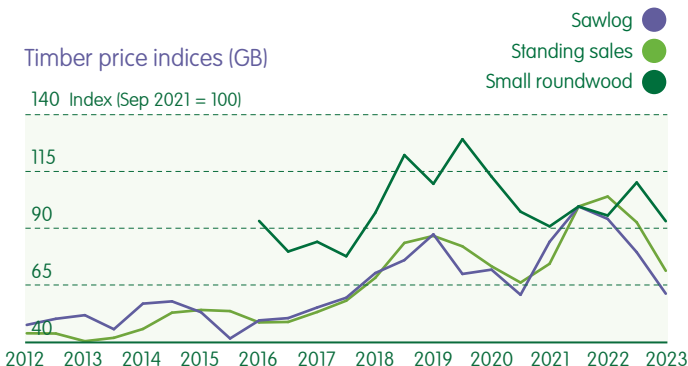
Value (£ million)

Imports	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sawnwood	1 743	1 598	1 587	2 668	2 346
Other wood	1 192	1 405	1 537	1 467	1 602
Wood-based panels	1 201	1 134	970	1 313	1 549
Pulp & paper	4 075	4 076	3 388	3 088	5 209
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	91	81	99	141	141
Wood-based panels	103	123	114	158	171
Pulp & paper	1 597	1 491	1 336	1 674	1 923

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

Economics

Timber price indices (GB)



Index in real terms. Source: Timber Price Indices: Data to March 2023.

Gross value added in forestry and primary wood processing (£ million) in 2021



£0.76 billion
Forestry

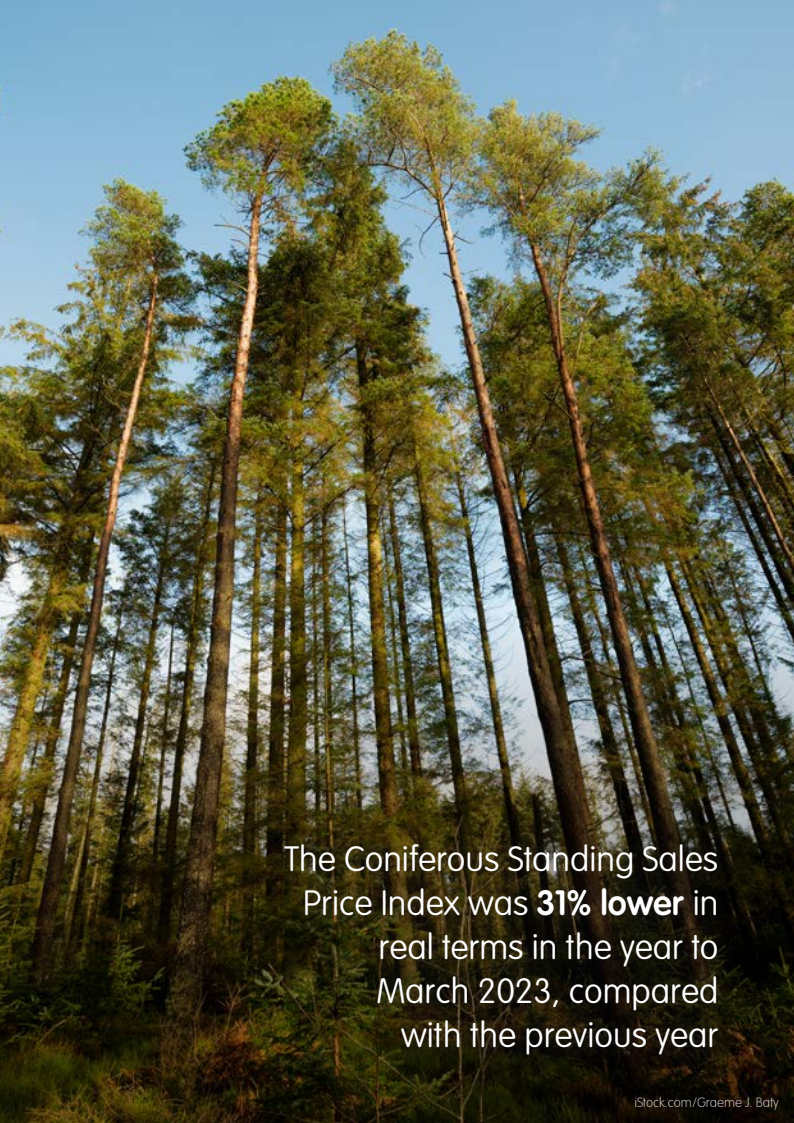
£2.09 billion
Primary wood processing



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Forestry	698	669	724	866	755
Primary wood processing	1 490	1 874	1 562	1 494	2 094
Sawmilling	420	580	496	456	788
Panels	363	453	379	396	534
Pulp & paper	707	841	687	642	772

Excludes secondary wood processing and other wood-using industries.

Source: Annual Business Survey (2022), Office for National Statistics. Note: *estimated.

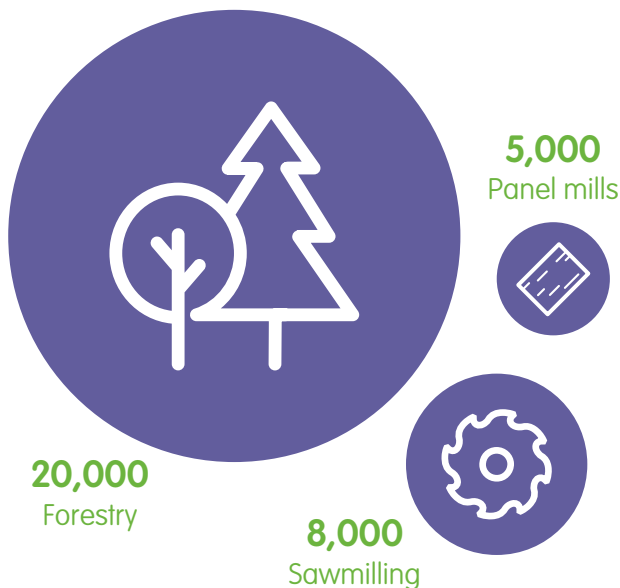


The Coniferous Standing Sales
Price Index was **31% lower** in
real terms in the year to
March 2023, compared
with the previous year

Around **20,000 full-time equivalent staff** were employed by the forestry sector in the UK in 2021



Employment



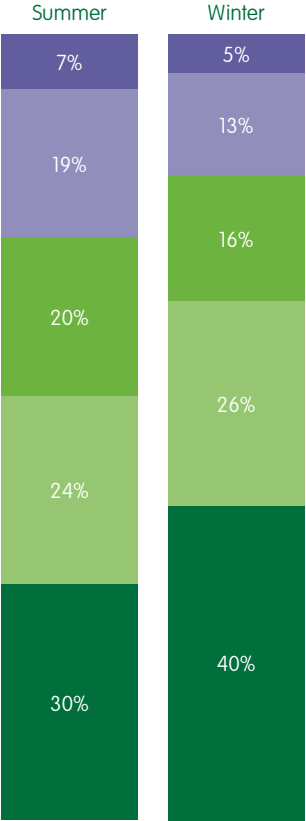
Employment in UK forestry and wood processing

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Forestry	[c]	16 000	18 000	19 000	20 000
Sawmilling	9 000	10 000	7 000	8 000	8 000
Panels	5 000	6 000	5 000	5 000	5 000

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, Nomis Official Census and Labour Market Statistics, Office for National Statistics. Note: [c] = confidential.

Woodland visits

Frequency of visitors to UK woodland



74%

of the UK population
visited woodlands
in the last few years

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

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry
Survey (2023). Results exclude those
that answered 'don't know'.

In 2023, 84% of the UK public agreed that a lot more trees should be planted in response to the threat of **climate change**

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (2023).



International comparisons

International forest area

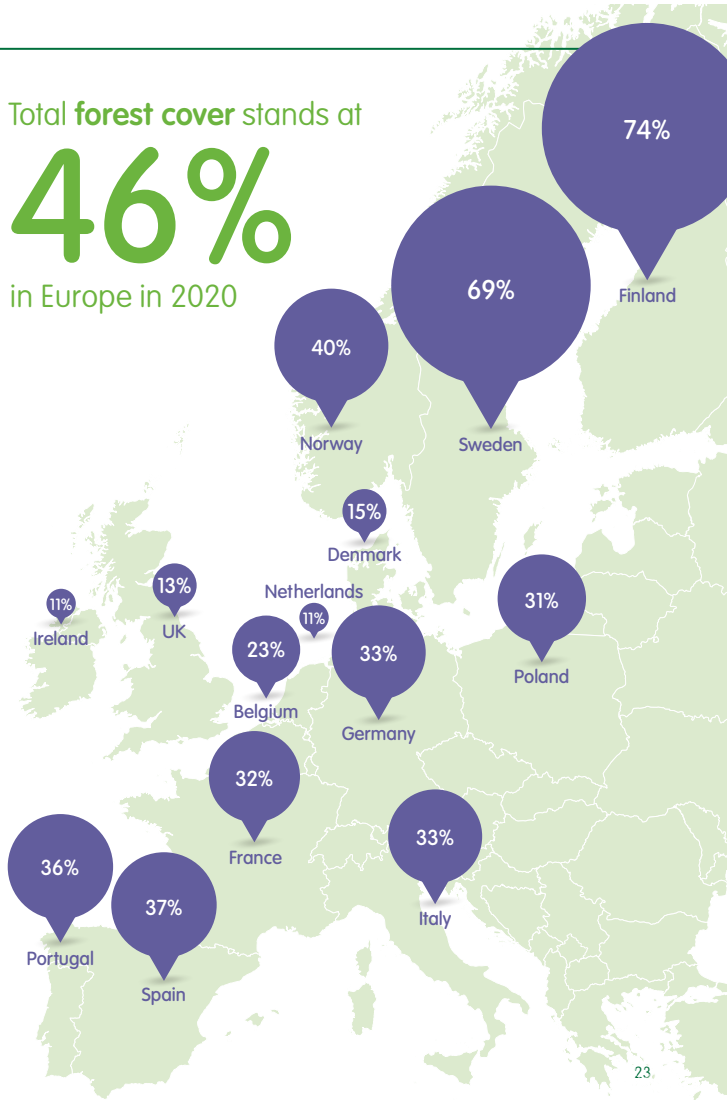
	Forest area (million ha)	Total land area (million ha)	Forest cover (%)
Europe	1 017	2 213	46
UK	3	24	13
EU	159	400	40
Denmark	1	4	15
Finland	22	30	74
France	17	55	32
Germany	11	35	33
Ireland	1	7	11
Italy	10	29	33
Spain	19	50	37
Sweden	28	41	69
Other EU	51	148	34
Russia	815	1 638	50
Africa	637	2 989	21
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

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 2021, of which:

**Industrial
roundwood**
2 billion m³



Woodfuel
2 billion m³

(million m ³)	Industrial roundwood	Woodfuel	Total roundwood
Europe	645	177	822
UK	8	2	10
EU	385	132	517
Africa	78	720	797
Asia	466	702	1 168
North & Central America	538	156	693
Oceania	71	10	81
South America	249	185	434
World	2 049	1 954	4 003

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (2023).

International production of wood products

Production of wood products from world forests in 2021 was:

Sawnwood
496 million m³



Wood-based panels
402 million m³



Paper & paperboard
417 million tonnes



	Sawnwood (million m ³)		Wood-based panels (million m ³)		Paper & paperboard (million t)	
	● Production	○ Apparent consumption	● Production	○ Apparent consumption	● Production	○ Apparent consumption
Europe	172	117	94	88	105	91
UK	4	11	3	7	4	7
EU	109	84	60	59	83	72
Africa	12	16	3	6	3	8
Asia	151	196	236	229	206	216
North & Central America	126	125	47	61	77	83
Oceania	9	8	3	3	4	4
South America	27	18	20	15	16	16
World	496	482	402	403	417	418

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (2023).

In 2023, 92% of the UK public agreed that
**forests and woodlands are important
places for wildlife**

Source: UK Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (2023).



Environment

Woodland type

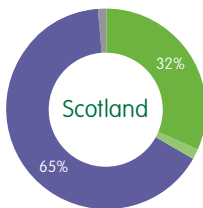
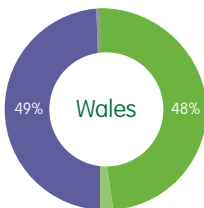
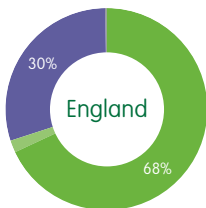
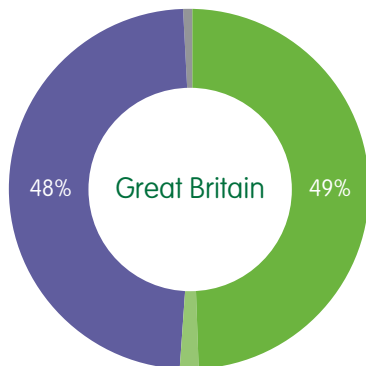
Native trees account for around **one half** of total woodland area in Great Britain, but this varies in each country.

Native

Near native & fragments

Non-native

Not determinable



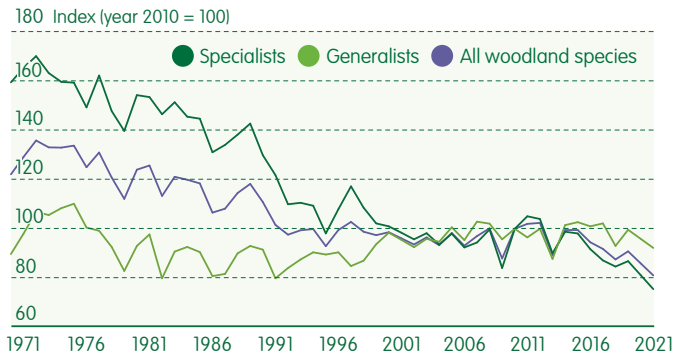
The total area of native woodland in Great Britain is estimated to be around

1.5 million hectares

Source: National Forest Inventory (2020).

Woodland bird populations

The woodland bird population has **fallen by 34%** since 1970



Source: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, British Trust for Ornithology (2023).


Carbon

The carbon stored in UK forest **soils** accounts for over two-thirds of forest 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.



Projected carbon sequestration from
registered Woodland Carbon Code projects*
increased by 23% between 2022 and 2023

woodlandcarboncode.org.uk

*For projects validated (including verified) and awaiting validation.

Forestry Facts and Figures is an annual summary of forestry statistics compiled by Forest Research on behalf of the forestry authorities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The full 2023 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**

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