

Forestry Facts & Figures 2024

A summary of statistics
about woodland and
forestry in the UK

Contents

Woodland area	01
Timber and wood products	09
Imports and exports	14
Economics	16
Employment	19
Woodland visits	20
International comparisons	22
Environment	27

- Public sector = Forestry England (FE), Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Northern Ireland Forest Service (FS).
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

3,279,000

 hectares of UK woodland

Public sector (000 ha)



England	143	70	214
Wales	89	26	115
Scotland	411	58	469
Northern Ireland	55	7	62
UK	699	161	860

Private sector (000 ha)

England	161	963	1124
Wales	50	147	197
Scotland	659	383	1042
Northern Ireland	9	47	56
UK	879	1540	2419

All woodland (000 ha)

England	305	1033	1338
Wales	139	173	312
Scotland	1070	441	1511
Northern Ireland	64	55	118
UK	1578	1701	3279

Areas as at 31 March 2024.

Woodland cover

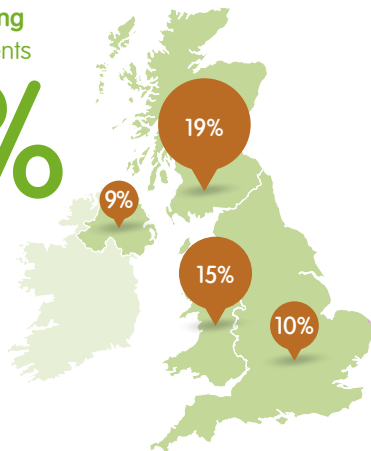
- 
- Public sector
 - Private sector

Includes woodland cover over 2 ha.
For more information on the
National Forest Inventory, see
forestresearch.gov.uk/nfi

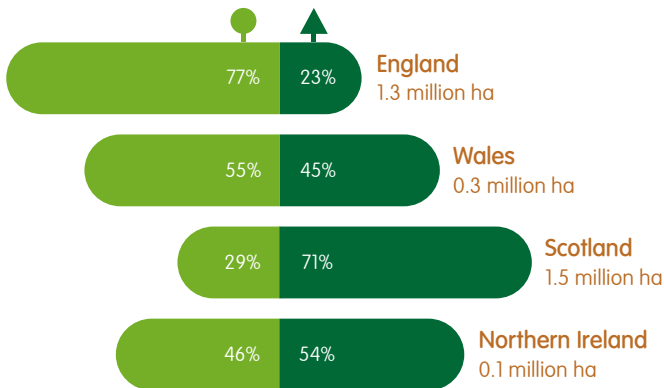
Woodland area is **increasing**
in the UK and now represents

13.5%

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/PEFC certified**

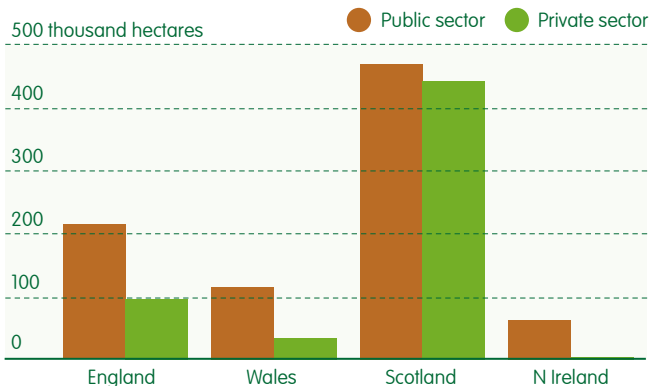
Certified woodland area

44%

UK woodland area certified
to FSC/PEFC schemes*

100%
Public sector

24%
Private sector



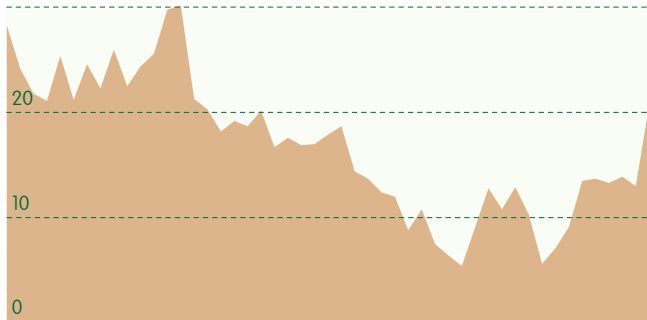
*FSC = Forest Stewardship Council; PEFC = Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

New planting

20,660 hectares of **new woodland** were created in the UK in 2023/24

New planting from 1976 to 2024

30 thousand hectares



1976 1980 1984 1988 1992 1996 2000 2004 2008 2012 2016 2020 2024

New planting by country (000 ha)

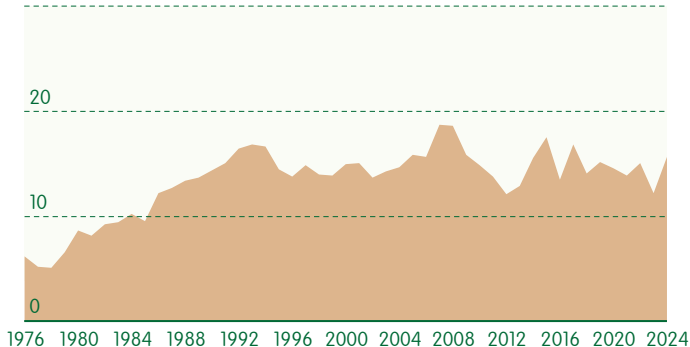
	England		Wales		Scotland		N Ireland		UK		Total	
	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●
2020	0.2	2.1	0.0	0.0	7.4	3.6	0.1	0.1	7.8	5.9	13.7	
2021	0.2	1.9	0.1	0.2	6.9	3.7	0.1	0.2	7.3	6.0	13.3	
2022	0.3	2.0	0.2	0.4	6.3	4.1	0.1	0.5	6.9	7.0	13.9	
2023	0.3	2.9	0.5	0.7	5.5	2.7	0.1	0.4	6.3	6.6	13.0	
2024	0.4	4.1	0.3	0.4	8.7	6.3	0.0	0.4	9.5	11.2	20.7	

Publicly funded restocking

15,870 hectares of publicly funded **restocking** were created in the UK in 2023/24

Restocking from 1976 to 2024

30 thousand hectares



Restocking by country (000 ha)

	England		Wales		Scotland		NIreland		UK		Total	
	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●	▲	●
2020	2.1	0.6	0.9	0.6	8.2	1.7	0.7	0.0	11.9	2.9	14.8	
2021	1.8	0.7	1.2	0.7	8.0	1.2	0.6	0.0	11.5	2.6	14.1	
2022	2.3	0.8	0.9	0.5	8.3	1.6	0.8	0.0	12.4	2.9	15.3	
2023	2.0	0.7	1.1	0.3	6.2	1.3	0.8	0.1	10.1	2.3	12.4	
2024	2.4	1.1	1.3	0.3	7.9	2.2	0.7	0.0	12.3	3.6	15.9	

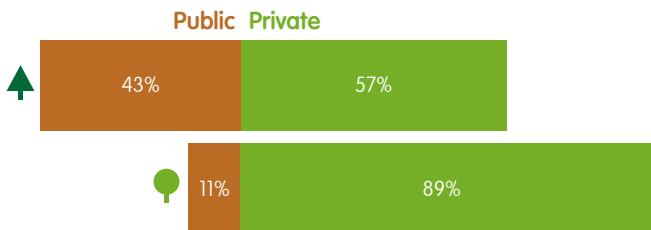
There was a **59% increase**
in new planting and a
28% increase in restocking
in the UK in 2023/24



Timber and wood products

UK wood production

57% of the softwood produced in 2023 came from **private sector** forests



Wood production

Softwood

Public sector	3948	4626	4019	3709	3972
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Private sector	5884	5437	6407	5484	5168
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Total	9832	10 062	10 426	9193	9140
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Hardwood

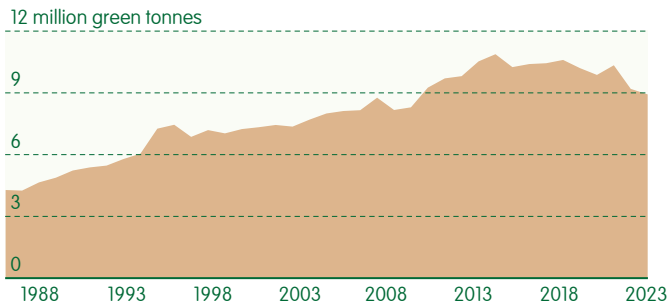
Public sector	68	87	96	90	86
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Private sector	800	742	727	745	730
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Total	868	829	823	834	816
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UK deliveries

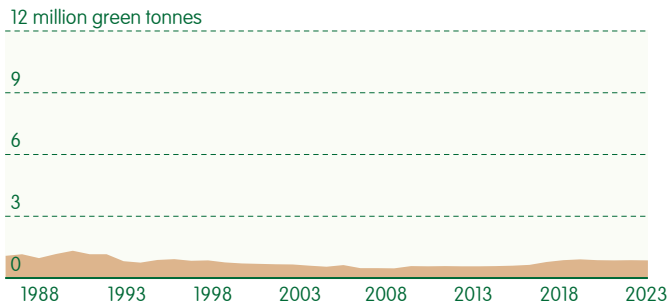
Softwood



(000 green tonnes)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Sawmills	5898	5837	6264	5452	4845
Pulpmills	464	383	399	403	413
Wood-based panels	1316	1248	1508	1229	1389
Fencing	262	258	247	232	224
Woodfuel	1900	1850	1600	1600	1700
Other	183	188	176	176	209
Roundwood exports	201	140	168	132	207
Total	10 225	9903	10 362	9224	8986

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 for biomass energy. 'Other' includes shavings and poles.

Hardwood



(000 green tonnes)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Sawmills	75	62	60	59	53
Pulpmills	0	0	0	0	0
Wood-based panels	0	2	3	5	0
Woodfuel	700	700	700	700	700
Other	93	66	60	70	63
Total	868	829	823	834	816

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

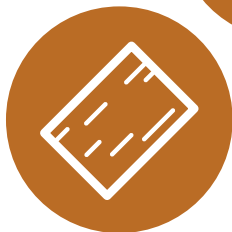
Sawnwood

2.9 million m³



Paper & paperboard

3.2 million tonnes



Wood-based panels

3.0 million m³

	Sawnwood (000 m ³)	Wood-based panels (000 m ³)	Paper & paperboard (000 tonnes)
2019	3462	3246	3851
2020	3348	2952	3631
2021	3611	3486	3642
2022	3145	3110	3456
2023	2908	2984	3225

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



There was an **8% decrease** in sawnwood and a **4% decrease** in wood-based panels production between 2022 and 2023

Imports and exports



\$14.1 billion

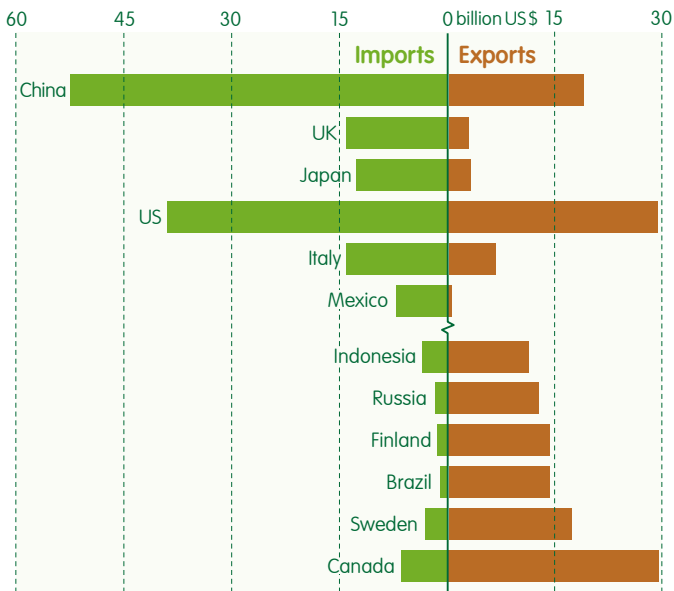
imported to UK

\$2.8 billion

exported from UK



Largest net importers and exporters of forest products in 2023



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

Volume (000 m³)

Imports	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Sawnwood	7040	7218	8159	6294	6210
Other wood	15 252	15 571	15 111	12 895	11 072
Wood-based panels	3650	3267	3794	3230	3134
Pulp & paper (000 t)	6130	5329	5114	5452	4784
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	819	532	579	468	737
Wood-based panels	384	389	321	370	311
Pulp & paper (000 t)	5160	4617	5352	4861	4666

Value (£ million)

Imports	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Sawnwood	1598	1587	2668	2247	1820
Other wood	1405	1537	1467	1605	1502
Wood-based panels	1134	970	1313	1583	1373
Pulp & paper	4076	3388	3088	5209	4322
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	80	99	140	131	140
Wood-based panels	123	114	158	172	138
Pulp & paper	1491	1336	1674	1923	1460

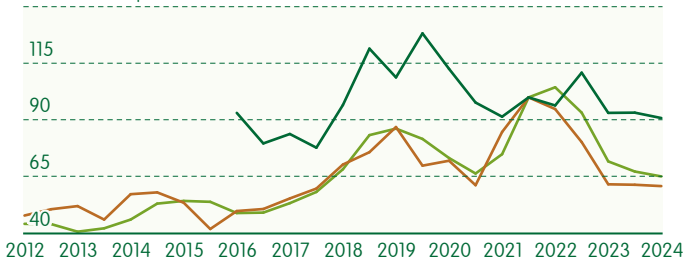
'Other wood' includes roundwood, wood charcoal, chips, particles, residues, and wood pellets. 'Pulp and paper' includes paperboards and recovered waste paper. 'Wood-based panels' includes veneer sheets. 'Sawnwood' includes sleepers.

Economics

Timber price indices (GB)

Sawlog ●
Standing sales ●
Small roundwood ●

140 Index (Sep 2021 = 100)



Index in real terms. Source: Timber Price Indices: Data to March 2024.

Gross value added in forestry and primary wood processing (£ million) in 2022



£0.68 billion
Forestry


£2.42 billion
Primary wood processing



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Forestry	669	724	866	738	681
Primary wood processing	1874	1562	1494	2047	2415
Sawmilling	580	496	456	782	701
Panels	453	379	396	526	639
Pulp & paper	841	687	642	739	1075

Excludes secondary wood processing and other wood-using industries.

Source: Annual Business Survey (2024), Office for National Statistics. Note: *estimated.

A photograph of a tall pine forest. The trees are slender and reach high into a clear blue sky. The ground is covered with dry, brownish vegetation. The text is overlaid on the bottom portion of the image.

The Coniferous Standing Sales Price Index was **9% lower** in real terms in the year to March 2024, compared with the previous year

Around **21,000 full-time equivalent staff** were employed by the forestry sector in the UK in 2022



Employment



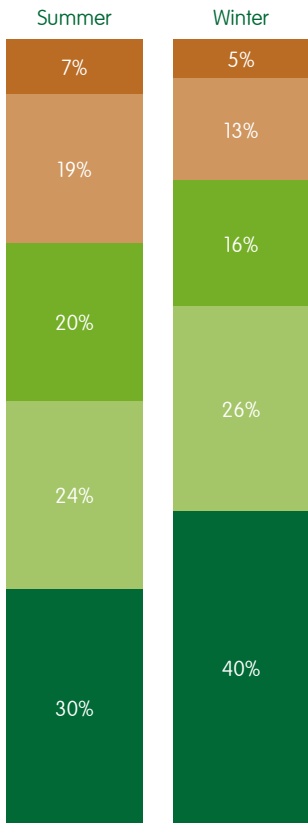
Employment in UK forestry and wood processing

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Forestry	15 800	18 000	19 100	20 000	21 000
Sawmilling	10 000	7 000	8 000	8 000	[c]
Panels	6 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	[c]

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 (surveyed in 2023).

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

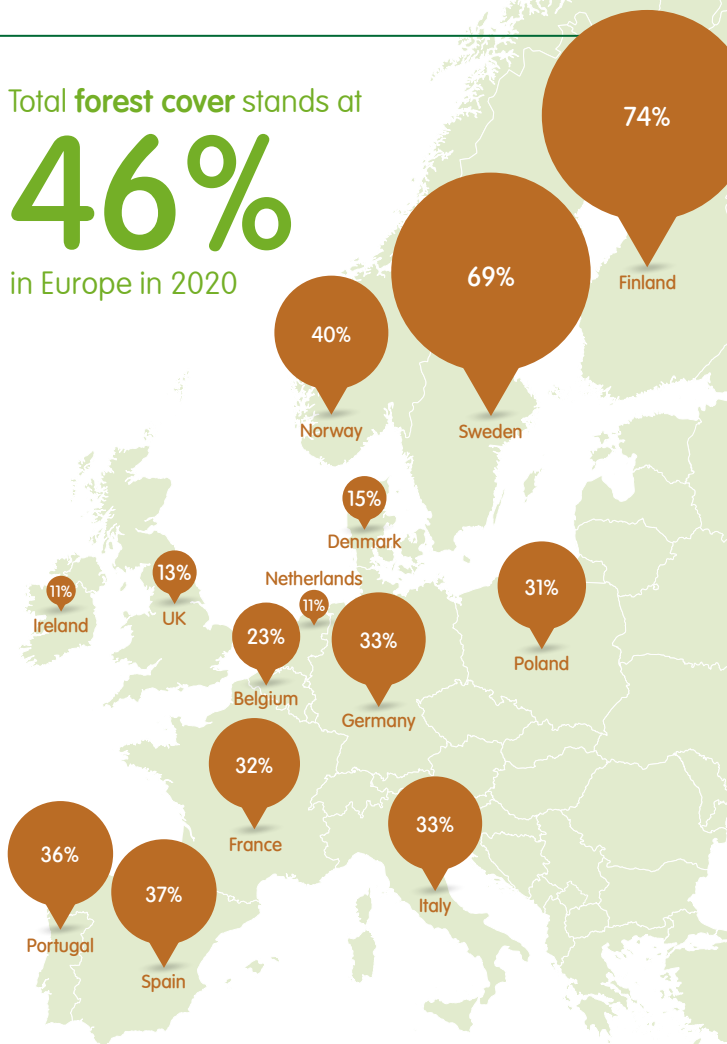
	Forest area (million ha)	Total land area (million ha)	Forest cover (%)
Europe	1017	2213	46
UK	3	24	13
EU	159	400	40
Denmark	1	4	15
Finland	22	30	74
France	17	55	32
Germany	11	35	33
Ireland	1	7	11
Italy	10	29	33
Spain	19	50	37
Sweden	28	41	69
Other EU	51	148	34
Russia	815	1638	50
Africa	637	2989	21
Asia	623	3109	20
North & Central America	753	2133	35
Oceania	185	849	22
South America	844	1746	48
World	4059	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 Official 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 2022, of which:

**Industrial
roundwood**
2 billion m³



Woodfuel
2 billion m³

(million m ³)	Industrial roundwood	Woodfuel	Total roundwood
Europe	614	180	794
UK	8	2	10
EU	379	129	508
Africa	79	728	807
Asia	459	695	1153
North & Central America	538	161	699
Oceania	71	10	81
South America	254	189	443
World	2016	1967	3983

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (2024).

International production of wood products

Production of wood products from world forests in 2022 was:

Sawnwood
481 million m³



Wood-based panels
375 million m³



Paper & paperboard
414 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	165	119	89	84	100	90
UK	3	9	3	6	3	7
EU	111	87	60	58	83	71
Africa	12	16	3	6	3	8
Asia	145	189	215	208	209	213
North & Central America	123	124	46	57	81	81
Oceania	9	9	3	3	4	4
South America	26	18	19	14	17	17
World	481	475	375	374	414	414

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (2024).

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

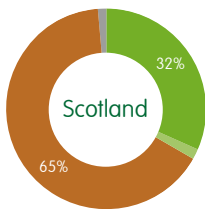
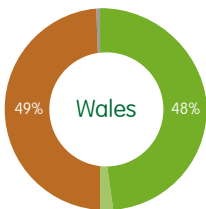
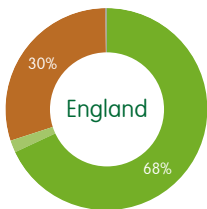
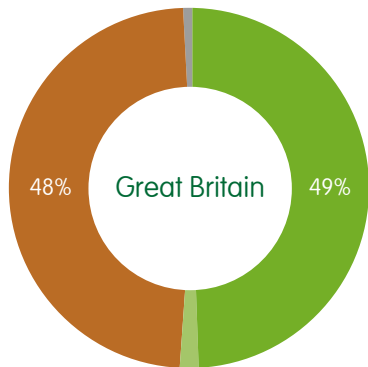
Native trees account for around **one-half** of total woodland area in Great Britain, but this varies in each country.

Native

Near native & fragments

Non-native

Not determinable

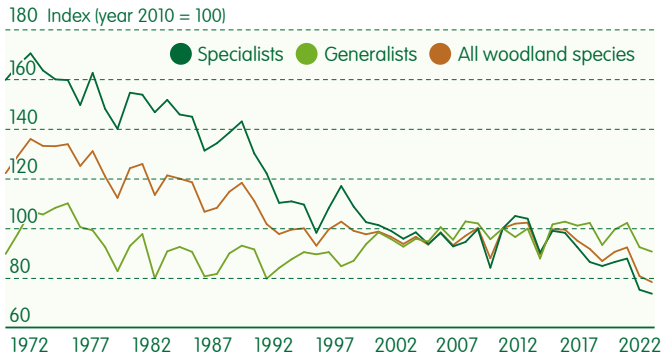


The total area of native woodland in Great Britain is estimated to be around
1.5 million hectares

Source: National Forest Inventory (2020).

Woodland bird populations

The woodland bird population has **fallen by 36%** 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 **4.1 billion tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2025.



Projected carbon sequestration from
registered Woodland Carbon Code projects*
increased by 18% between 2023 and 2024

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 2024 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 Accredited Official 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

Responsible statistician: Kirsten Piller.

Enquiries relating to this publication should be addressed to: statistics@forestresearch.gov.uk

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