

# Forestry Facts & Figures 2022

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

- 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 m<sup>3</sup> underbark softwood or 0.88 m<sup>3</sup> underbark hardwood, and to approximately 1.22 m<sup>3</sup> overbark standing softwood or 1.11 m<sup>3</sup> overbark standing hardwood.

# Woodland area

**3,237,000** hectares of UK woodland

FE/FLS/NRW/FS (000 ha)



England	151	62	214
Wales	96	19	115
Scotland	426	42	467
Northern Ireland	55	7	62
UK	728	130	858

Private sector (000 ha)

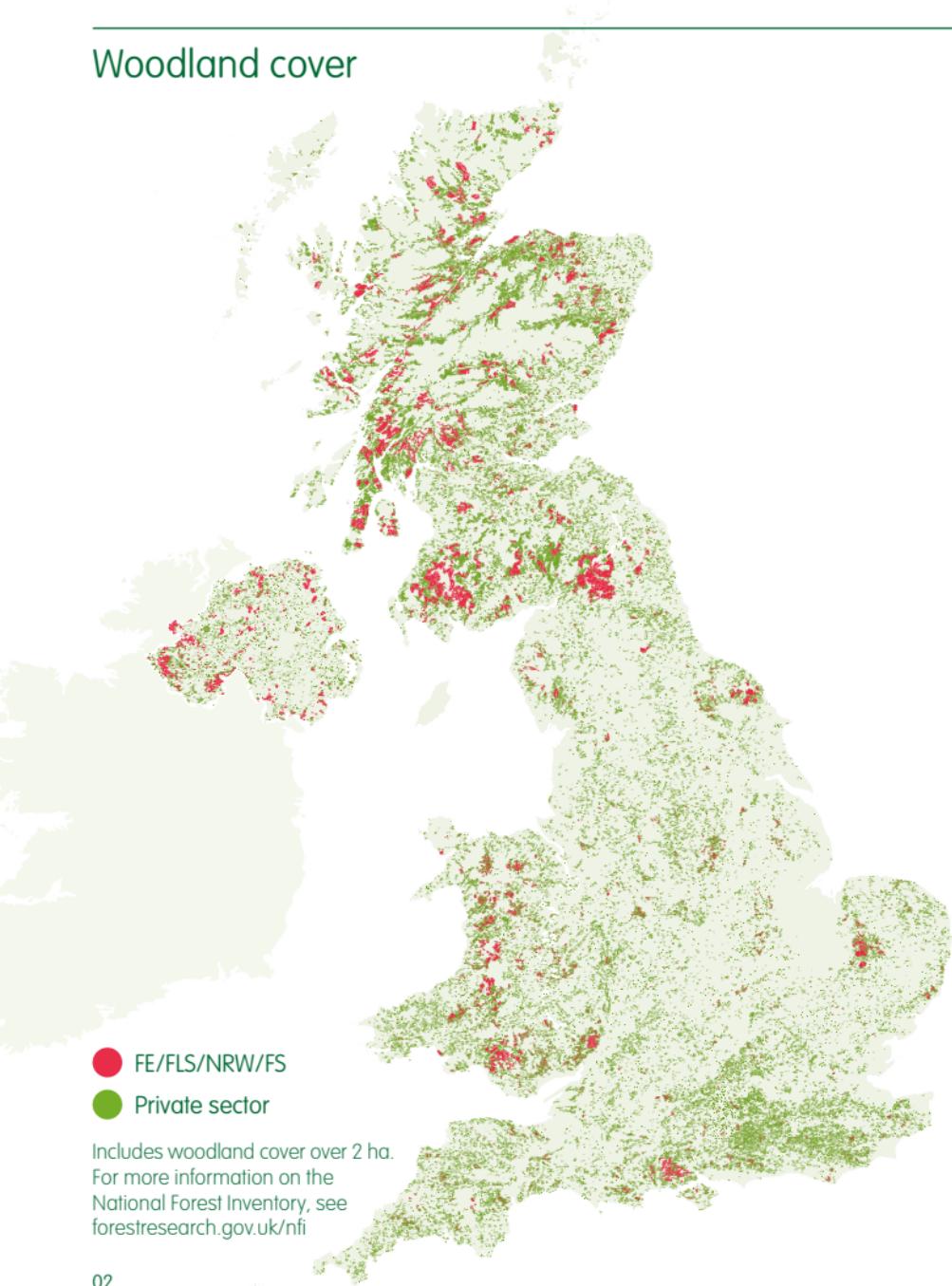
England	192	918	1109
Wales	56	140	196
Scotland	666	353	1 019
Northern Ireland	9	47	55
UK	922	1 457	2 379

All woodland (000 ha)

England	343	980	1 323
Wales	152	159	310
Scotland	1 092	395	1 486
Northern Ireland	64	54	118
UK	1 650	1 587	3 237

Areas as at 31 March 2022.

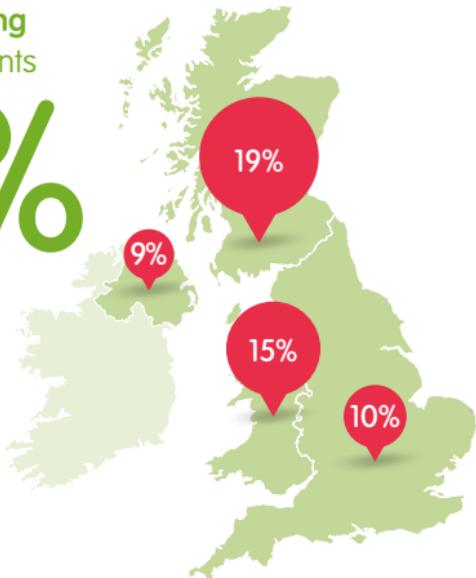
## Woodland cover



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

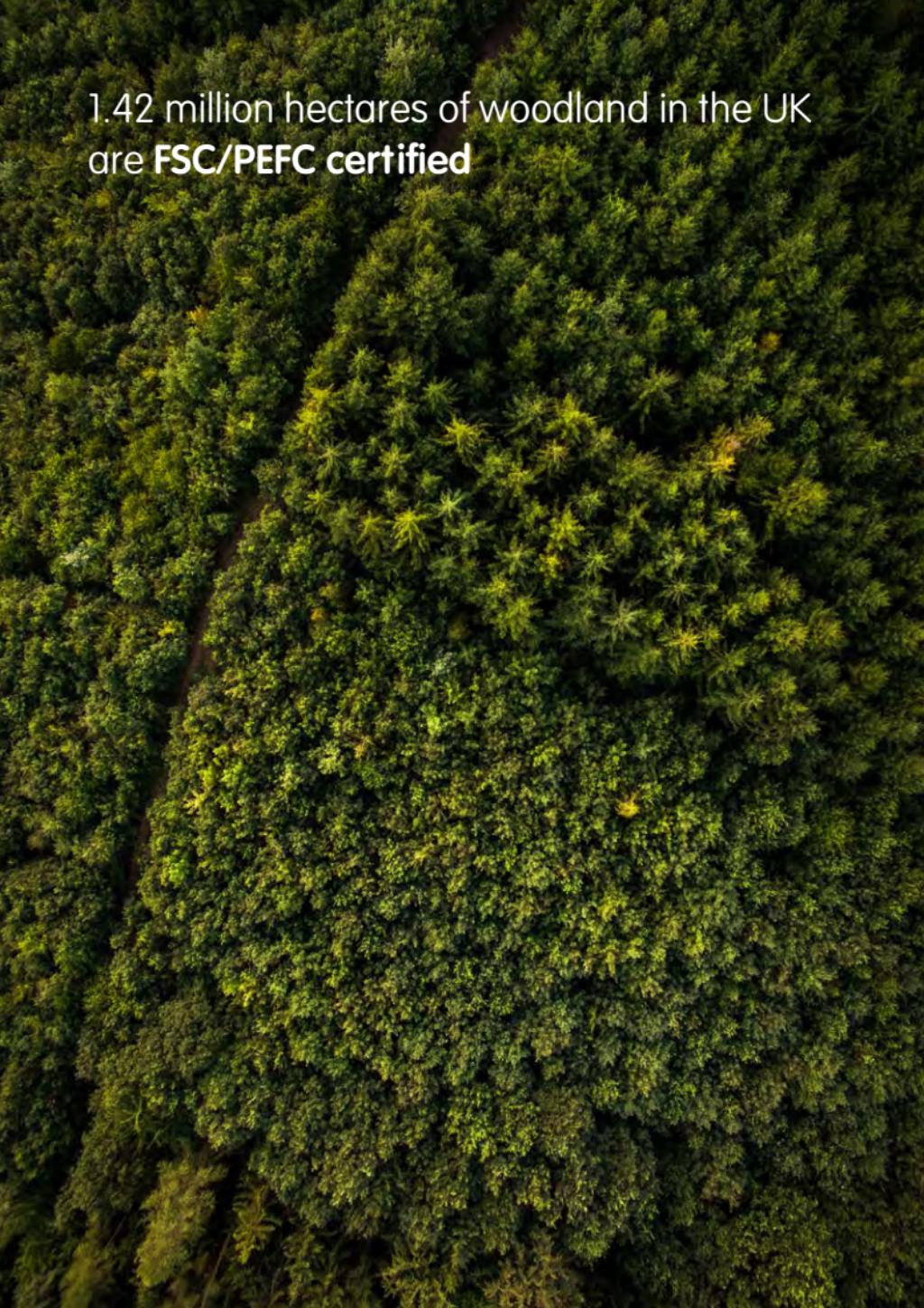
# 13.3%

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.



An aerial photograph showing a dense, sprawling forest. The canopy is a rich, dark green, with some lighter green and yellowish patches where sunlight filters through. A faint, winding path or road cuts through the lower-left portion of the forest. The overall texture is organic and layered.

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

## Certified woodland

# 44%

UK woodland area certified

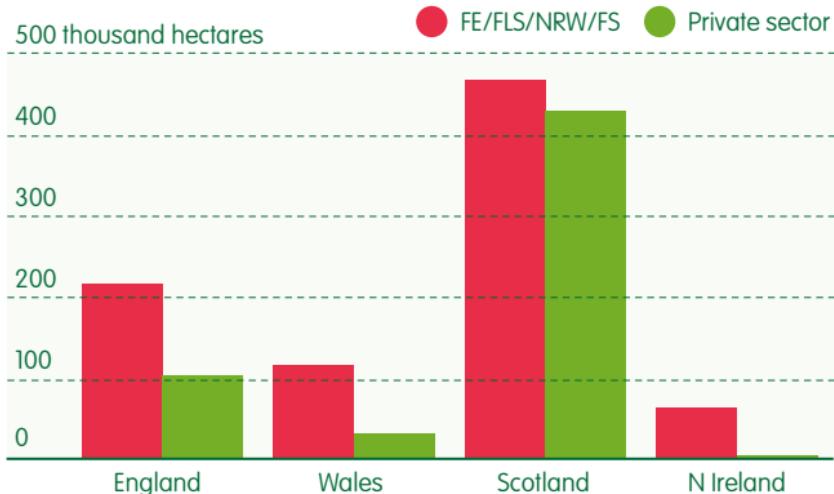
to FSC/PEFC schemes\*

100%

Public sector

24%

Private sector



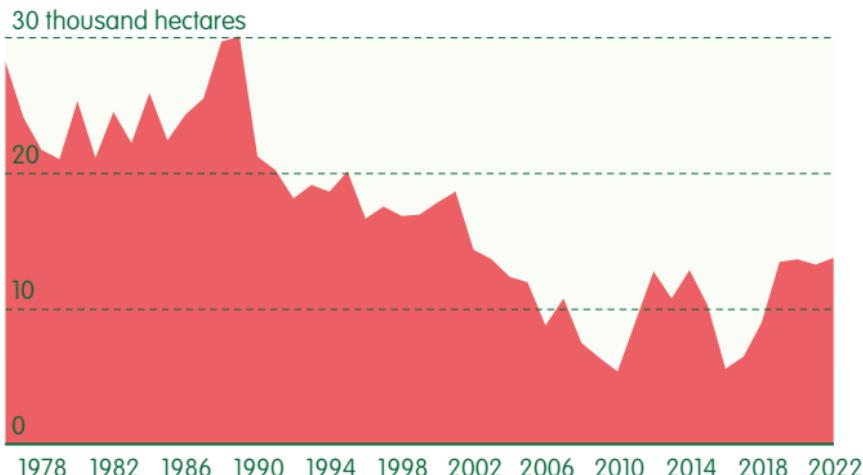
FSC = Forest Stewardship Council; PEFC = Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

## New planting

# 13,800

hectares of new woodland  
were created in the UK  
in 2021/22

New planting (000 ha)



	England	Wales	Scotland	N Ireland	UK	Total	
2018	0.2	1.3	4.7	2.5	0.1	3.9	9.0
2019	0.4	1.0	7.3	3.9	0.1	5.4	13.5
2020	0.2	2.1	7.4	3.6	0.1	5.9	13.7
2021	0.2	1.9	6.9	3.7	0.1	6.0	13.3
2022	0.3	2.0	6.3	4.1	0.1	7.0	13.8

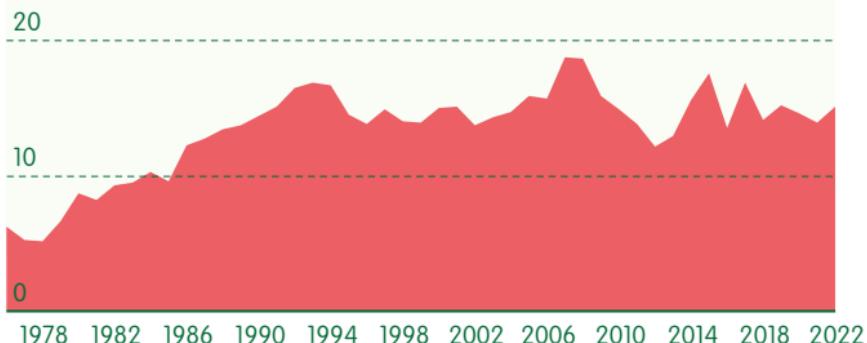
## Restocking

# 15,300

hectares of publicly funded  
**restocking** were reported  
in the UK in 2021/22

Restocking (000 ha)

30 thousand hectares



	England	Wales	Scotland	N Ireland	UK	Total	
2018	1.6	0.5	8.1	1.5	0.9	2.8	14.3
2019	1.3	0.4	9.1	2.1	0.7	0.1	12.1
2020	2.1	0.6	8.2	1.7	0.7	0.0	11.9
2021	1.8	0.7	8.0	1.2	0.6	0.0	11.5
2022	2.3	0.8	8.3	1.6	0.8	0.0	12.4

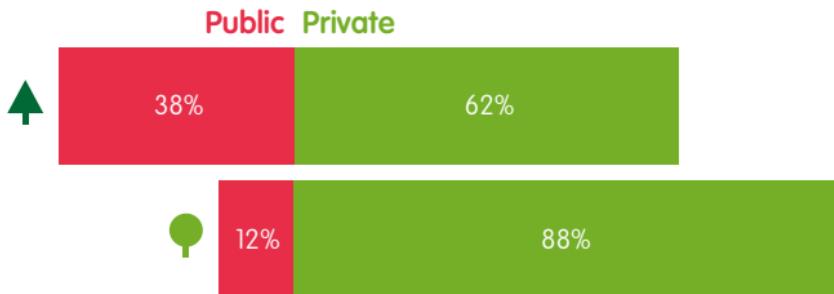


There was a **4% increase** in  
new planting and a **9% increase**  
in restocking in the UK in 2021–22

# Timber and wood products

## UK wood production

**62%** of the softwood produced in 2021 came from **private sector** forests



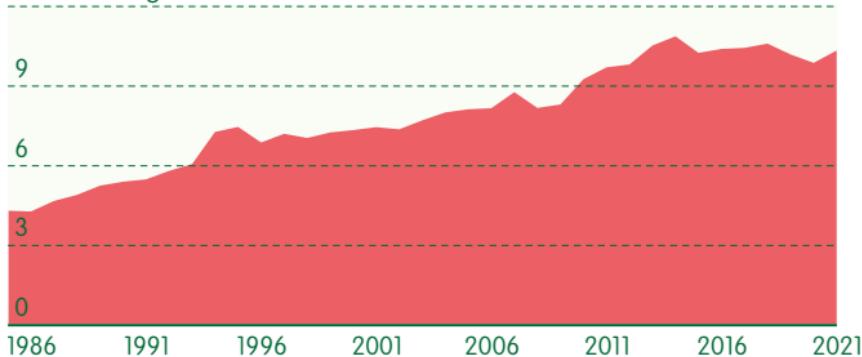
### Wood production (000 of green tonnes)

Softwood	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
FE/FLS/NRW/FS	4 761	4 522	3 937	4 616	4 009
Private sector	6 075	6 827	5 884	5 437	6 407
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 836</b>	<b>11 349</b>	<b>9 822</b>	<b>10 053</b>	<b>10 416</b>
Hardwood					
FE/FLS/NRW/FS	85	88	68	87	96
Private sector	651	746	800	742	727
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>823</b>

## UK deliveries

### Softwood

12 million of green tonnes

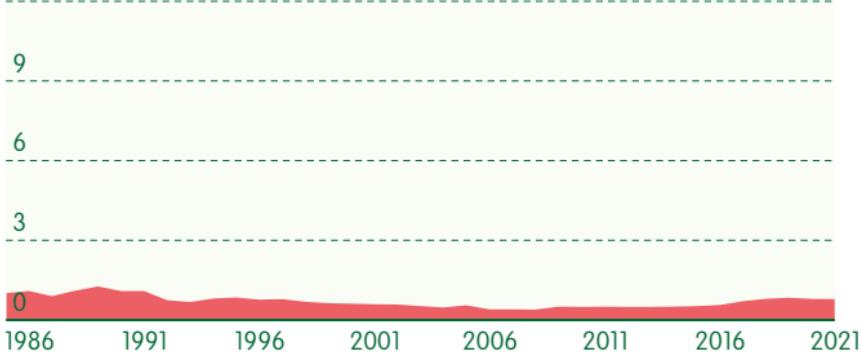


(000 of green tonnes)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Sawmills	6 586	6 337	5 898	5 837	6 268
Pulpmills	442	486	464	383	399
Wood-based panels	1 059	1 210	1 316	1 248	1 508
Fencing	283	255	262	258	247
Woodfuel	1 600	1 900	1 900	1 850	1 600
Other	170	174	183	188	176
Roundwood exports	331	264	201	140	168
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 471</b>	<b>10 626</b>	<b>10 225</b>	<b>9 904</b>	<b>10 366</b>

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)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Sawmills	65	66	75	62	60
Pulpmills	0	0	0	0	0
Wood-based panels	0	1	0	2	3
Woodfuel	600	700	700	700	700
Other	71	68	93	66	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>823</b>

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

3.6 million m<sup>3</sup>



### Paper & paperboard

3.6 million tonnes



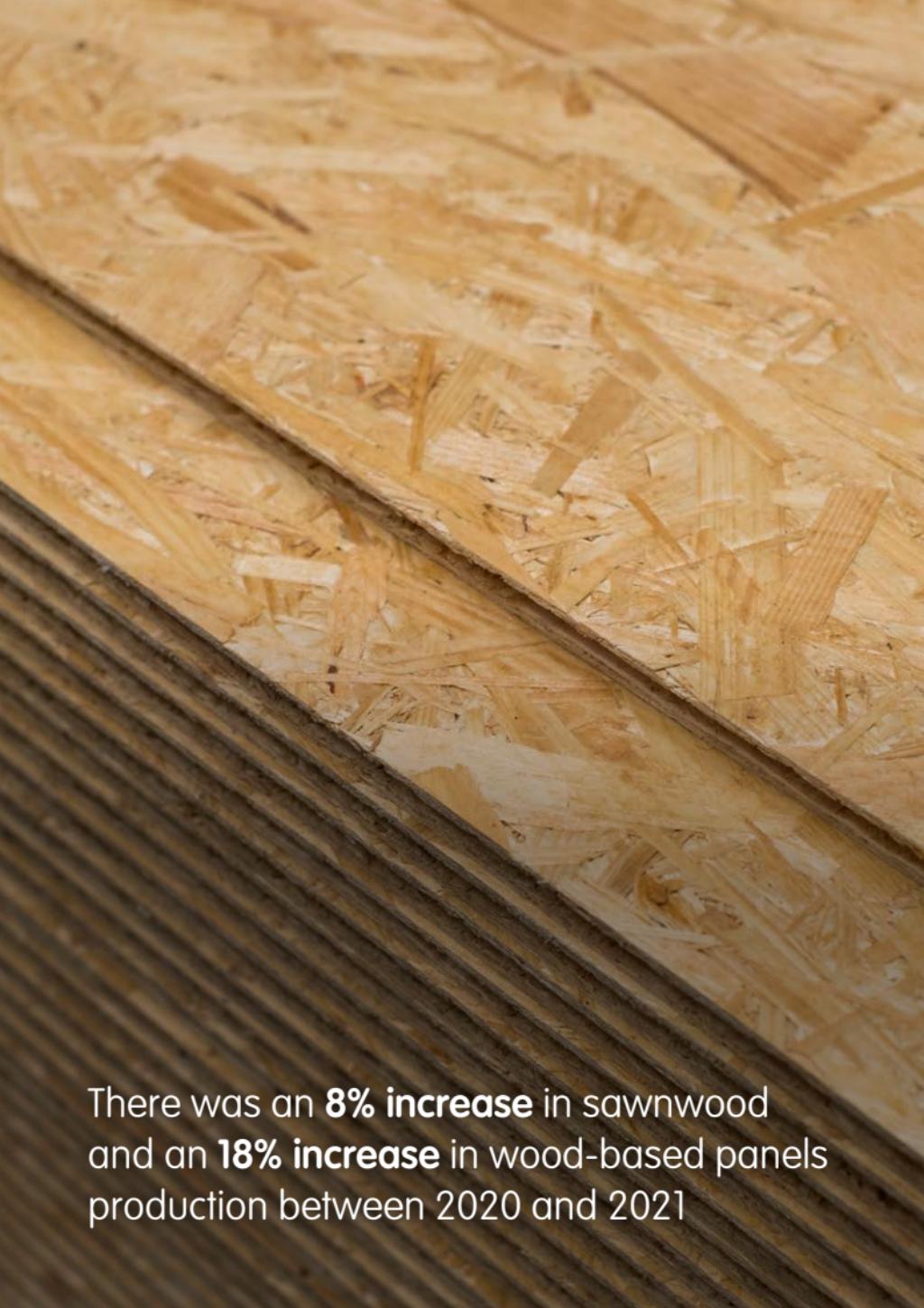
### Wood-based panels

3.5 million m<sup>3</sup>



	Sawnwood (000 m <sup>3</sup> )	Wood-based panels (000 m <sup>3</sup> )	Paper & paperboard (000 tonnes)
2017	3768	3176	3858
2018	3666	3079	3894
2019	3463	3246	3851
2020	3348	2952	3631
2021	3 611	3 486	3 640

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).

A close-up photograph showing a stack of oriented strand board (OSB) panels. The panels are made of wood fibers oriented in a parallel direction, creating a distinct grain pattern. The top panel is light-colored, while the bottom panels are darker. The edges of the panels are slightly irregular, showing the thickness and the layered construction.

There was an **8% increase** in sawnwood  
and an **18% increase** in wood-based panels  
production between 2020 and 2021

# Imports and exports



£8.5 billion  
imported to UK

£2.0 billion  
exported from UK



Largest net importers and exporters of forests products in 2020



**2nd**

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

### Volume (000 m<sup>3</sup>)

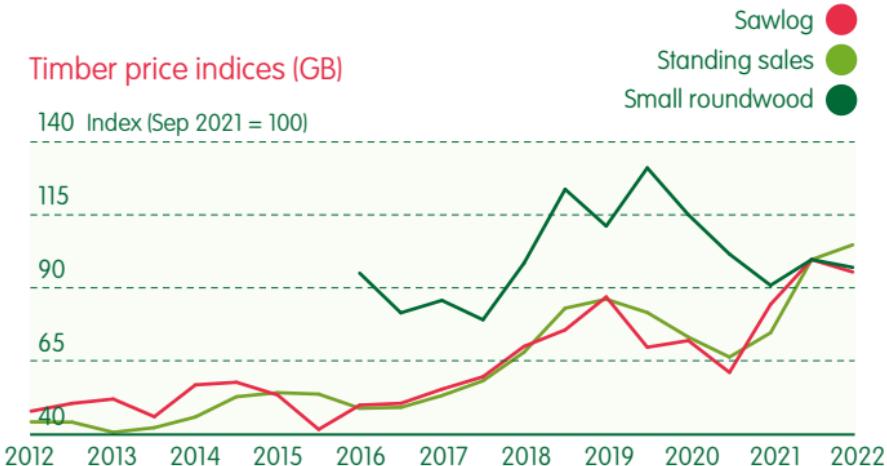
Imports	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Sawnwood	7 663	7 213	7 040	7 218	8 159
Other wood	11 569	13 595	15 368	15 571	15 111
Wood-based panels	3 800	3 878	3 650	3 267	3 794
Pulp & paper (000 t)	6 798	6 663	6 130	5 329	5 152
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	1 044	925	867	530	581
Wood-based panels	374	295	384	389	321
Pulp & paper (000 t)	5 528	5 317	5 160	4 617	5 352

### Value (£ million)

Imports	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Sawnwood	1 636	1 743	1 598	1 587	2 668
Other wood	1 051	1 239	1 492	1 537	1 467
Wood-based panels	962	996	955	970	1 313
Pulp & paper	3 998	4 067	4 070	3 388	3 088
Exports					
Wood (sawn & other)	102	110	100	99	141
Wood-based panels	109	103	123	114	158
Pulp & paper	1 651	1 597	1 491	1 336	1 674

'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.

# Economics



Index in real terms. Source: Timber Price Indices: Data to March 2022.

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



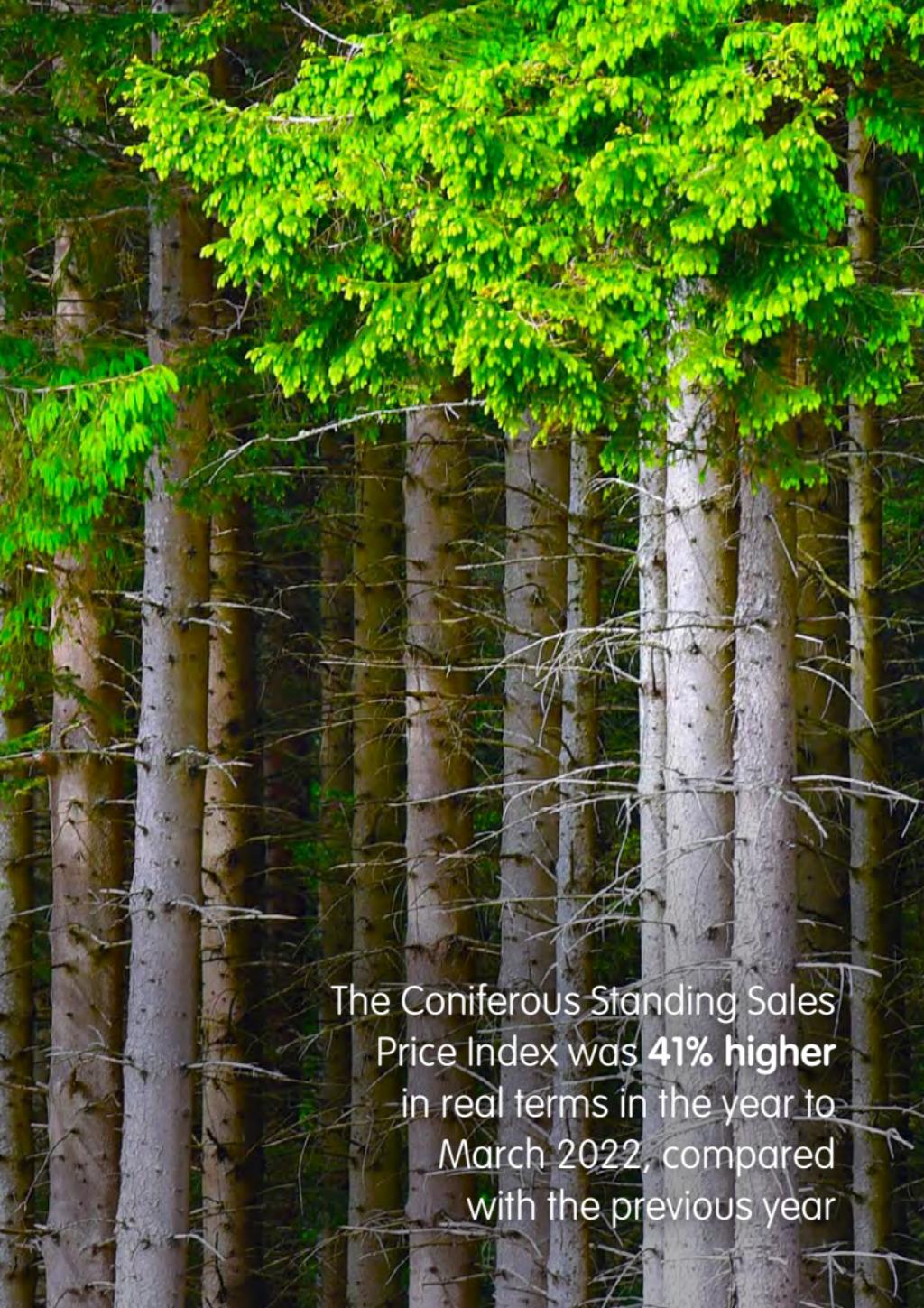
**£0.74 billion**  
Forestry



**£1.53 billion**  
Primary wood  
processing

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Forestry	596	698	669	724	739
Sawmilling	413	420	580	496	508
Panels	316	363	453	379	391
Pulp & paper	610	707	841	687	632
Total	1339	1490	1874	1561	1531

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

A photograph of a forest showing many tall, slender trees, likely coniferous, with their characteristic needle-like leaves. The trees are closely packed, creating a vertical pattern. The lighting suggests it might be morning or late afternoon, with sunlight filtering through the canopy.

The Coniferous Standing Sales  
Price Index was **41% higher**  
in real terms in the year to  
March 2022, compared  
with the previous year

Around **19,000 staff** were employed by the forestry sector in the UK in 2020



# Employment



Employment in UK forestry and wood processing

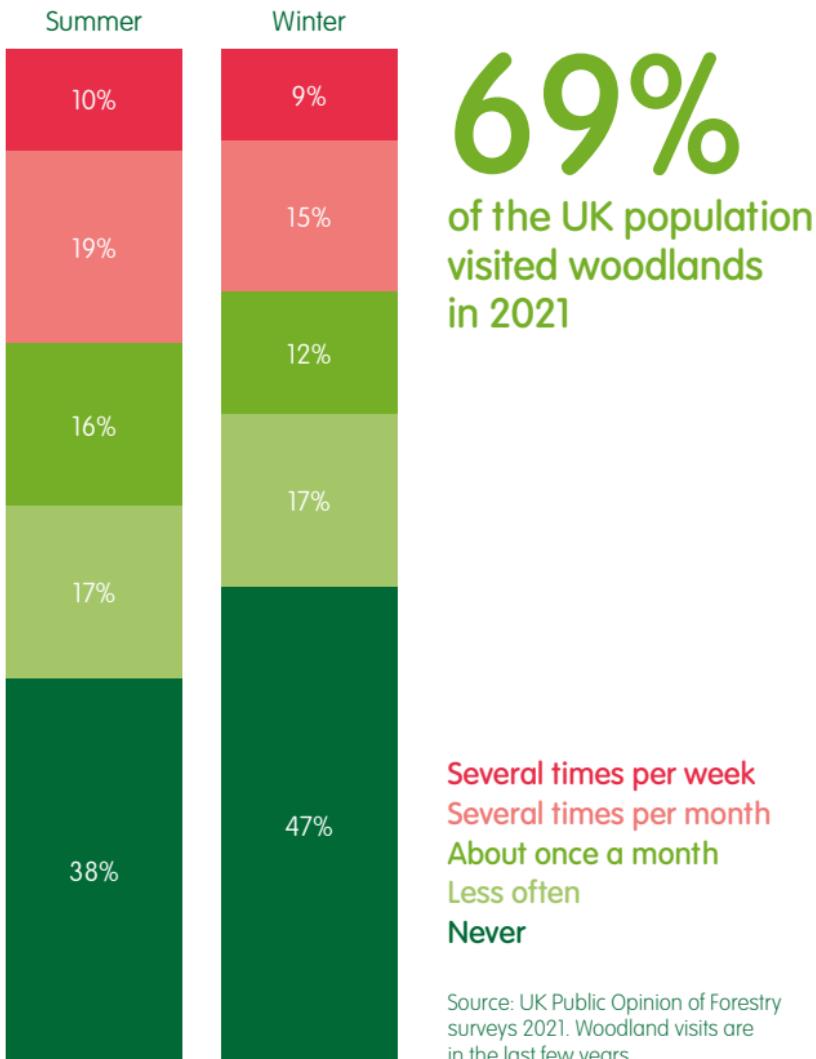
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Forestry	17 000	[c]	16 000	18 000	19 000
Sawmilling	9 000	9 000	10 000	7 000	8 000
Panels	5 000	5 000	6 000	5 000	5 000

[c]= confidential.

Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2022), Office for National Statistics.

# Woodland visits

## Frequency of visitors to UK woodland



In 2021, 88% of the UK public agreed that woodlands are places where they can **relax and de-stress**

Source: Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys, 2021



# International comparisons

## International forest area

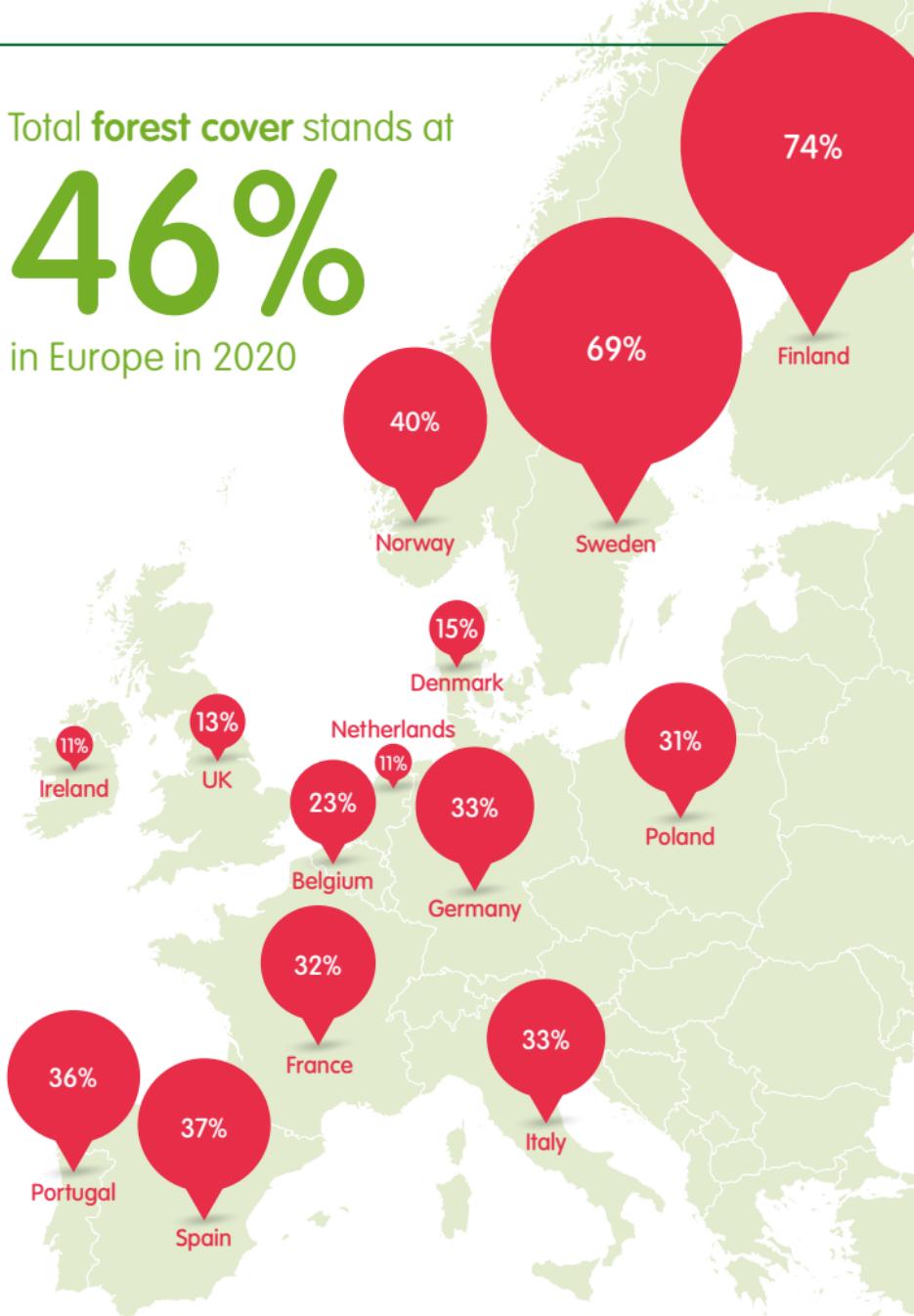
	Forest area (million ha)	Total land area (million ha)	Forest cover (%)
Europe	1017	2 213	46
UK	3	24	13
Finland	22	30	74
France	17	55	32
Germany	11	35	33
Italy	10	29	33
Spain	19	50	37
Sweden	28	41	69
Other EU	51	148	34
Total EU	159	400	40
Russia	815	1 638	50
Africa	637	2 989	21
Asia	623	3 109	20
North & Central America	753	2 133	35
Oceania	185	849	22
South America	844	1 746	48
World	4 059	13 039	31

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%

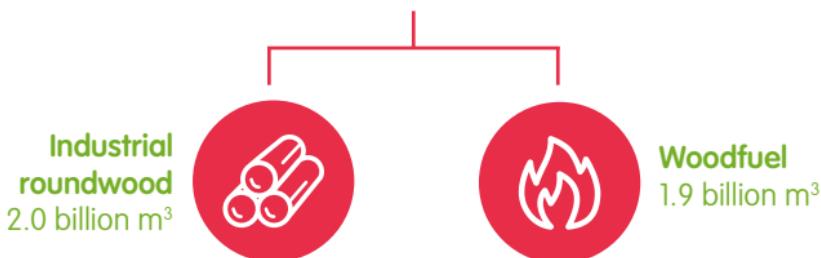
in Europe in 2020



## International wood removals

# 3.9 billion m<sup>3</sup>

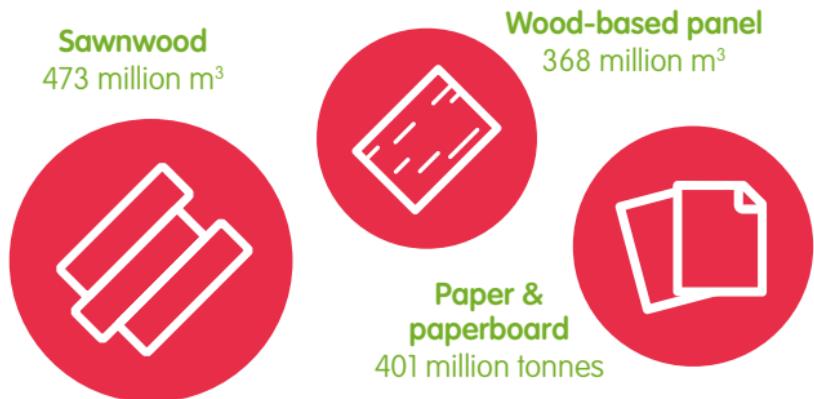
of wood was removed from forests in the world in 2020



(million m <sup>3</sup> )	Industrial roundwood	Woodfuel	Total roundwood
Europe	633	170	804
EU	378	121	499
UK	8	2	11
Africa	79	712	792
Asia	453	706	1159
North & Central America	511	145	656
Oceania	77	10	87
South America	229	180	409
<b>World</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1928</b>	<b>3 912</b>

Source: FAO (Data for 2020).

## International production of wood products



	Sawnwood (million m <sup>3</sup> )		Wood-based panels (million m <sup>3</sup> )		Paper & paperboard (million t)	
	Production ●	Apparent consumption ○	Production ●	Apparent consumption ○	Production ●	Apparent consumption ○
Europe	170	114	85	79	99	86
EU	109	86	57	55	81	67
UK	3	10	3	6	4	7
Africa	11	16	3	6	3	7
Asia	133	185	213	209	198	208
North & Central America	123	121	47	56	81	80
Oceania	9	8	3	3	4	4
South America	26	19	18	14	15	16
World	473	465	368	367	401	401

Source: FAO (Data for 2020).

In 2021, 87% of the UK public agreed that  
**forests and woodlands are important  
places for wildlife**

Source: Public Opinion of Forestry Surveys, 2021



# Environment

## Woodland type

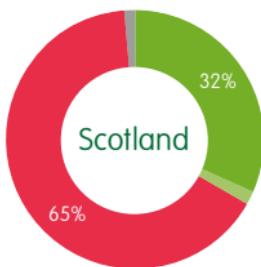
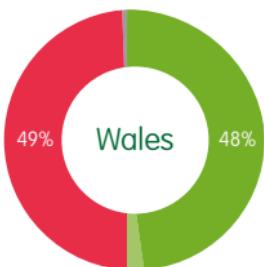
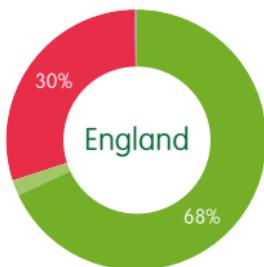
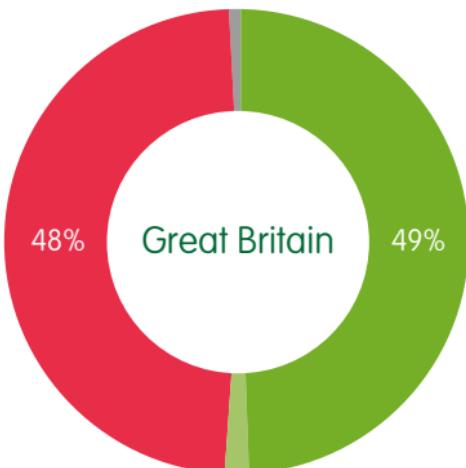
Native trees account for around **one half** of total woodland area in Great Britain, but this varies in each country.

Native

Near native & fragments

Non-native

Not determinable



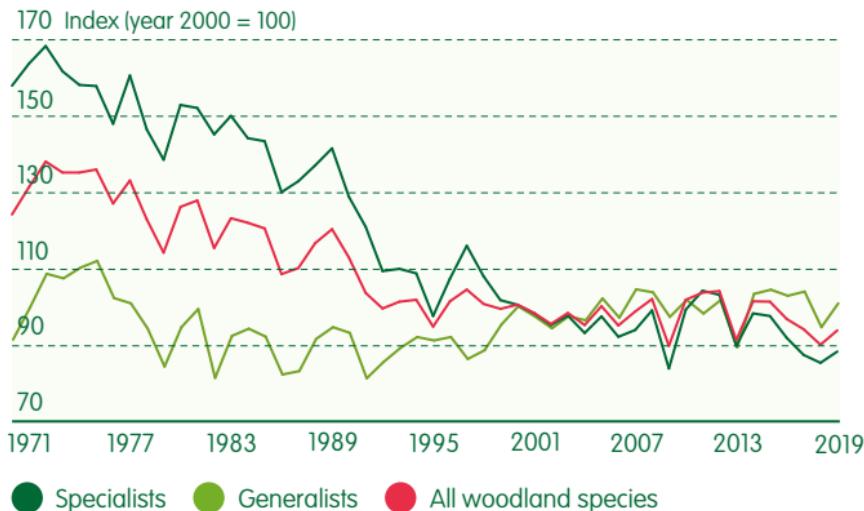
The total area of native woodland in Great Britain is estimated to be around

**1.5 million hectares**

Source: National Forest Inventory (2020).

## Woodland bird populations

The woodland bird population has fallen by 25% since 1970



## 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 68%** between 2021 and 2022

[woodlandcarboncode.org.uk](http://woodlandcarboncode.org.uk)

\*includes projects that are verified, validated and awaiting validation

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 2022 publication, including details of the sources used and downloadable spreadsheets of data, can be found online at [www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/statistics](http://www.forestryresearch.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](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

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