

## Climate change and forestry

# THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

There is now a convincing body of evidence that we are facing a climate emergency. Planting and managing trees, forests and woodlands so that they are fit for the future must be part of our nation's response.

Growing trees removes carbon dioxide from the air, and stores the carbon in wood products throughout their life. Trees can also help to manage the risk of flooding, and provide shade and cooling benefits. They are a renewable source of energy today, and a sustainable raw material for the future bio-economy.

But trees can only help reduce the negative impacts of a changing climate if they are resilient to those challenges themselves. As one of many signatories of the Climate Change Accord, we know that we must take urgent action.

Our action involves making significant changes to the species composition, structure and management of our woodlands now, to give them the best chance to survive and thrive in 50 years' time, when we know our climate will be quite different.

Many species that are currently less common in British woodlands may be better adapted to future conditions. That is why we are planting a wider range of tree species in the nation's forests. We also need to plan for some species suffering more from tree health issues, as the changing climate makes them more vulnerable, or the conditions more favourable, to pests and diseases.

We recognise that different woodland management objectives require different adaptation strategies and timescales. Adapting our woodlands to the future climate cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach, and diversity will be needed at the landscape level, as well as within woodlands, to mitigate risks.

The Forestry Commission has a key role to play, and we will continue to work closely with our Climate Change Action Plan partners and all parts of the tree, woods and forestry sector to protect our woodlands for future generations.

### We will:

**Lead by example,** making the woodlands we look after more resilient.

**Provide advice and support** to landowners and managers so they can make changes now.

**Keep learning** through research, monitoring and the exchange of knowledge.