

New climate change hub launched for forestry sector

20 February 2023

- Trees and improved woodland management are key in both adapting to climate change and reaching UK Government goal of Net Zero by 2050.
- New online Climate Change Hub centralises information on forestry and climate change adaptation.
- The Hub features UK Forestry Standard guidance and includes fact sheets, videos and case studies to ensure our woodlands are fit for the future

The Climate Change Hub - which centralises the latest resources, information and guidance on climate change adaptation to support landowners, woodland managers and forestry practitioners in addressing climate change threats – was launched by Defra, Forest Research, Scottish Forestry and Welsh Government today (Monday 20 February).

The projected rate of climate change is unprecedented, from warmer summers to more frequent extreme conditions such as drought periods and heavy rainfall events. Action is needed now to improve the resilience of forests and woodlands, and to protect the benefits that they provide, including carbon sequestration.

The Climate Change Hub, managed by Forest Research, centralises and distils the latest information and UKFS (United Kingdom Forestry Standard) guidance on climate change adaptation to encourage uptake of adaptive practice by forest and woodland owners and managers. It provides concise information about risks from the changing climate, how to identify suitable adaptation measures and examples of how other managers are implementing adaptive practice.

There is no single recommended approach to climate change adaptation, as each woodland has different objectives and conditions. To enable managers to make informed decisions for their own woodlands, the Climate Change Hub also includes detailed guidance through the decision-making process, step-by-step, including information about the online tools available to support risk management and species choice.

Forestry Minister Trudy Harrison said:

“Trees and tree management are crucial parts of our plan to reach Net Zero by 2050, and resources such as the Climate Change Hub support the forest industry to make better, more informed and ultimately more sustainable decisions when it comes to tree planting and woodland management.”

Forestry Commission Chief Executive Richard Stanford said:

“Climate change will affect our trees, wood and forests. We need to ensure that our management practices ensure they thrive for the long term to ensure all the benefits they provide are maximised. Trees are a critical part of our endeavours to tackle climate change; trees are the most efficient and cost-effective method of capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The Climate Change Hub will allow all of us to see this critical information in one place for the first time, enabling land managers and foresters to make the best decisions for our planet on tree and forest management.”

Scottish Forestry’s Chief Executive Dave Signorini said:

“I’m excited to launch the new Climate Change Hub - a one-stop shop for resources on protecting woodland and forests from the risks of climate change. Trees have a significant role in climate change adaptation and resilience, providing habitats for wildlife, reducing flooding, and absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and we want to help people understand how best to achieve that.

“The new Climate Change Hub will help empower the forestry sector here in Scotland to sustainably manage woodland and forests to deliver benefits for our environment, economy and communities.”

Wales’ Minister for Climate Change, Julie James, said:

“This project will provide up-to-date research and guidance that will help the forestry sector and woodland planners plant and manage woodland in a flexible way.

“It’s another key project that will help us in Wales meet our Net Zero commitments and I look forward to seeing how it progresses.”

Woodland owners are encouraged to plant and manage more diverse and resilient woodlands of varying ages and species in the face of climate change. To counter future extreme weather risks from severe storms to drought, forests and woodlands should have a broad range of trees at different ages, from seedlings to trees to vary the size of our trees. Larger, more mature trees are more susceptible to severe winds than younger trees, so promoting the growth of trees of varying ages helps to strengthen their collective resilience.

The Climate Change Hub supports the government’s wider Net Zero strategy and follows commitments set out within the recently published Environmental Improvement Plan to improve our mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

- The Climate Change Hub can be found online [here](#).
- The Climate Change Hub is endorsed by the Forestry and Climate Change Partnership (<https://forestryclimatechange.uk/>), a cross-sector body that seeks to represent a collective view of the forestry and woodland sector on climate adaptation of trees, woods and forests in England. It promotes measures which enhance the adaptation of trees, woods and forests to climate change and associated impacts. Members include the ICF, the Woodland Trust and Natural England.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-climate-change-hub-launched-for-forestry-sector--2>