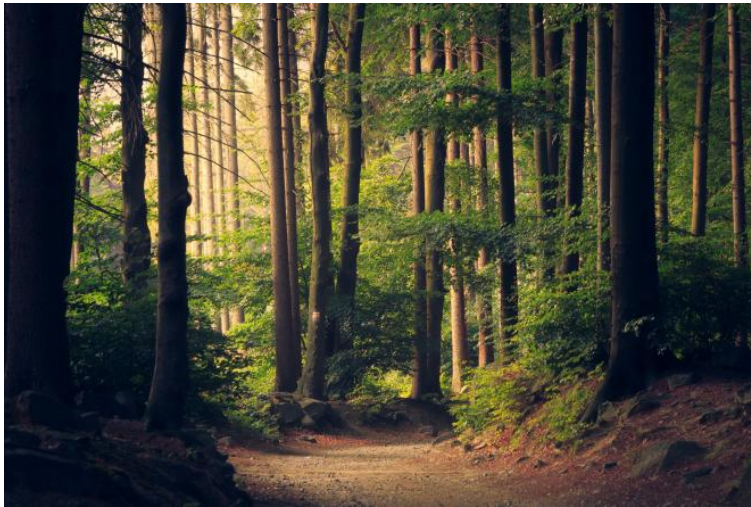


France to plant 50 million trees to fight global warming

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France will plant 50 million trees to repopulate its forests, the Agriculture, Food and Forests Minister Julien Denormandie announced today (December 16).

The project, which will cost almost €200million, has been launched to help fight global warming and may be run with the involvement of schools throughout France.

Mr Denormandie described the challenge of repopulating the forests as being at the highest level in the post-war era, with significant damage to trees caused by beetles that burrow holes into tree trunks ravaged by dryness.

Speaking to specialist news channel Cultivonsnous.tv, the minister said that planting the right kind of trees to combat climate change and finding enough seeds and saplings would also be an “enormous challenge”.

He said: “Take mature ash trees. Today, ash trees need a certain humidity level, and there are many places where we can see that if we replant ash trees in 30 or 40 years, they won’t be able to survive.”

Minister rebuffs criticism

Some have criticised the project, saying that natural forests should not be disturbed or used as tools to protect the environment, but Mr Denormandie disagreed. He said: “You need to protect a forest, just like the soil, and cultivate it, just like the soil.

“One does not work in opposition to the other. [If you] cut certain trees to let others develop it is not a crime against the environment or nature. It is allowing management in terms of protection and cultivation.”

Mr Denormandie said that involving school children in the planting project would be a huge opportunity to “create a link between the land [and them]”. Discussions with the education ministry are planned.

Source: <https://www.connexionfrance.com/French-news/France-to-plant-50-million-trees-to-repopulate-forests-to-fight-climate-change>