

# UK Biodiversity Indicators 2019

This document supports  
B1b. Area of forestry land certified as sustainably  
managed

## Fiche

For further information on B1b. Area of forestry land certified as sustainably managed visit [jncc.gov.uk/ukbi-B1b](https://jncc.gov.uk/ukbi-B1b)

For further information on the UK Biodiversity Indicators visit [jncc.gov.uk/ukbi](https://jncc.gov.uk/ukbi)



B1. Agricultural and forest area under environmental management schemes

b. Area of forestry land certified as sustainably managed

Type: Response Indicator

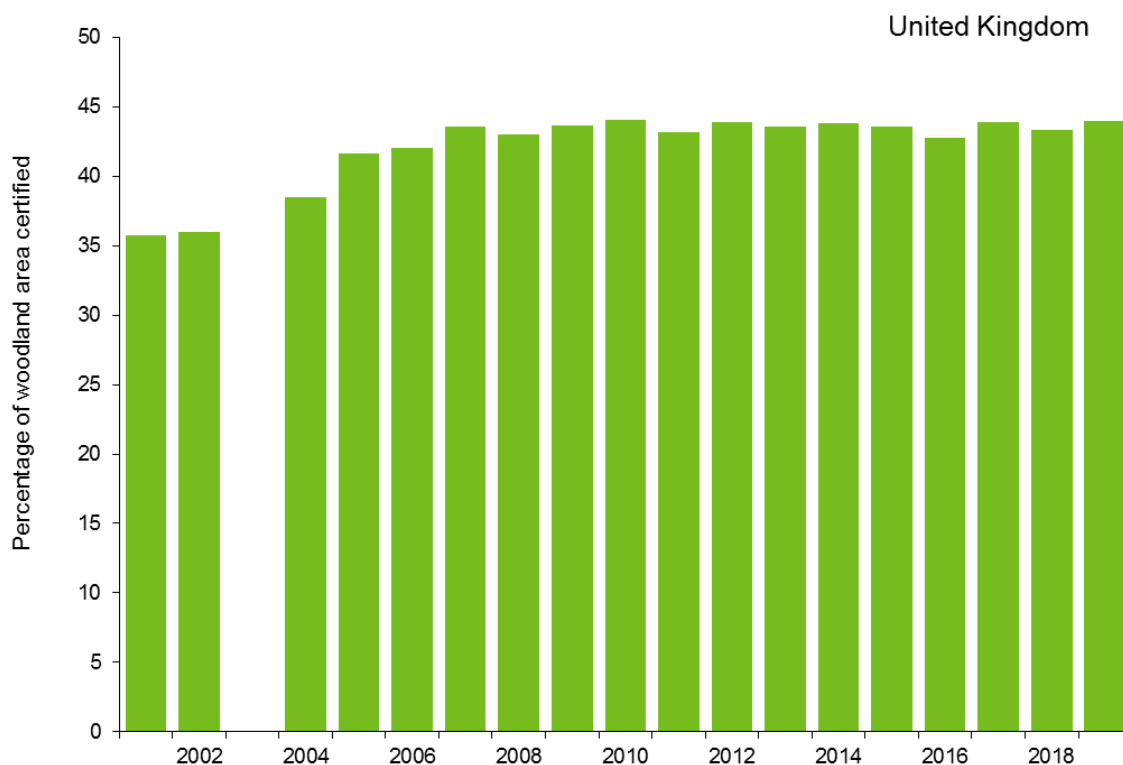
Summary

In March 2019, there were 1.4 million hectares of certified woodland across the UK, representing 44% of the total woodland area. The proportion of woodland certified as sustainably managed has remained stable at either 43% or 44% since 2007.

Indicator Description

This indicator shows the percentage of the woodland area that is certified against agreed environmental standards. Woodland certification schemes promote good forest practice and are used to demonstrate that wood or wood products come from well-managed forests.

Figure B1bi. Percentage of woodland area certified as sustainably managed, 2001 to 2019





Note: All figures relate to data at 31<sup>st</sup> March, apart from 2001 (31<sup>st</sup> December) and 2002 (30<sup>th</sup> September), with regular data collection from 2004.

Source: Forestry Commission.

Certification of woodlands promotes responsible forest management to safeguard forests' natural heritage and protect threatened species. Since 2001, the percentage of woodland certified as sustainably managed in the UK has increased from 36% to 44% in 2019. The percentage of woodland certified as sustainably managed in the UK remains relatively stable with a slight increase in the latest year.

## B1b. Area of forestry land certified as sustainably managed

The total area certified can change if new woodlands are certified, if existing certificates are not renewed, or if there is a time lag in renewal of an existing certificate.

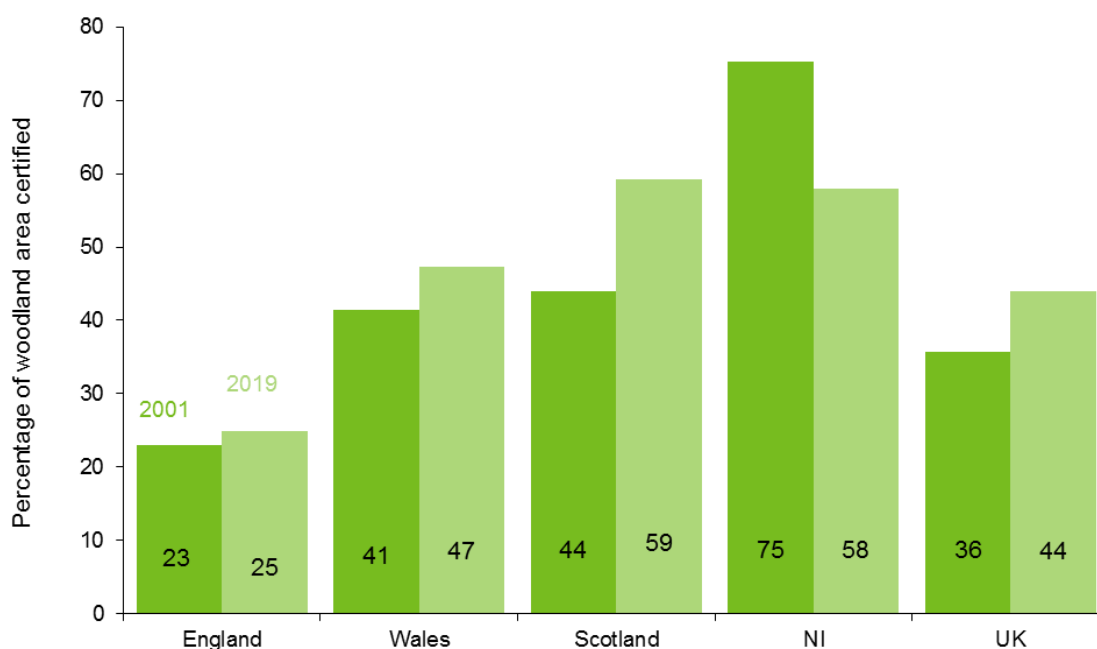
Assessment of change in area of woodland certified as sustainably managed			
	Long term	Short term	Latest year
Percentage of woodland certified	 2001–2019	 2014–2019	Increased (2019)

**Note:** Long and short-term assessments are based on a 3% rule of thumb. Where possible, the base years for these assessments use a 3-year average. See [Assessing Indicators](#).

### By country within the UK

In 2019, there were 1.4 million hectares of certified woodland in the UK. Figure B1bii shows that the proportion of woodland that is certified has increased in all countries since 2001 apart from Northern Ireland. The area certified in Northern Ireland has remained reasonably stable over the entire period, rising slightly (from 62 thousand hectares to 66 thousand hectares). The percentage fall is caused by a change in the data source for estimating the total woodland area in Northern Ireland between 2011 and 2012.

**Figure B1bii. Percentage of woodland area certified as sustainably managed by country**



**Source:** Forestry Commission.

### Relevance

Woodland certification assesses management practices against agreed environmental standards. Certification requires that wood products are harvested legally and sustainably, and that important wildlife habitats are identified and are not negatively impacted by management.

## B1b. Area of forestry land certified as sustainably managed

### Background

#### Certification

The indicator shows the percentage of the woodland area in the UK that is certified against agreed environmental standards, derived from the areas reported on certificates and more detailed assessment of selected certificate holders. A breakdown by country, giving areas of woodland under certified management is given in Table B1bi.

Certification in the UK began in 1996, with data collation starting in 2001, becoming a regular annual collation in 2004. New certificates may relate to existing woodland that was not previously certified or to newly planted areas. In order for products produced from timber to be certified as sustainable, both forest management practices and the Chain of Custody, which tracks timber from forest to retail outlet, must be assessed.

Certified woodland areas are often used as an indicator of sustainable forest management, however, woodland that is not certified may also be sustainably managed. Some choose not to become certified because there is a cost involved in getting certified and there may be little incentive for woodland owners to get their woodlands certified if timber production is not a major objective.

**Table B1bi. Area of woodland (thousands of hectares) under certified management in March 2019**

Ownership	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK
Forestry Commission/Forestry and Land Scotland/Natural Resources Wales/Forest Service	215	117	469	62	863
Private sector	110	29	395	3	538
Total woodland area certified	325	146	864	66	1,400

#### Notes:

1. Where possible, calculations have used the total woodland area certified, rather than the total land area certified.
2. All Forestry Commission, Forestry and Land Scotland, Natural Resources Wales and Forest Service woodland is certified, areas shown are latest estimates of woodland areas.
3. The 'Total woodland area certified' may not match the figures in the column above due to rounding.

**Source:** Forestry Commission.

#### Statistical methods

In 2011, the Forestry Commission implemented a number of refinements to methods for calculating the area certified, using revised woodland area data from the National Forest Inventory together with geo-referenced data for Forestry Commission land. This method was later applied to the whole data series. The indicator is therefore now based on a revised dataset which cannot be directly compared with previous publications before 2013.

### Goals and targets

#### Aichi Targets for which this is a primary indicator

**Strategic Goal A.** Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society.



**Target 3:** By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio-economic conditions.

**Strategic Goal B.** Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.



**Target 7:** By 2020, areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.

#### Aichi Targets for which this is a relevant indicator

**Strategic Goal A.** Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society



**Target 1:** By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.



**Target 2:** By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.



**Target 4:** By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

**Strategic Goal B.** Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.



**Target 5:** By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.

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### Web links for further information

Reference	Title	Website
Forestry Commission	Provisional Woodland Statistics: 2019 Edition	<a href="#">Woodland Statistics - Forest Research</a>
Forest Stewardship Council	FSC Certified Forest Certificate List	<a href="https://ic.fsc.org/">https://ic.fsc.org/</a>
Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme	PEFC certification scheme	<a href="http://www.pefc.org/">http://www.pefc.org/</a>

**This indicator is available:** [jncc.gov.uk/ukbi-B1b](http://jncc.gov.uk/ukbi-B1b)

**Last updated:** September 2019

**Latest data available:** March 2019