

# BRITAIN AND THE WORLD'S FORESTS: WHY WE NEED TO CONTINUE OUR LEADERSHIP

BRIEFING  
MARCH 2017

The United Kingdom has long been a world leader in the fight against the destruction of forests and biodiversity loss, the promotion of sustainable and legal trade in forest products, and the securing of jobs and tenure for local people to uphold their rights and reduce poverty.

The national and global importance of maintaining this leadership role has never been greater.

ALMOST  
**1/2 BILLION**  
TRIPS  
MADE TO UK FORESTS ANNUALLY

BRITAIN'S OWN FORESTS ARE A SOURCE OF PRIDE AND PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE DAILY LIVES OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, SUPPORTING LIVELIHOODS, RECREATION, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELLBEING.

Protecting the world's forests has also been one of Britons' most popular conservation causes during the last three decades.

BRITAIN HAS HELPED FOREST COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD GAIN STRONGER RIGHTS TO THEIR LAND, AN IMPORTANT STEP IN ENSURING GREATER FOOD SECURITY, LIVELIHOODS AND ENTERPRISE.

**1 BILLION**  
WORLDWIDE  
DEPENDENT ON FORESTS

As trees are felled, forest-dependent people can lose their livelihoods, and be drawn to major cities or other countries. DFID has supported hundreds of communities to map their lands and maintain their presence in the forests.

ILLEGAL LOGGING COSTS  
**£23 BILLION**  
EACH YEAR

FROM GUYANA TO GHANA TO INDONESIA, UK SUPPORT HAS ENABLED GOVERNMENTS, LOCAL PEOPLE AND FOREST-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO ILLEGAL LOGGING, CREATE JOBS, BUILD LEGAL TRADE, AND PROTECT FORESTS THAT ARE CRITICAL IN THE LIVES OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.

In Africa alone, losses from illicit financial flows such as illegal logging are twice as large as international aid receipts, according to the UN.

BRITAIN'S SCIENTISTS ARE RECOGNISED AS WORLD LEADERS IN UNDERSTANDING HOW FORESTS INTERACT WITH CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY, HOW FOREST ECOSYSTEMS FUNCTION, AND HOW SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION CAN BE A REALITY.

**10%**  
OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS  
CAUSED BY THE  
DESTRUCTION OF FORESTS

Achieving the Paris Agreement goal to avoid dangerous climate change is essential to prevent millions more people falling further into poverty alongside negative social, environmental and economic impacts across the world.

FORESTS ARE AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES, AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE LIVELIHOOD OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF THEIR CITIZENS.

**810 MILLION**  
HECTARES  
OF FOREST IN THE  
COMMONWEALTH

DFID supports the growth of forest-friendly economies in countries such as Cameroon, Ghana and Papua New Guinea.

WOMEN OWN A GREAT DEAL OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, BUT THEIR ABILITY TO ACCESS AND USE THESE RESOURCES IS OFTEN LIMITED BY THEIR WEAKER RESOURCE RIGHTS.

**FOREST DESTRUCTION**  
DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTS  
**WOMEN**

"In the poorer parts of the world, women continue to be very dependent on forest goods and services – whether these are firewood, fodder, soil and water protection, or regulation of the climate for their agricultural activities." – Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize winner.

UK TIMBER USAGE

MANY UK BUSINESSES HAVE TAKEN SIGNIFICANT ACTION TO ENSURE THAT THE FORESTS THEY DEPEND ON FOR WOOD AND OTHER PRODUCTS, IN BRITAIN AND WORLDWIDE, WILL BE THERE IN THE LONG TERM. MANY MORE WILL BENEFIT FROM THIS LEAD.

**82% FROM OVERSEAS TRADING** | **18% FROM DOMESTIC SOURCES**

The UK has led the way in creating and implementing the Voluntary Partnership Agreements for legal timber trade and the EU Timber Regulation.

INVESTING IN PROTECTION AND STABILITY OF THE WORLD'S RAINFORESTS IS AN INVESTMENT IN GLOBAL SECURITY.

**FOUR-FIFTHS**  
MAJOR ARMED CONFLICTS  
OCCURRED IN BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS LIKE  
**RAINFORESTS**  
OVER THE LAST 50 YEARS

The pillaging of forestland resources such as timber, ivory and minerals, along with poor sector governance, has often fuelled conflict.

**80%**  
OF THE WORLD'S TERRESTRIAL SPECIES LIVE IN THE

BRITAIN IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF INTELLIGENCE-LED ENFORCEMENT TO COMBAT THE GLOBAL ESCALATION OF FOREST AND WILDLIFE CRIME.

At US\$15-20 billion per year, the illegal trade in wildlife is one of the greatest illicit global trades, alongside drugs and arms. The 2014 London Conference Declaration, brokered by the UK, launched a new, more comprehensive global approach to tackle this problem.

PROTECTION OF FORESTS IS A PRIORITY FOR MANY OF THE UK'S STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS DELIVERING ON OUR COMMITMENTS TO FORESTS AND FOREST PEOPLES AND STRENGTHENS THE UK'S LEADERSHIP ROLE.

**NEW YORK DECLARATION ON FORESTS 2014**

WAS ENDORSED BY THE UK GOVERNMENT AND FOREST NATIONS INCLUDING...  
COLOMBIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, GUYANA, INDONESIA, KENYA, MEXICO, NEPAL, NORWAY, USA  
AS WELL AS...  
BARCLAYS BANK, LLOYDS BANK, UNILEVER, NESTLÉ, MARKS AND SPENCER

AREA THE SIZE OF A FOOTBALL PITCH  
**2 ACRES**  
LOST EVERY  
**2**  
SECONDS

POOR COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD ARE FACING LOSS AND DAMAGE TO THE FORESTS THEY DEPEND ON FOR FOOD, INCOME AND SHELTER. THE UK SHARES RESPONSIBILITY FOR CAUSING THIS AND CAN CONTINUE TO HELP SOLVE IT, ESPECIALLY BY HELPING COMMUNITIES TO MAP, DEMARCATÉ AND PROTECT THEIR LANDS.

UK government objectives aim to reverse this trend and to support communities to protect their local environment.

By the UK NGO Forest Coalition:



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