

S: Landscape and wildlife

Between 1990 and 1998, significant decreases were identified in plant species diversity in infertile and fertile grassland habitats and in tall grass and herb vegetation types.

In Great Britain in 2003, nearly half of lower plants and a third of vascular plants were 'threatened' or nationally scarce, whilst 16 per cent of vertebrates were considered 'threatened'.

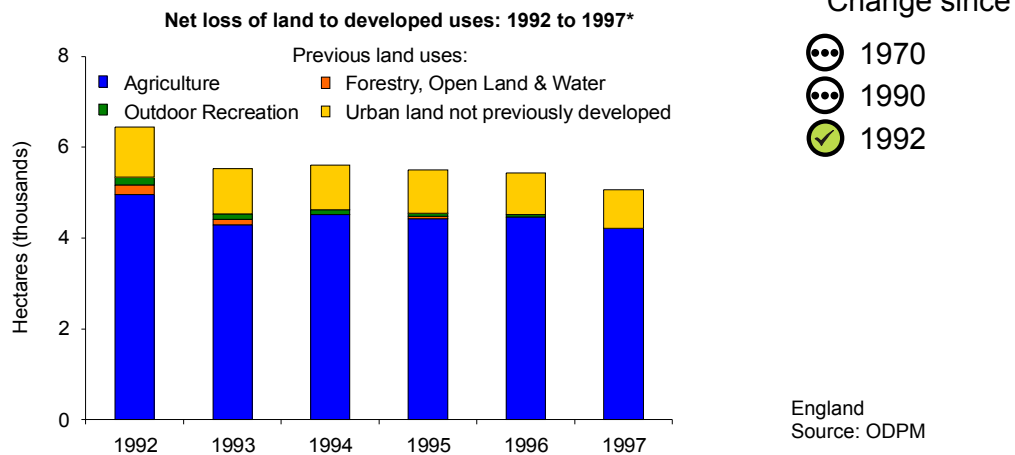
Although the overall area of woodland has increased over the last century, the area of ancient semi-natural woodland has declined and such woodlands have become increasingly fragmented.

The proportion of aggregates used that come from recycled material has increased from 10 per cent in 1989 (UK) to nearly a quarter in 2001 (England).

Ref. no.	Indicator		QOLC 1999		QOLC Updated Assessment		
			Change since		Change since		
			1970	1990	1970	1990	Strategy
S1	Net loss of soils to development		☹	☹	☹	☹	✓
S2	Concentrations of organic matter in agricultural top soils		✗	☹	✗	☹	☹
H13	Wildlife: Populations of wild birds (headline)	All species	✓	≈	✓	≈	≈
		Woodland birds	≈	✗	✗	✗	≈
		Farmland birds	✗	✗	✗	✗	≈
S3	Trends in plant diversity		✗	☹	✗	✗	✗
S4	Biodiversity action plans		☹	☹	☹	☹	✓
S5	Landscape features	Hedges	✗	✗	✗	≈	≈
		Walls, banks, etc	☹	☹	✗	≈	≈
		Ponds	✗	≈	☹	✓	✓
S6	Extent and management of SSSIs	Extent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Management	☹	☹	☹	☹	☹
S7	Countryside quality		☹	☹	☹	☹	☹
S8	Access to the countryside [†]		☹	☹	☹	☹	☹
S9	Native species at risk		na	na	na	na	na
S10	Area of woodland in the UK		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
S11	Area of ancient semi-natural woodland in GB		☹	☹	☹	☹	☹
S12	Sustainable management of woodland [†]		☹	☹	✓	✓	✓
S13	Number of countries with national forest programmes		☹	☹	☹	☹	☹
S14	Amount of secondary/recycled aggregates used compared with virgin aggregates [†]		☹	☹	☹	✓	☹
S15	Mineral working site land covered by restoration and aftercare conditions		≈	≈	☹	☹	☹

Indicator: Net loss of soils to development

S1



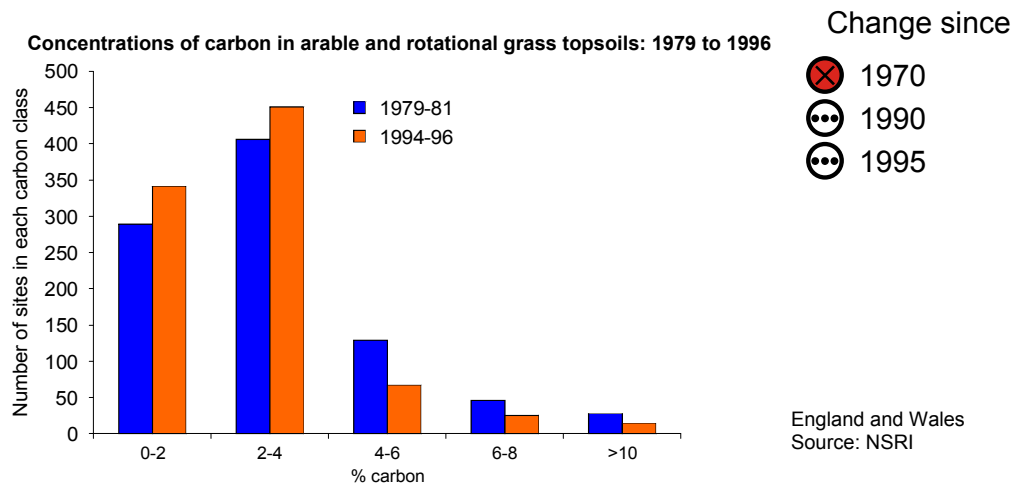
Note: * 5-year moving averages.

Objective: Minimise the loss of soils to new development

- There are considerable fluctuations in the annual figures reported during 1990 to 1999, so five-year moving averages have been used.
- In England, this measure indicates that the net change of land to developed uses fell from 6,450 hectares in 1992 to 5,000 hectares in 1997.
- A majority of the land becoming developed was previously used for agricultural purposes.

Indicator: Concentrations of organic matter in arable and rotational grass topsoils

S2



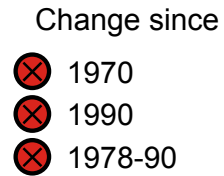
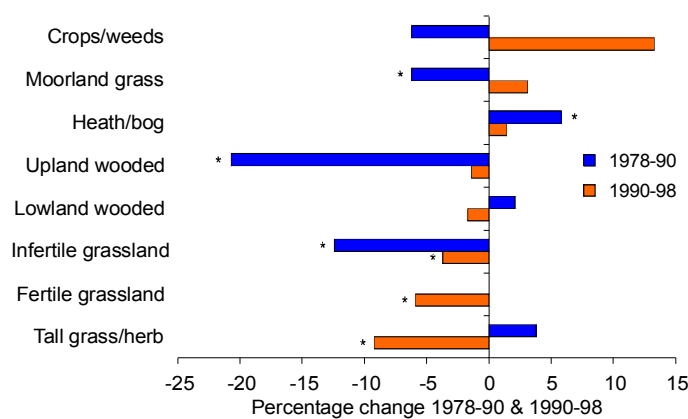
Objective: Soil protection

- In the fifteen year period up to 1996, there was an increase in the proportion of arable and rotational grass topsoils found to have 'low' carbon concentrations.

Indicator: Trends in plant diversity

S3

Changes in mean species numbers within major vegetation groups: 1978 to 1998



Great Britain
Source: Defra, CS2000

Note: * statistically significant changes.

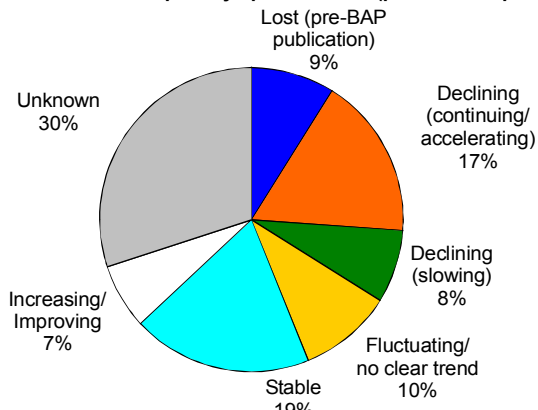
Objective: Reverse the decline in UK wildlife and habitats

- Between 1978 and 1990, there were significant declines in plant species diversity in moorland grass, infertile grassland and upland woodland habitats, and an increase in diversity in heath and bog vegetation types.
- Between 1990 and 1998, significant decreases were identified in plant species diversity in infertile and fertile grassland habitats and in tall grass and herb vegetation types.

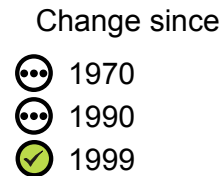
Indicator: Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)

S4

Status of priority species: 2002 (per cent of species)



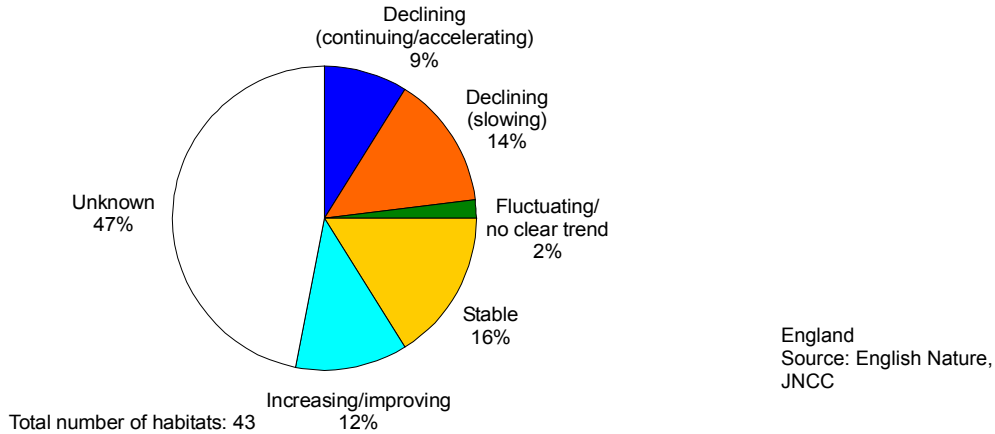
Total number of species: 347



England
Source: English Nature, JNCC

Indicator: Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) S4
(continued)

Status of priority habitats: 2002 (per cent of habitats)

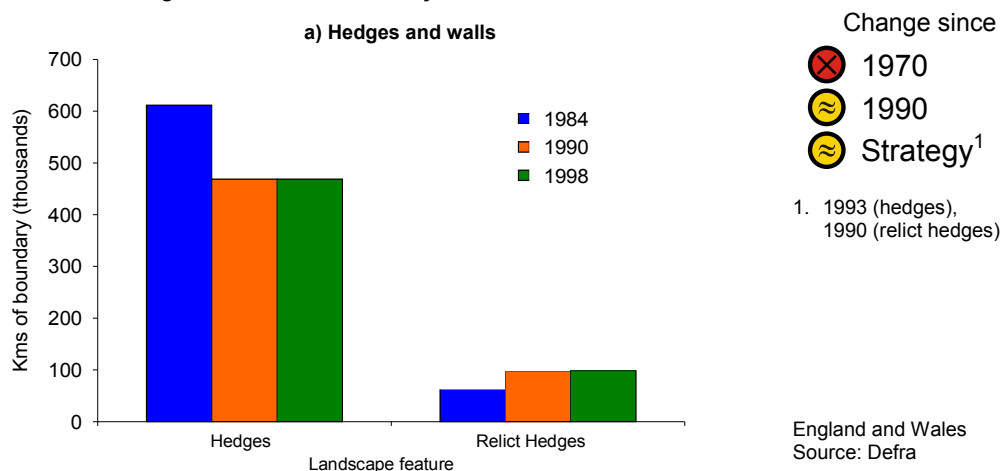


Objective (revised): To reduce the proportion of priority habitats and species for which status is unknown. To halt and ultimately to reverse the decline in England’s priority species and habitats.

- The information for this indicator now reflects an assessment of the current status of priority species and habitats covered by Biodiversity Action Plans.
- In 2002, 34 per cent of priority species and 42 per cent of priority habitats were found to be increasing/improving, stable or declining (slowing).
- About 17 per cent of priority species and 9 per cent of priority habitats were assessed as being in continuing or accelerating decline in 2002.

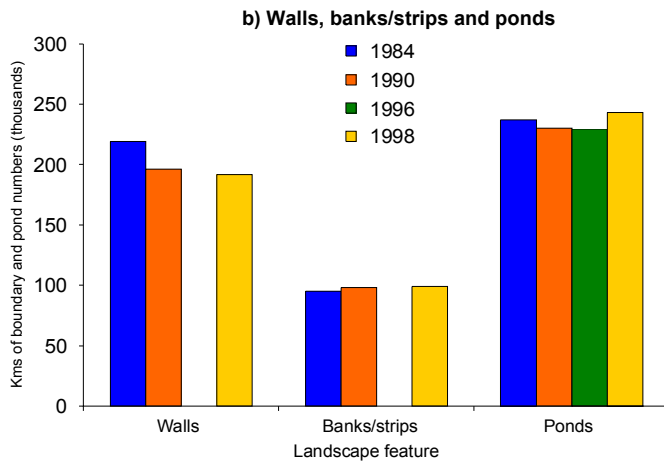
Indicator: Landscape features – hedges, stone walls and ponds S5

Changes in characteristic countryside features: 1984 to 1998



Indicator: Landscape features – hedges, stone walls and ponds *(continued)*

S5



Walls, banks etc.

Change since



1970



1990



1990

Ponds

Change since



1970



1990



1996

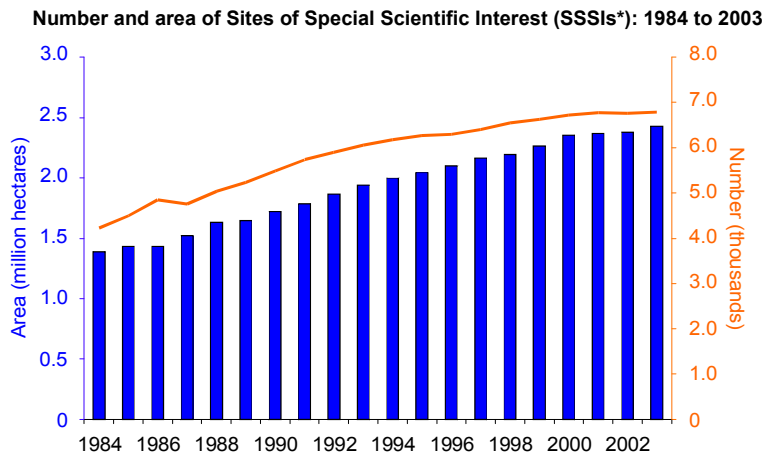
Great Britain
Source: Defra

Objective: Protection for individual landscape features, such as hedges, dry stone walls and ponds

- The length of hedges and walls in Great Britain reduced between 1984 and 1990, but has since stabilised.
- The length of banks and strips has remained fairly constant throughout the period, whereas between 1996 and 1998 the number of ponds increased by 6 per cent.

Indicator: Extent and management of SSSIs

S6



Extent

Change since



1970



1990

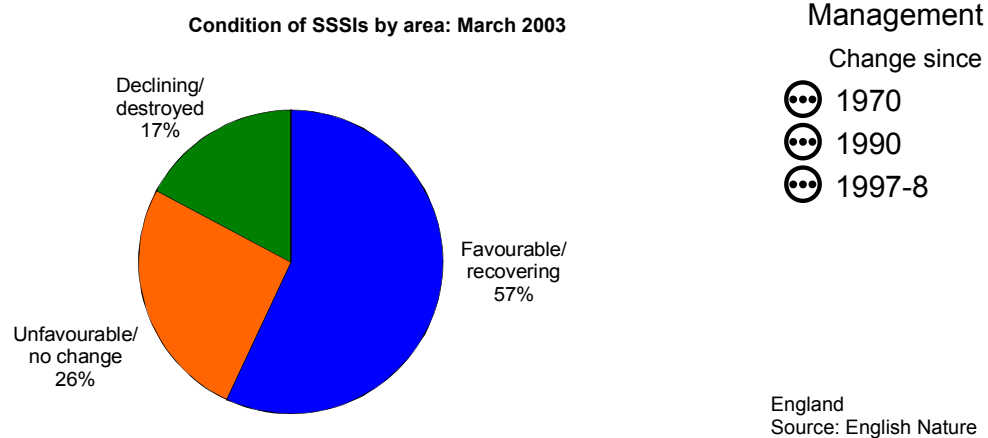


1999

United Kingdom
Source: English Nature,
CCW, SNH, DOE(NI), JNCC

Note: * In Northern Ireland SSSIs are known as ASSIs.

Indicator: Extent and management of SSSIs S6
(continued)



Objective (revised): To increase the proportion of SSSI designated land in favourable condition.

- Since 1999, the number of SSSIs in the UK has increased by 2 per cent, from 6,625 to 6,782 in 2003.
- The total area of land designated as SSSIs has risen from 2,263 thousand hectares in 1999 to 2,427 thousand hectares in 2003, an increase of 7 per cent.
- Based on information available as at March 2003, just over half of English SSSIs were assessed as being in a “favourable/recovering” condition. However, there is insufficient information to make an assessment of overall progress.

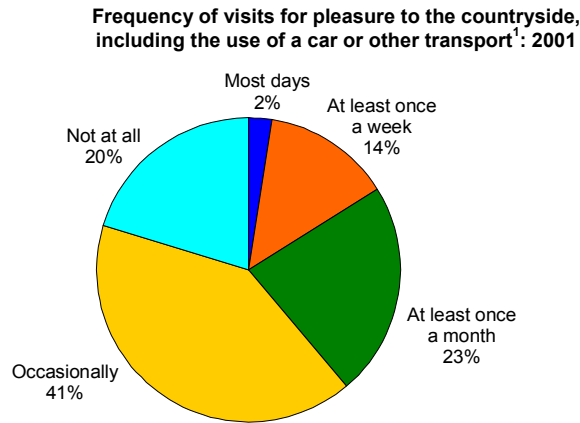
Indicator: Countryside quality S7

Objective: Protecting the wider landscape

This indicator is still under development. The research project Countryside Quality Counts, which relates to England, is due to report later in 2004.

Indicator: Access to the countryside[†]

S8



Change since



[†] New since QoLC (1999)

England
Source: Defra

Note: 1. Excluded trips to the countryside for proper holidays, to play golf or use other sporting facilities and trips to the beach.

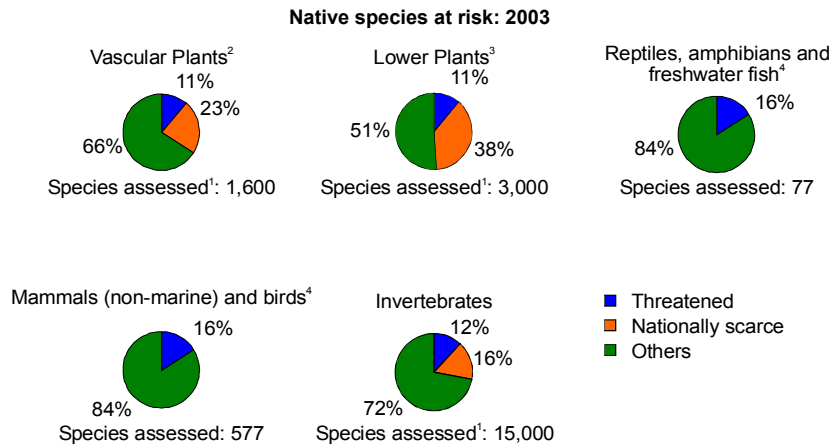
Objective: Promoting public access and enjoyment of the landscape

- In a 2001 survey, 80 per cent of respondents said they had visited the countryside for pleasure in the last 12 months. Ranging from most days to less frequently, 39 per cent had visited at least once a month.
- The most commonly mentioned reasons for visiting the countryside were tranquillity (58 per cent), scenery (46 per cent), open space (40 per cent), fresh air (40 per cent) and plants and wildlife (36 per cent).

Indicator: Native species at risk

S9

Contextual Indicator

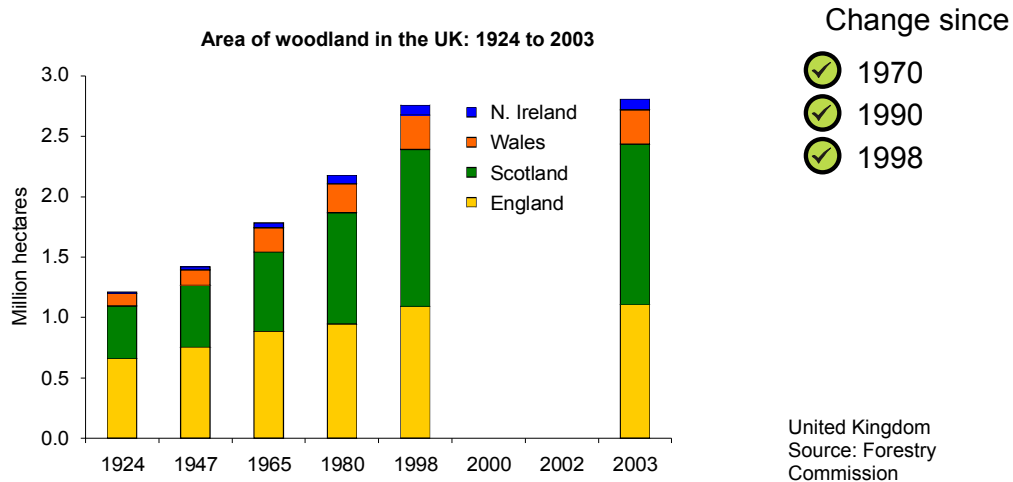


Note: 1. Numbers are estimated for invertebrates, vascular plants, and lower plants.
2. Nationally scarce includes nationally threatened and nationally rare.
3. Mosses, liverworts, lichens and stoneworts.
4. Reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds have not been formally assessed against IUCN criteria.

- In Great Britain in 2003, 16 per cent of mammals and birds, and 16 per cent of reptiles, amphibians and freshwater fish, were assessed as 'threatened'.
- Nearly half of lower plants, and a third of vascular plants were assessed as threatened or nationally scarce in 2003.

Indicator: Area of woodland in the UK

S10

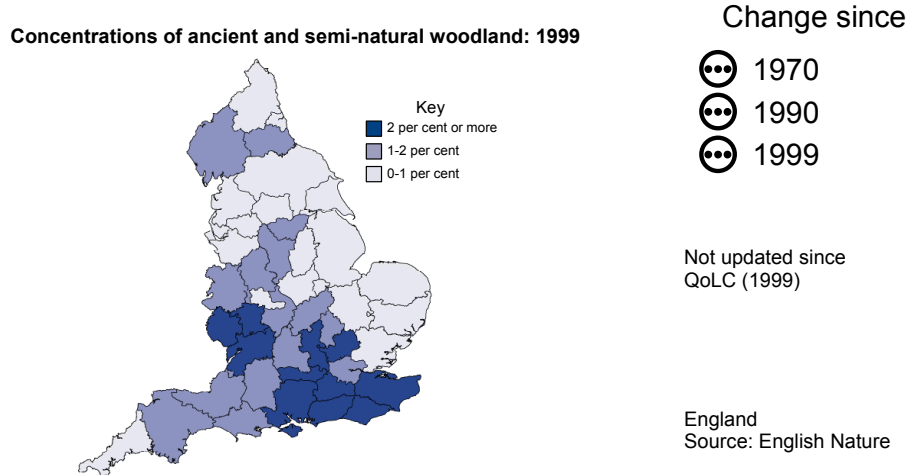


Objective: Continuing expansion of UK woodland area

- The area of woodland in the UK has increased over the last century.
- In 1998, the area of woodland in the UK was 2,758 thousand hectares. By 2003, this had risen by 2 per cent to 2,807 thousand hectares.
- Northern Ireland has seen a six-fold increase in the area of woodland since 1924.

Indicator: Area of ancient semi-natural woodland

S11



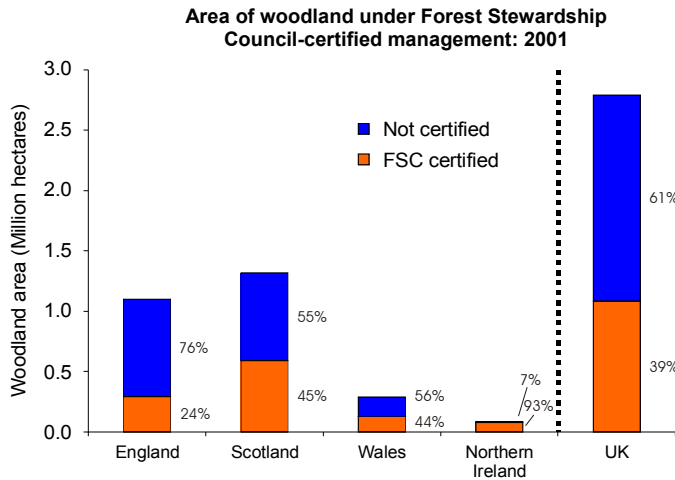
Note: Excludes woodlands smaller than 2 hectares.

Objective: Protecting and expanding ancient and semi-natural woodlands

- Updated data for this indicator are not available.
- The area of ancient semi-natural woodland has declined over the last century and the woodlands have become increasingly fragmented.
- In 1999, the area of ancient semi-natural woodland in GB was around 300,000 hectares, 1.4 per cent of total land area.

Indicator: Sustainable management of woodland†

S12



Change since

- ✔ 1970
- ✔ 1990
- ✔ Strategy

† New since QoLC (1999)

United Kingdom
Source: Forestry Commission

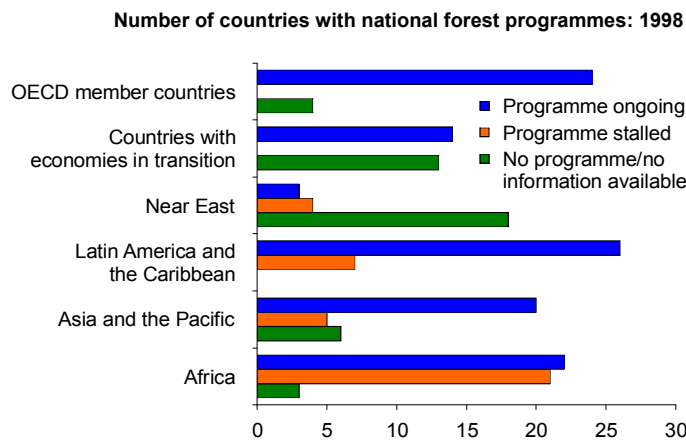
Note: Certified areas are as recorded at the time of certification and can include some non-woodland areas.

Objective: Better management of existing woodlands

- Forest certification is a process of inspecting woodland to see if it is being managed according to an agreed set of standards. It is still possible for woodland to be sustainably managed without being certified.
- In 2001, 291 thousand hectares in England, 590 thousand hectares in Scotland, 126 thousand hectares in Wales and 77 thousand hectares of the total woodland area in Northern Ireland were FSC certified.

Indicator: Number of countries with national forest programmes

S13



Change since

- ⊙ 1970
- ⊙ 1990
- ⊙ 1998

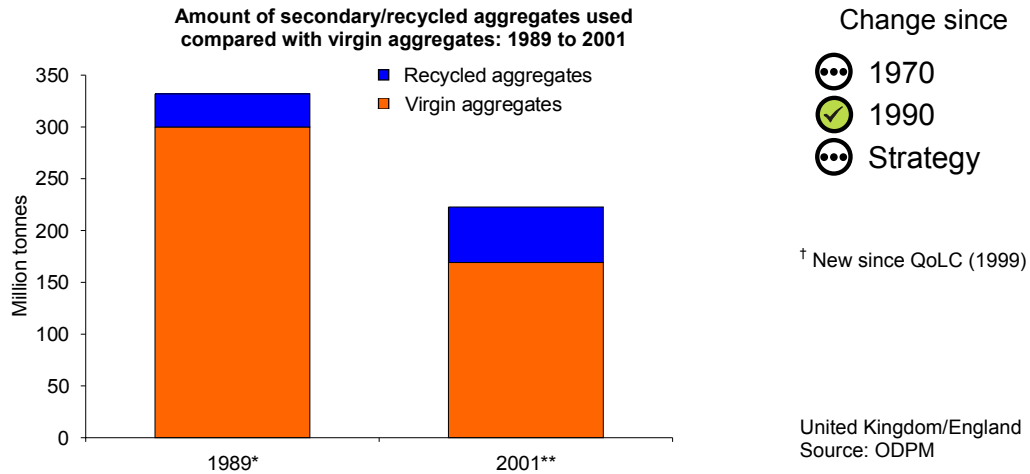
Not updated since QoLC (1999)

Global
Source: FAO

Objective: Sustainable forestry management overseas

- “National forest programme” is a general term for a wide range of national approaches to the achievement of sustainable forest management.
- Of the 190 countries surveyed, 77 per cent (146) had a national forest programme adopted by the intergovernmental panel on forests, of which 25 per cent (37) had stalled.

Indicator: Amounts of secondary/recycled aggregates used compared with virgin aggregates[†] S14

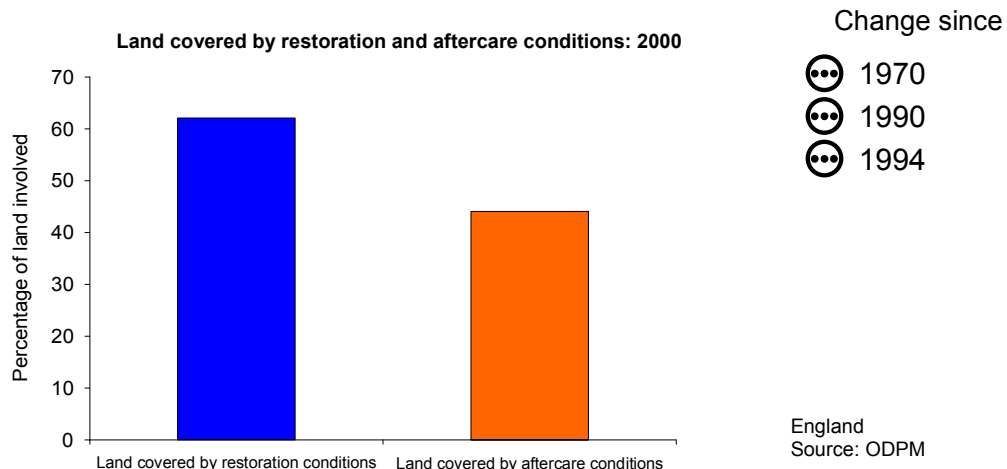


Notes: * UK.
 ** England.

Objective: Aim to maximise efficient use of materials and greater use of recycled and waste materials

- Figures for 1989 show that around 330 million tonnes of aggregates were used in the UK of which about 10 per cent were recycled materials. 2001 figures for England only show that nearly a quarter of the approximately 220 million tonnes of aggregates used in England in 2001 were recycled materials.
- Construction and demolition waste make up more than two thirds of recycled aggregates. The remaining recycling is from the use of secondary material and asphalt planings.

Indicator: Mineral working site land covered by restoration and aftercare conditions S15



Objective: All mineral working sites are restored to a standard suitable for a specific beneficial afteruse

- In 2000, 62 per cent of the land permitted for mineral extraction working was covered by restoration conditions, and 44 per cent was covered by aftercare conditions.
- Information for earlier years about the conditions attached to permissions for mineral working sites is not available on a consistent basis.