

# LET'S STOP **CLIMATE** CHANGE!

## SUSTAIN **FORESTS** – THE RESOURCE OF FUTURE.

### FOREST & GERMANY

Today's forests are part of the cultural landscape. Completely natural, from man unaffected forest ecosystems (so-called primary forest) have not existed in Germany for a long time. Human influences - such as clearing, pasture, forestry, woodland, hunting, drainage, air pollutants - have characterized the biodiversity of forests. Today's forest pictures are the result of the forestry decisions of our ancestors due to the needs of their time.

According to the results of the Federal Forest Inventory in 2012, Germany has a forest area of approx. 11.4 million hectares; which is 32 percent of the land area. In total, the forest area has increased slightly during the last decades. The entire forest area is protected by the federal and state forest laws. About 77% of today's forests have existed for at least 200 years. 36% of the forests have a near-natural composition of the tree species.

#### Distribution of tree species

For about three decades, forestry has been working increasingly on the principles of close to nature forest management. A core element here is the conversion of pure coniferous forest stands into site-appropriate broadleaf or mixed forest stands. The results of the Federal Forest Inventory 2012 are:

- The amount of broadleaf trees is increasing. At present, they account for 42% of forest area. The most important are beech (15%) and oak (10%) followed by birch (4%), alder, ash and maple (each 2%).
- The amount of conifers is decreasing: between 2002 and 2012 minus 267,000 hectares (about 4%) to 58%.
- At the same time, the spruce is still the most abundant tree species in Germany, with almost 2.8 million hectares (25% of the forest area). The second most common tree species is the pine tree with 2.5 million hectares (22%).
- Broadleaf and mixed forests have reached 72% in Germany. Due to climate change, the trend towards deciduous forests could continue. The spruce is particularly affected by climate change.
- Currently, the forest area with old trees has increased. Almost a quarter of the forest (24%) is older than 100 years, 14% are even older than 120 years.

#### Forest regeneration

The natural regeneration of trees is the most common type with 85% of the juvenile forest area. Plantings account for only 13%. Sowing and stockpiling are rare with around 2%.

#### Timber volume of forests

The timber volume in the forests have reached the highest level since the beginning of a regulated forest management. The average stock of beech (wood with a diameter above 7 cm) is about 336 cubic meters (cbm) per hectare (ha, 1 ha=10,000 square meters) or a total of 3.7 billion cbm. Compared to other countries in Central Europe, Germany presently maintains the highest stocking level.

#### Forest ownership structure

The ownership of the 11.4 million hectares of the German forest is widely spread. The ownership structures have developed historically and differ from region to region:

- 5.5 million ha are private forest (48%)
- 3.3 million ha are owned by the states (29%)
- 2.2 million ha are owned by corporations (19%)
- 0.4 million ha are owned by the federal government (4%)

UNITING FOR CLIMATE ACTION –  
FURTHER, FASTER, TOGETHER  
OFFICIAL CLIMATE PARTNER



[cop23.german-forestry.com](http://cop23.german-forestry.com)

**FORESTRY IN GERMANY**  
looking ahead but based on tradition