

Implications and adaptation: nature conservation and biodiversity

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Conservation thinking in the UK has developed in the context of a largely static view of the natural world. This has led to a focus on site-centred protection and management of existing semi-natural habitats and maintenance of the genetic distinctiveness of different species, sub-species or populations in order to conserve the existing appearance of individuals of a species, genetic integrity and local adaptations. Such aspirations have underpinned conservation thinking in relation to planting trees of local provenance.

Climate change is bringing into sharp relief the fact that nature is dynamic and that conservation needs to look to the future and find sustainable solutions. If we are to enable the widest biodiversity to survive and evolve there is an urgent need to restore degraded semi-natural habitats, create new habitats and reduce the general intensity of land use across whole landscapes. In this context should we:

- Continue to promote use of trees of local provenance?
- Ensure wider genetic diversity of planting stock?
- Introduce novel tree species from bioclimatic zones that are projected will shift here over the course of this century?