



A changing UK climate

Climate around the world and in the UK is changing due to human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and changes in land use. Without rapid and sustained global efforts to reduce emissions and adapt, the recent changes are set to increase and impacts for people and nature are expected to become more severe.



Nature can help us fight back!

Nature and wildlife are vulnerable to climate change and are also a key part of the solution to reduce and adapt to a changing climate. If we protect and restore nature, it can protect us too.



What does a warming world mean for Wildlife Trusts sites? Observations and climate model projections show:



Heat – increasing heat extremes with multiple record-breaking heatwaves in the last five years



Flooding - recent decades have been wetter and extreme rainfall is projected to increase



Drought – hotter, drier summers, increasing drought risk



Fire - hotter conditions and more frequent periods of water scarcity are likely to increase wildfire risk



Sea level rise - sea level around the UK has risen by 18.5cm since the 1900s and will continue to rise to 2100 and beyond

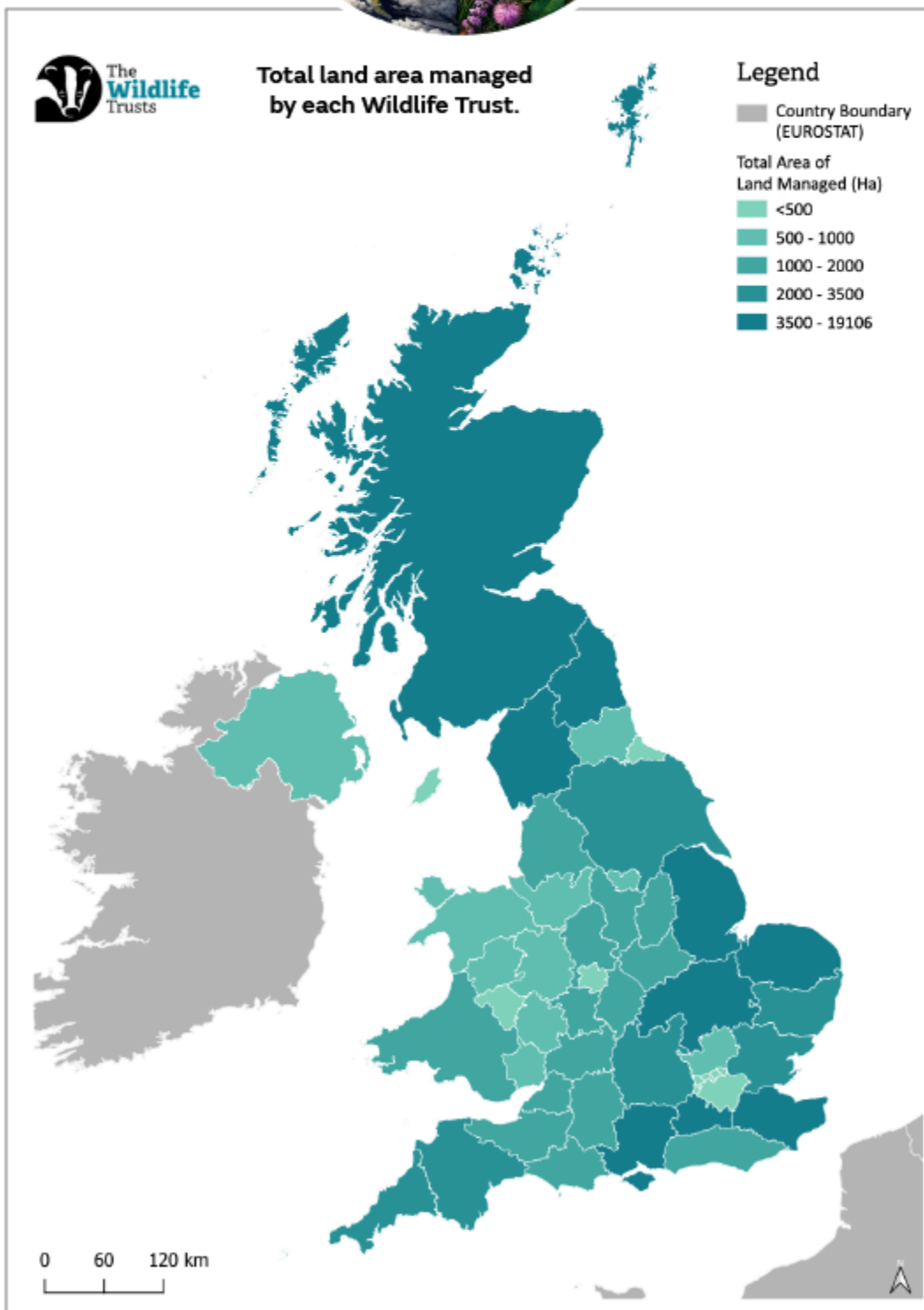
I care about nature and wildlife, how can I protect it from climate change? Here's how you can do more:

- Go peat-free – never buy products grown in peat
- Support your local Wildlife Trust and others undertaking woodland creation and restoration
- Change how you travel – wherever possible, use public transport
- Change your energy use – switch to a renewable supplier



Scan here to check out Wildlife Trust's website for more information.

www.wildlifetrusts.org/things-you-can-do-climate-change
www.metoffice.gov.uk/getclimateready



Wildlife Trust sites can sequester (lock away) carbon, helping to reduce climate change



Wildlife Trust habitats	Areas being restored	Potential for emissions reduction/sequestration
Peatlands	60,000 hectares	Emissions reduction of up to 13.4 tonnes of CO ₂ e per hectare per year
Woodlands	24,000 hectares	Sequestration of up to 30 tonnes CO ₂ e per hectare per year
Coastal/ Saltmarsh	7,000 hectares	Sequestration of up to 29 tonnes CO ₂ e per hectare per year



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Let nature help, keep the peat in the ground!

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What does a warming world mean for peatlands?

High temperatures and droughts make peatlands more susceptible to degradation and wildfire. Observations and climate model projections show:



Temperature - average annual temperatures are increasing across the UK



Heat – increasing heat extremes with multiple record-breaking heatwaves in the last five years



Drought – hotter, drier summers, increasing drought risk



Fire - hotter conditions and more frequent periods of water scarcity are likely to increase wildfire risk

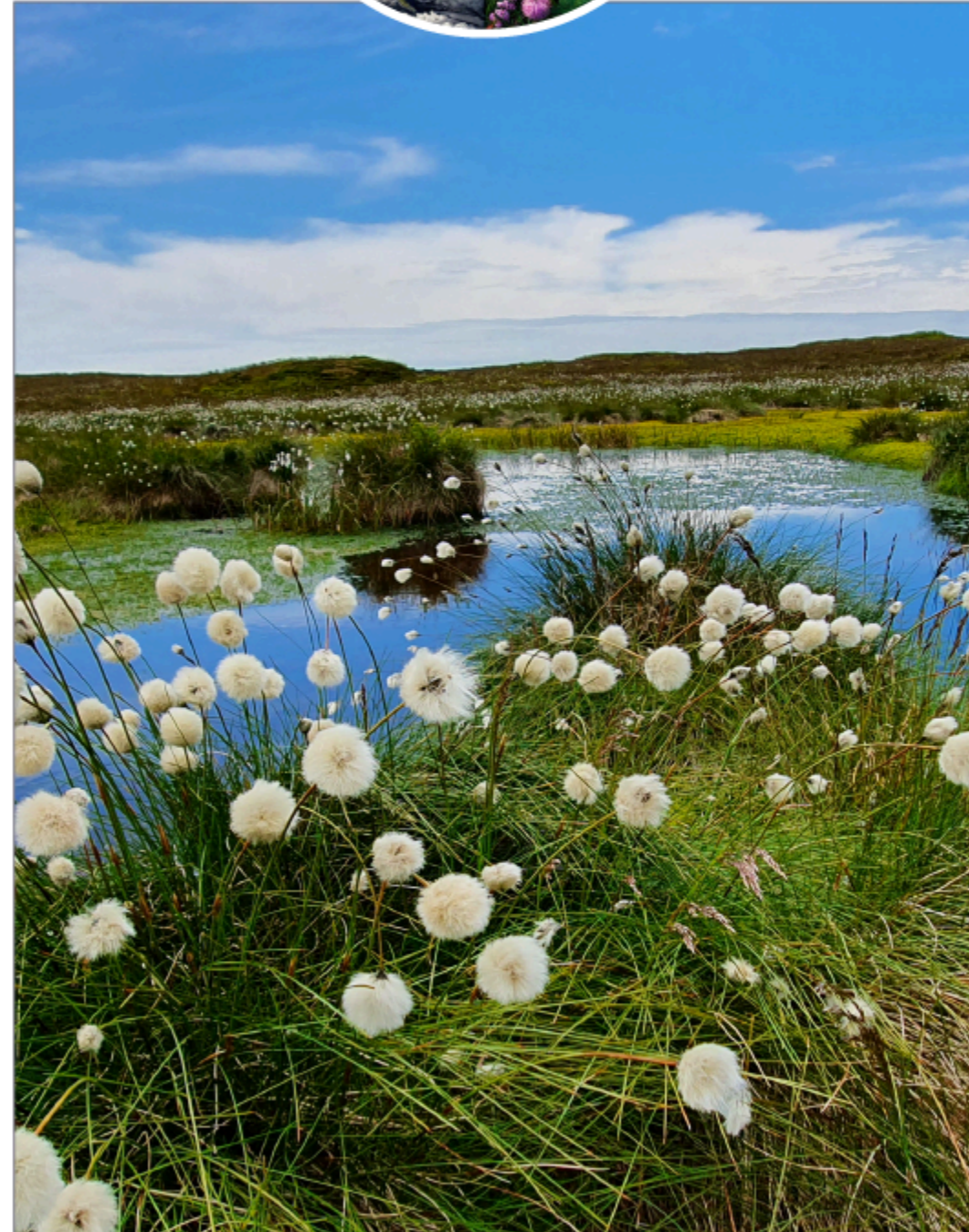
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Attributed to Beth Taylor/YPP
Taken on Ingleborough as part of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's Wild Ingleborough programme
Blanket bog pool with cottongrass

Healthy peatlands are a vital carbon store, they trap carbon safely.

- The Wildlife Trusts are restoring around 60,000 hectares of Peatlands
- The UK's peatland soils store around 3.2 billion tonnes of carbon but are heavily degraded and release the equivalent of 23 million tonnes of CO₂ every year
- Healthy peatlands can potentially reduce emissions by up to 13.4 tonnes of CO₂e per hectare per year
- Peatlands are affected by climate change and healthy peatlands can help to mitigate climate change by removing carbon from the atmosphere





Woodlands and a changing UK climate

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What does a warming world mean for woodlands? Observations and climate model projections show:



Heat – increasing heat extremes with multiple record-breaking heatwaves in the last five years



Flooding - recent decades have been wetter and extreme rainfall is projected to increase



Drought – hotter, drier summers, increasing drought risk



Fire - hotter conditions and more frequent periods of water scarcity are likely to increase wildfire risk

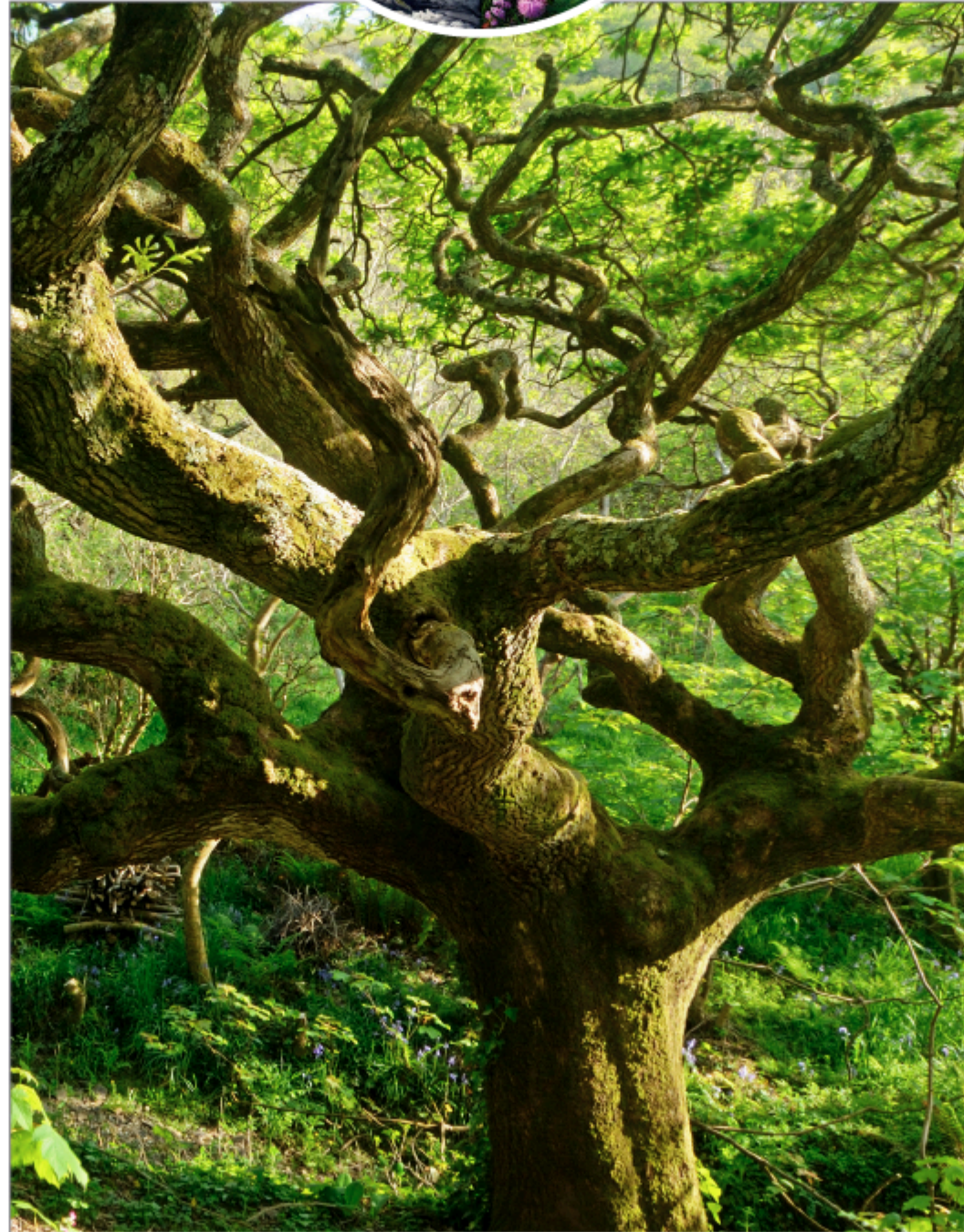
I care about nature and wildlife, how can I protect it from climate change? Here's how you can do more:

- Plant more greenery around your house; trees, shrubs and other plants
- Support your local Wildlife Trust and others undertaking woodland creation and restoration
- Change how you travel – wherever possible, use public transport
- Change your energy use – switch to a renewable supplier



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Attributed to Ross Hoddinott
Devon Wildlife Trust, Marsland Nature Reserve

The Wildlife Trusts currently care for 24,000 hectares of UK woodlands.

- Woodlands remove carbon dioxide, from the air, as well as providing important habitats for wildlife and spaces for people to enjoy
- In 2021, UK woodlands sequestered 19.6 million tonnes of greenhouse gases, valued at £5.1 billion (Woodland natural capital accounts, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk))





Coastal habitats, saltmarsh and a changing UK climate

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What does a warming world mean for coastal habitats and saltmarsh?



Sea level rise – sea level around the UK has risen by at least 16.5cm since 1900 and is expected to continue rising to 2100 and beyond. The rate of rise has increased rapidly in recent years to about 4.6mm per year



Coastal flooding – rising sea levels increase coastal flood risk, with more frequent and intense flooding



Windstorms – can cause impacts from storm surges and high waves in coastal areas. These are expected to worsen as sea level rises



Storm surge – there were 16 extreme storm surge events in 2023, of which 13 were associated with named storms



Sea surface temperature – the surface ocean is warming with 2022 the warmest year for UK near-coast Sea Surface Temperature since 1870



Attributed to Terry Whittaker
Abbots Hall Farm, Essex

The 17,800km of UK coastline, home to many habitats, is under threat from climate change.

- Approximately 1.25M residential and business properties are at risk from the impact of coastal flooding and erosion due to sea level rise
- Sea defences have resulted in coastal squeeze and disrupted the natural cycles of coastal habitats

The Wildlife Trust is working on creative projects to counter the effects of climate change at our coasts.

- Raising awareness of the practice of managed realignment where sea defences are deliberately breached to allow coastal habitats to form further inland
- Restoring seagrass meadows to protect coasts by absorbing the energy of the waves



I care about nature and wildlife, how can I protect it from climate change? Here's how you can do more:

- Reduce your flood risk – replace paving with grass and plants around your home
- Support your local Wildlife Trust and others undertaking woodland creation and restoration
- Change how you travel – wherever possible, use public transport
- Change your energy use – switch to a renewable supplier



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