



**Together we make forestry work**

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CEO Forestry Commission

8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

# Questions posed

- What are the barriers to new productive planting?
- How to get woodland into management to produce timber?

# Climate Crisis



# Forests, Woods and Trees are good



**CARBON**



**BIODIVERSITY**



**SOIL**



**TIMBER**



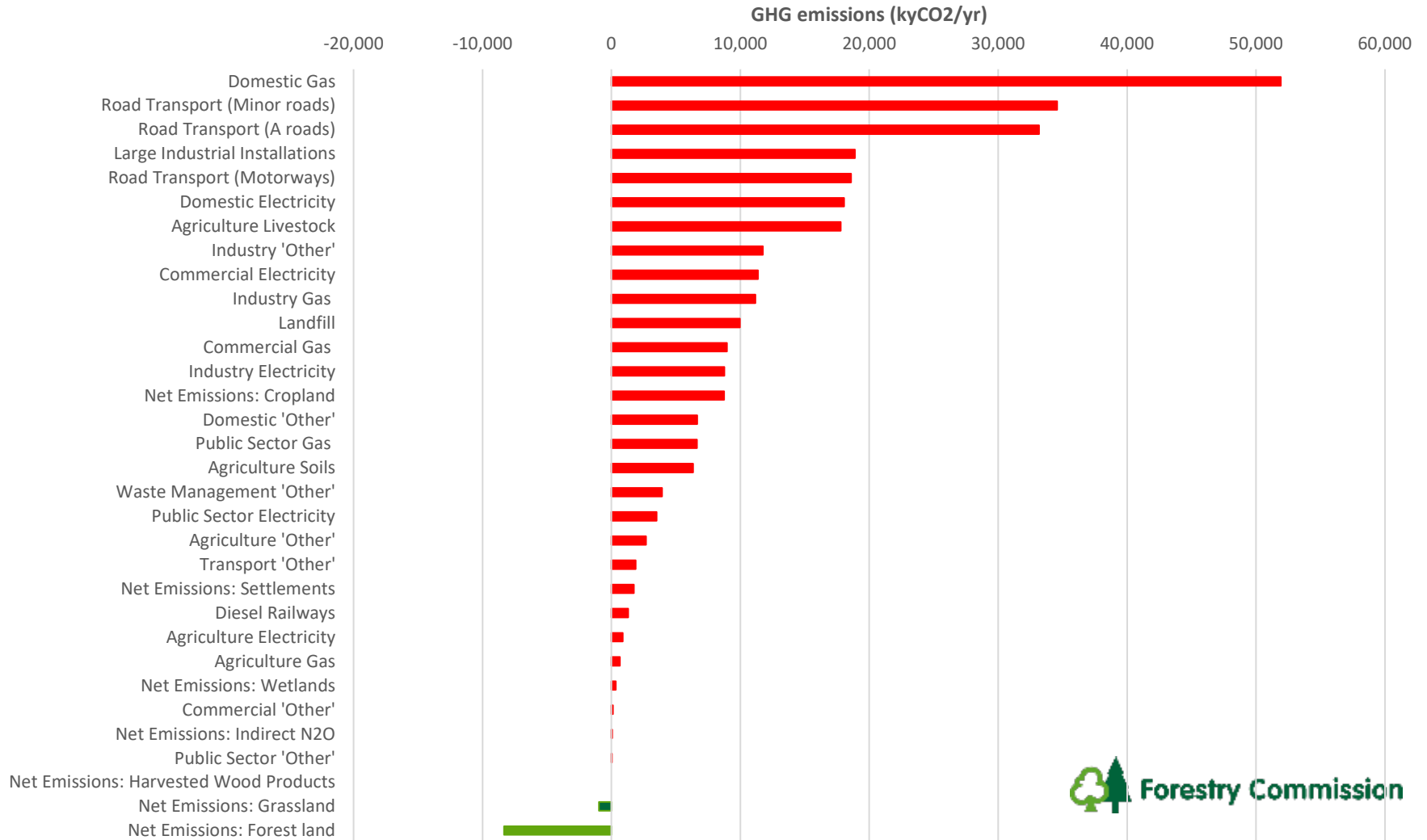
**PEOPLE**



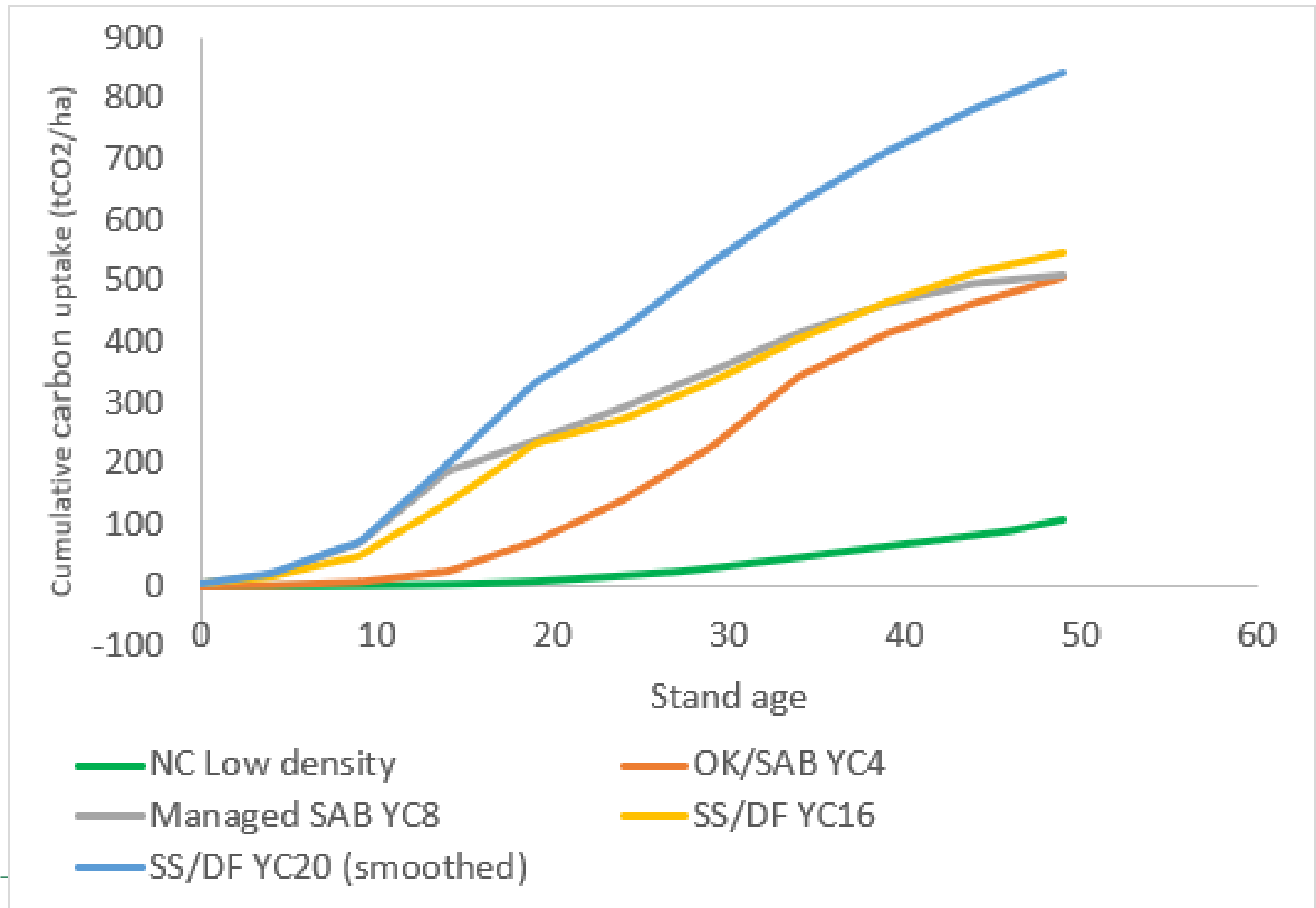
**WATER QUALITY**

# Trees and Greenhouse Gasses

England Total



# Carbon Capture of Different species



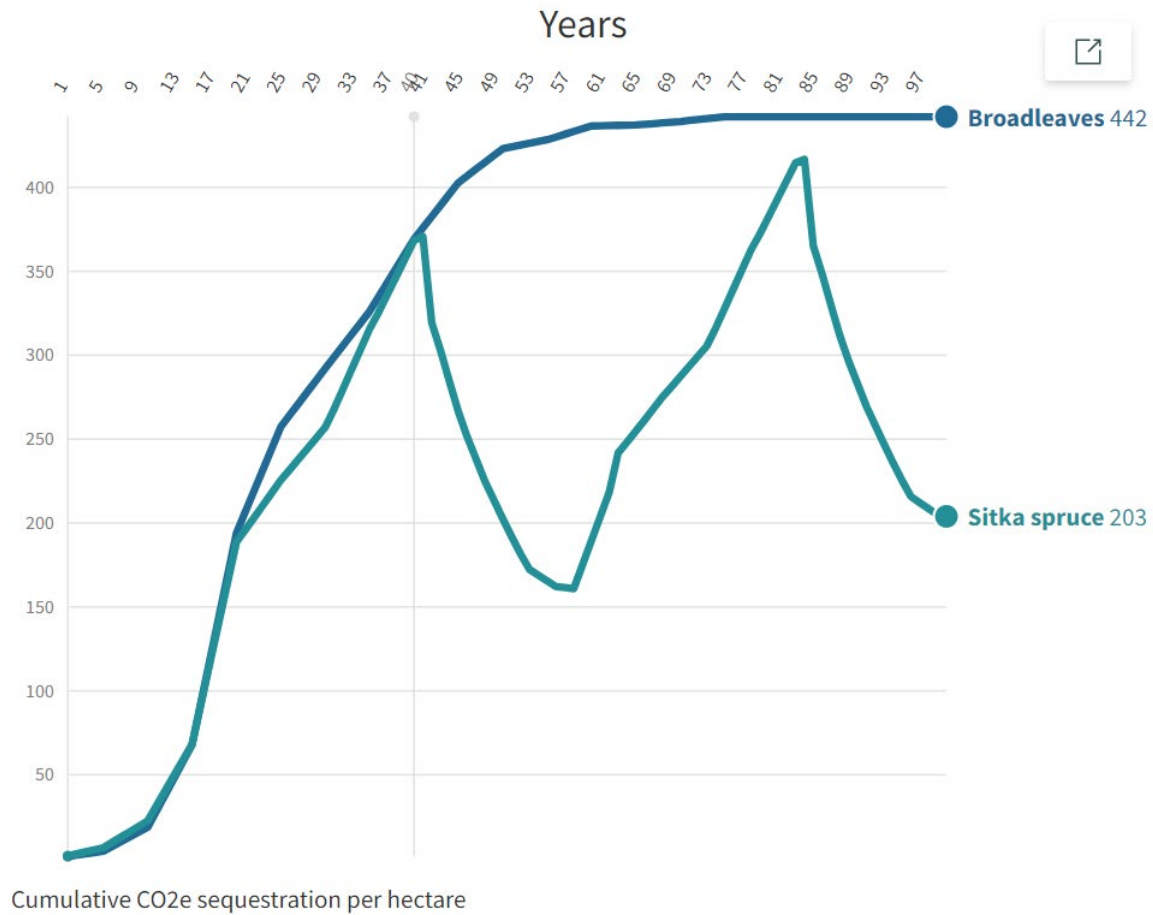
Data from Forest Research



# Carbon Capture of Trees – RSPB View



Nature must be at the heart of woodland expansion



# Native Broadleaf good Conifer evil

*Conifer plantations wreak havoc with balance of nature, impact soil quality and kill off wildlife habitats. Productive coniferous woodlands contribute to carbon foot print.*

*Proposal will be a dark and alien intrusion into sensitive historic landscape*

*Conifer is harmful to the environment*

*Conifer planting does not benefit soil*

*Conifer acts as heat sink and increases local warming, also a net-carbon emitter.*

*Conifers are not what is needed to promote rewilding and fight climate change. They will wreck natural habitat for wildlife.*

*Don't need dense non-native conifers marring beautiful countryside and wasting good farm land. Conifer planting is not wanted in \*\*\*\*shire.*

*Planting large block of conifers on level economic arable land cannot be justified on ecological, aesthetic or practical grounds. Proposal is a travesty*

*Density and conifer species proposed would impact local environment by impacting sight lines, access to sunshine and heritage assets. Lack of sunlight could be a safety issue to local roads.*



# Timber

81% of timber imported

2<sup>nd</sup> largest timber importer in the world

Construction is one of largest emitting industries

Timber security is as important as food security

## Value

- **32,000 jobs and £2Bn to economy**
  - Comparable to dairy products sector
  - More value than UK fishing fleet



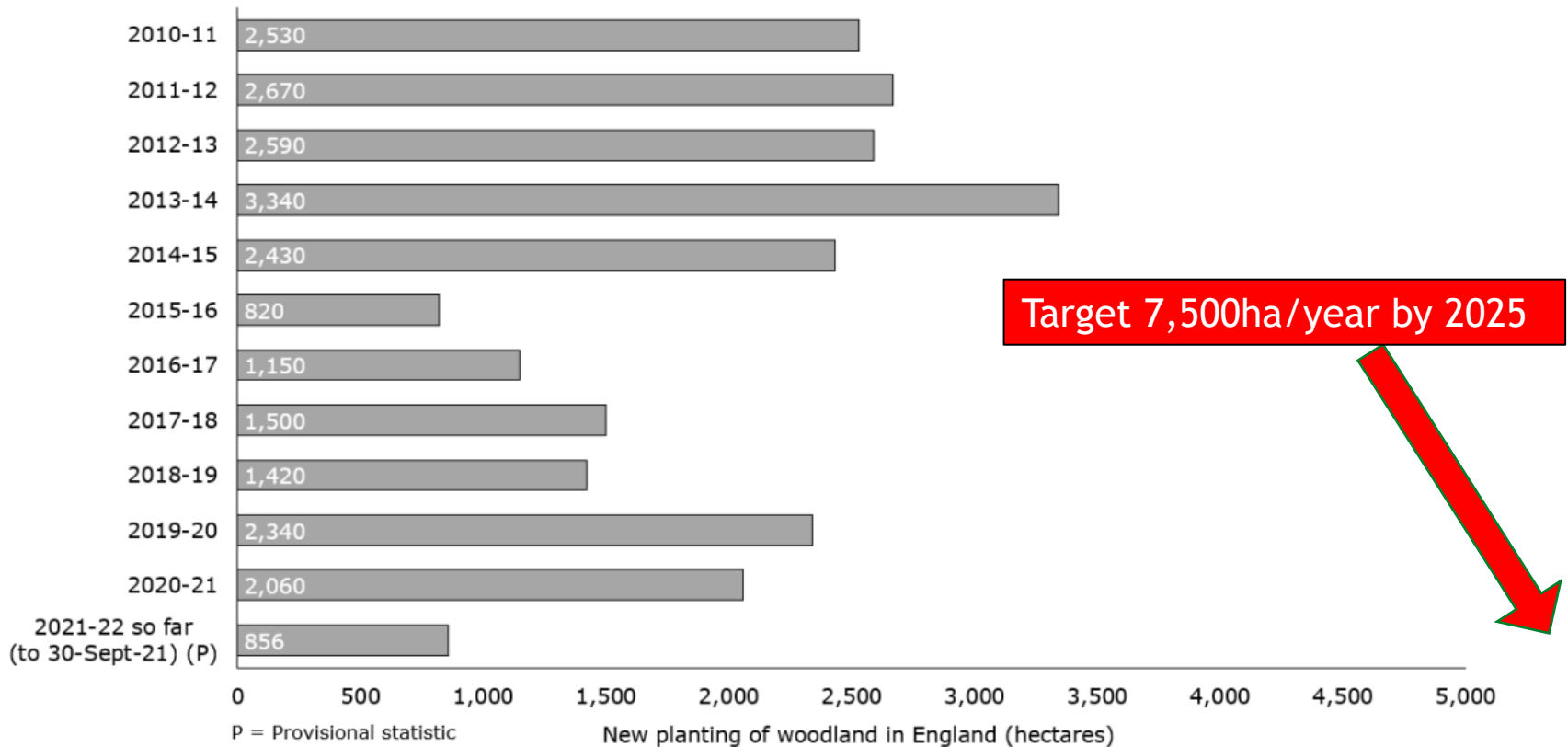
# UK Forestry Standard

- Woodland is the most regulated form of land use in England
- No other land use type has such an exacting technical standard
- Input from lots of 'ologists'

Ecologists  
Ornithologists  
Hydrologists  
Planners  
Soil scientists  
Social scientists  
Leisure managers

Archaeologists  
Pathologists  
Entomologists  
Landscape architects  
Foresters  
Health professionals  
Regulators

# New Woodland Planting



Source: [Forestry Statistics 2021](#) (Forest Research) and Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators.

# EWCO Successes

- More applications than envisaged
  - 464 in 21/22 compared to 200 in 2020
- Median size = 4ha
- 58% approved within 5 months
- A total of 13 applications of 10ha or more have been stuck in the system for > 3 months. Of these:
  - 1 has now been given approval
  - 3 about to be approved
  - 1 amended plan being worked on
  - 1 is stuck with AONB dispute
  - 7 are waiting for input from applicant

# Barriers to planting

- Policy
- Process
- People
- **Ministerial support**
- Cross Government and cross sector support

# Barriers to planting

- Policy

- ELM uncertainty
- Conifer / broadleaf mix
- Breeding waders
- WCC into ETS
- BNG
- Stacking

work in progress



review in March

work in progress

nearly there



- Process

- Presumption to plant
- WCPG and EWCO – consult once only
- Statutory consultees and timescales – 28 days for all?

work in progress

- People

- Behavioural change



# Woods into Management

- Woodland improvement 'WD2' under Countryside Stewardship
- Woodland management standard under the SFI pilot
- Woodland management plan an eligibility requirement for some grants
- Woodlands into Management Innovation Funds
- Better use of hardwoods + value of hardwood timber

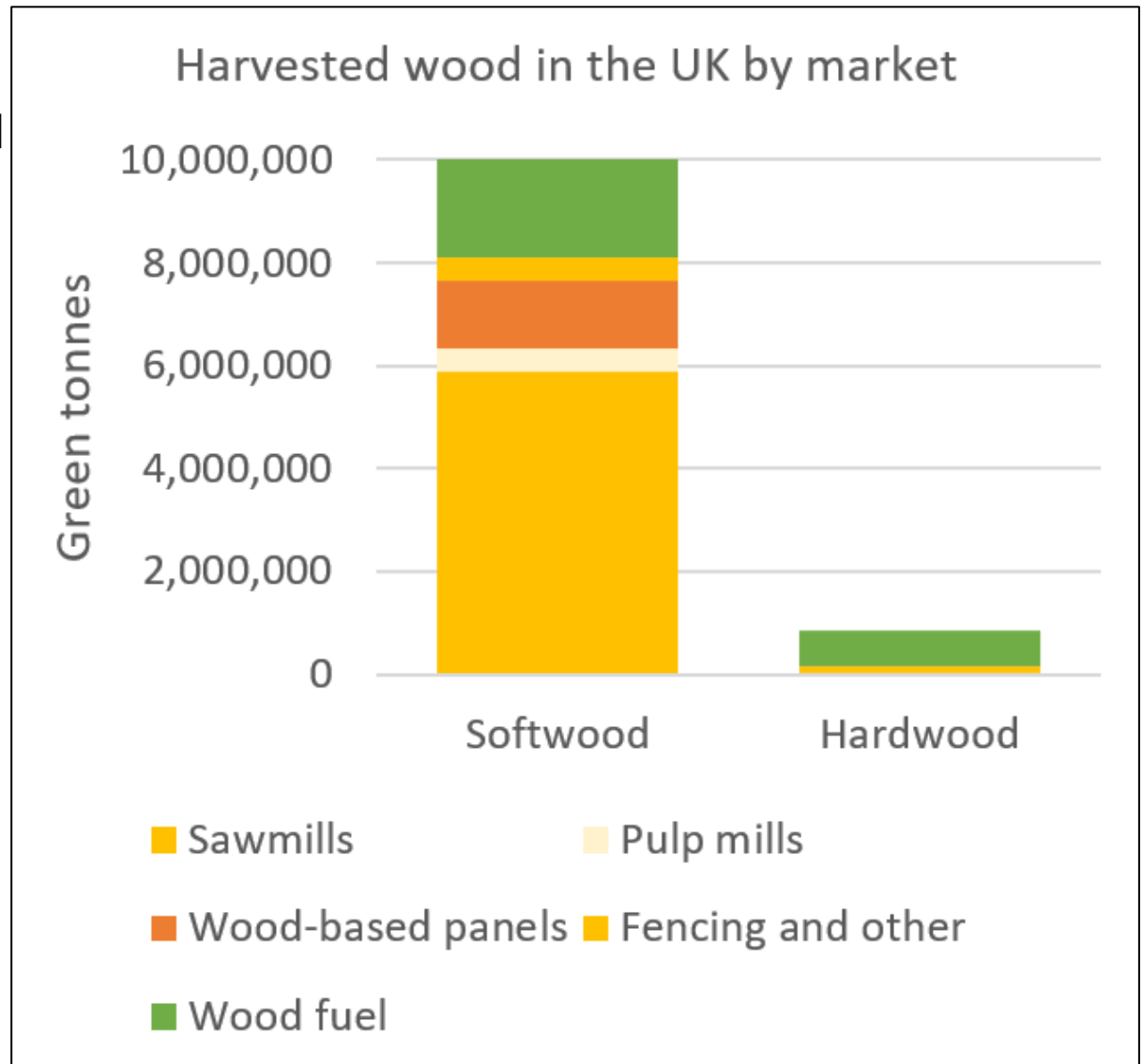
# The potential for hardwood

- 38.1% of annual growth of trees harvested in England

BUT

- 69.5% of conifer annual growth harvested
- 17.7% of annual growth of broadleaves harvested

Hardwoods currently represent less than 8% of the wood we produce. Of this, over 80% ends up as firewood



# We need more trees

- Debate and discussion should not be either nature or carbon / climate it has to be all outcomes
- We need all types of woodland designed to UKFS
- Champions of woods and forests are too few to be divided
- Emergencies and crises require crisis / emergency response
  - Pragmatism and delivery over purists and prevarication
- The default setting for all must be to grow trees



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to make forestry work**

Questions

