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Influence of Climate Change on Tree Growth and Forest Ecosystems

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Message from the Guest Editors

Recent research has shown that climate change is already altering tree species ranges, mortality and growth rates. Recent analyses of the potential effects of climate change on tree growth in Europe and America have suggested that important timber species may lose suitable habitat and suffer adversely from a combination of warming trends and reduced growing season precipitation. In contrast, other species may actually expand their range and potentially show improved growth rates in parts of their existing range, or show potential for their use as commercial species in new regions. Research has uncovered species-specific growth responses to climate change. In addition, the complex interactions between tree growth and temperature, water, nutrients, and carbon dioxide are also modulated by inter- and intra-specific competition levels. The state-of-the-art currently focuses on understanding how forest ecosystems, and not only tree species, could respond to climate change.

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