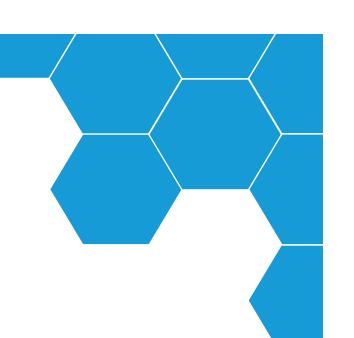
Diverse Forests Create a Healthier Environment



Understanding differences in tree species could lead to cleaner air and soil.

Different trees affect the environment in different ways. They have different lifespans, shade tolerances, growth rates, leaf traits, root traits, and more. More than 25 years ago, scientists planted 16 different tree species common to U.S. Northeastern forests in a "common garden" in Pennsylvania, and it has since become a powerful tool for asking questions about these species.

Current research is examining how trees trigger changes in soil biology and chemistry that can then lead to differences in how greenhouse gases are released. By understanding this relationship, scientists can better understand gas emissions and open the possibility of selecting tree species that improve soil and air quality.

