



Climate Change and Acid Rain: Good for Forests?

New research says that an increase in temperature from pollution may help forests grow better.

Researchers have been measuring the temperature and moisture caused by acid rain in four forests in the US. They found that trees grow faster at higher temperatures and store more carbon.

“It may well be that increasing temperature and nitrogen ... are good things ...” said a scientist.



Could climate change be good for some forests?

The rise in temperature is stretching the growing season, say scientists. So far, they measured an increase in the growing season of 10-11 days. “Our growing season isn't that long in the first place,” one pointed out.

A longer growing season could benefit the timber industry, allowing them to harvest more wood. The new study includes measurements of tree growth and the build-up of natural, organic matter in the soil.

Researchers want to discover if the increased growth is balanced by an increase in tree deaths. They hope to find out whether wood on the forest floor will break down more slowly, helping trees to store more carbon.

The new research is “a window into the future,” and a chance to see if there is a ‘tipping point’ beyond which nitrogen hurts rather than helps our forests.

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