

Peat

And global warming....

The government has set a target to reduce peat in all growing media by 90% by 2010, and with 40% as an interim target by 2005.

Britain's peatlands are our equivalent of the Amazon

Peatlands are vital carbon sinks

Britain has 15% of the world's peatlands - there is more carbon in British bogs than all the forests of Britain and France together.

Peatlands contain roughly 5,000 tonnes of carbon per hectare and absorb carbon from the air at a rate of 0.7 tonnes per hectare per year.

There is more carbon in peat bogs than in the whole of the earth's atmosphere.

If peatlands are growing naturally, they have the potential to store this carbon indefinitely and continue to absorb more of it.

The peat sold for gardening comes straight from these peatlands.

When disturbed, drained and mined, the peat decays and releases the carbon back to the atmosphere in massive quantities.

These bogs cannot be replaced - whereas a tree can be grown in 100 years, a bog takes thousands of years to restore itself.

Unique and rare habitat

Peat bogs contain many rare and endangered species - Thorne Moor, for example, has over 3,000 species of insects alone.

Thorne and Hatfield Moors have recently been saved from being mined for garden peat by English Nature and are being restored as part of Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve.

If you buy peat compost or a plant grown in peat, you are helping to destroy one of the world's greatest carbon stores and adding to global warming.