

## Talking Biotech: Genetic engineering could protect at-risk forests—but regulation blocks progress

Our forests sequester carbon from human activity, and serve as great resources for renewable building materials, fuels and recreation. However, our forests are threatened like never before. Rapidly changing climates, human activity, and new pests and pathogens have caused massive change in forest populations over a very short time, with some species driven nearly to extinction.

Scientists are poised to meet these problems with modern biotechnology. The problem is that the certification and regulatory bodies that govern the work have great restrictions on the kind of research that may be performed, and they all but forbid any types of genetic engineering. Ancient language installed by activist groups is difficult to overcome, and stops the best tools from being utilized in tree improvement.

Dr. Steve Strauss discusses the recent National Academies Report on forests and technology, and introduces a petition for scientists and concerned citizens to sign. The hope is that regulators and certification bodies will maintain rigorous assessment, yet will allow new technologies to at least be considered and tested as scientists search for answers.

Please [click here](#) to go to sign the petition.

Read the [full petition and related scientific background](#).

View a press release on the petition [here](#).

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