

## What is resilience?

**Resilience is the capacity of a system to continually change and adapt yet remain within critical thresholds.**

Resilience is the long-term capacity of a system to deal with change and continue to develop. For an ecosystem such as a forest, this can involve dealing with storms, fires and pollution, while for a society it involves an ability to deal with political uncertainty or natural disasters in a way that is sustainable in the long-term.

Increased knowledge of how we can strengthen resilience in society and nature is becoming increasingly important in coping with the stresses caused by climate change and other environmental impacts.

### **Why resilience?**

Sometimes change is gradual and things move forward in roughly continuous and predictable ways. At other times, change is sudden, disorganizing and turbulent reflected in climate impacts, earth system science challenges and vulnerable regions. Evidence points to a situation where periods of such abrupt change are likely to increase in frequency and magnitude. This challenges the adaptive capacity of societies.

The resilience approach focuses on the dynamic interplay between periods of gradual and sudden change and how to adapt to and shape change.

Research at the Stockholm Resilience Centre will address these challenges in order to generate a deeper understanding of interdependent social-ecological systems for improved governance and policy.