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Forestry

KEY FACTS

- In 2010, forests covered about 31 percent of the world's total land area – about 4 033 million hectares.
- About 93 percent of the world's forest cover is natural forest and 7 percent is planted.
- Deforestation affected an estimated 13 million hectares per year between 2000 and 2010; net forest loss was 5.2 million hectares per year, due to afforestation and natural expansion.
- Most deforestation takes place in tropical countries, whereas most developed countries with temperate and boreal forest ecosystems – and more recently, countries in the Near East and Asia – are experiencing stable or increasing forest areas.
- Between 1990 and 2010, the amount of forest land designated primarily for the conservation of biological diversity increased by 35 percent, indicating a political commitment to conserve forests. These forests now account for 12 percent of the world's forests.
- Approximately 14 million people worldwide are formally employed in the forestry sector. Many more depend directly on forests and forest product for their livelihood.
- In developing countries, wood-based fuels are the dominant source of energy for more than 2 billion poor people. In Africa, over 90 percent of harvested wood is used for energy.
- Wood is not the only resource taken from forests. About 80 percent of people in the developing world use non-wood forest products for health and nutritional needs and for income.

Managing forests for the future

One of FAO's strategic goals is the sustainable management of the world's forests. The FAO Forestry Department works to balance social and environmental considerations with the economic needs of rural populations living in forest areas. FAO serves as a neutral forum for policy dialogue, as a reliable source of information on forests and trees and as a provider of expert technical assistance and advice to help countries develop and implement effective national forest programmes.

Sharing ideas, creating partnerships

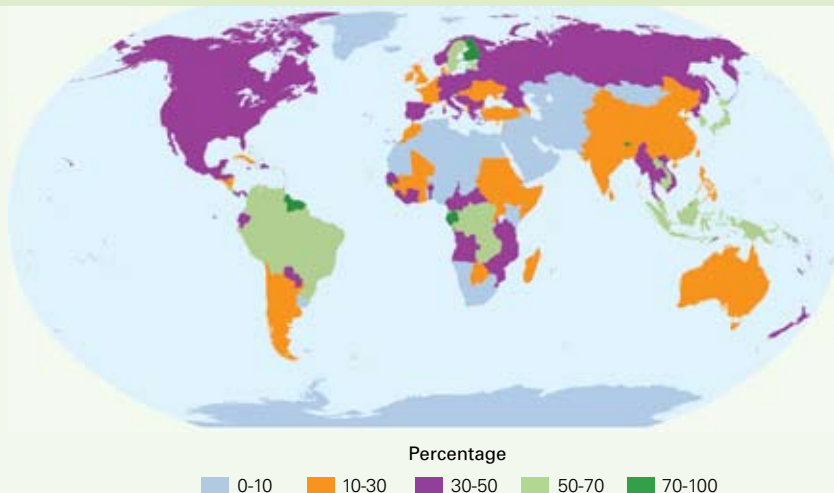
FAO's Committee on Forestry brings together decision-makers from national forest services, international organizations, the private sector and civil society to examine emerging international forestry issues and shape the Organization's forestry programme. Six regional forestry commissions meet to address regional issues. There is also an FAO Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products that brings together leaders from the private sector to address global issues and to provide advice to FAO.

In 2008, FAO joined forces with the UN Development Programme and the UN Environment Programme to support the UN programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) in developing countries. The programme builds on the combined expertise of the three collaborating agencies and works at

both national and global levels with 34 partner countries.

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests, a group of 14 leading international organizations concerned with the world's forests, is chaired by FAO. The group's mission is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest and strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. FAO also hosts the Mountain Partnership, an international consortium concerned with livelihoods of mountain people and the conservation of mountain ecosystems, and the National Forest Programme Facility, an innovative approach to forest development in developing countries that promotes participatory processes and effective national policies that integrate forestry with other key sectors.

Forest area as a percentage of total land area by country, 2010



Source: FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010

Sound information for sound forest policy

FAO is both a global clearinghouse for information on forests and forest resources and a facilitator that helps build countries' local capacity to provide their own national forest data. In collaboration with member countries, FAO carries out periodic global assessments of forest resources, which are made available through reports, publications and the FAO Web site. The *Global Forest Resources Assessment* provides the most comprehensive reporting on forests worldwide.

Every two years, FAO publishes the *State of the World's Forests*, a major report covering current and emerging issues facing the forestry sector. *Unasylva*, FAO's peer-reviewed journal on forestry, has been published in English, French and Spanish on a regular basis since 1947, the longest-running multilingual forestry journal in the world.



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FAO-supported researchers work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Knowledge for better forest management

FAO provides technical assistance and advice to help countries develop and improve national forest programmes, plan and carry out forest activities, and implement effective forest legislation. More than 120 countries have benefited from the Organization's forestry guidance over the last 20 years.

FAO develops guidelines for forestry management through broad consultative processes with stakeholders in all regions of the world. Popular guidelines cover fire management, responsible management of planted forests and forest harvesting practices.

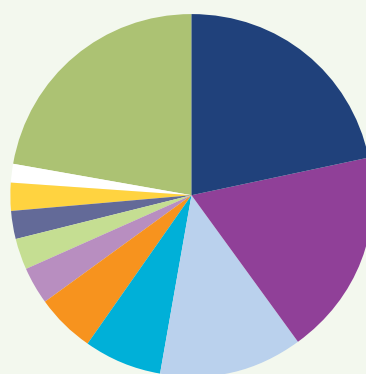
Forests are the world's most important source of renewable bio-energy. The FAO publication, *Forests and Energy: Key Issues*, provides guidance to member countries that are facing critical policy decisions in this important area. FAO works with countries to develop systems for harnessing energy without depleting tree resources.

The Organization also helps countries to develop strategies to control pests and diseases, in addition to providing emergency assistance to safeguard forest health.

Fire affects millions of hectares of forest land every year. FAO works with countries to adopt community-based approaches, strengthen fire-related policy and legislation, and promote international cooperation in fire management.

The livelihoods of hundreds of millions of rural people depend on forests and trees. People who benefit from forests are more likely to conserve them if they have a say in how they are managed. FAO promotes participatory forestry and community-based enterprise development to enable communities to balance their economic needs with the conservation of forest resources for the future.

Ten countries with largest forest area designated for protection of soil and water, 2010

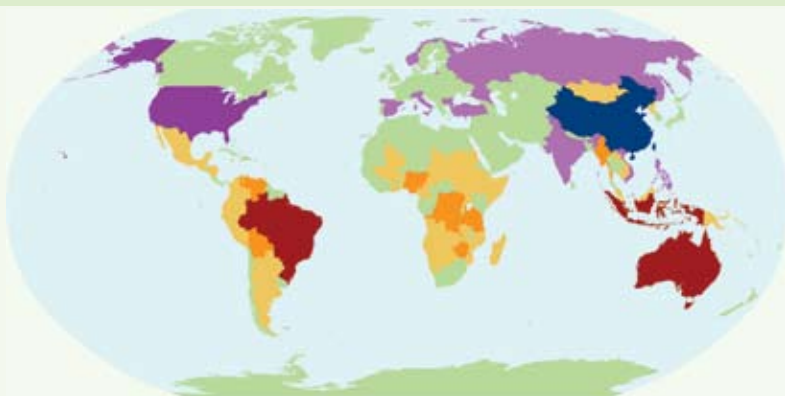


(1 000 ha)

Russian Federation	71 436	Mozambique	8 667
China	60 480	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	7 915
Brazil	42 574	Viet Nam	5 131
Indonesia	22 667	Remaining countries	73 014
Japan	17 506		
India	10 703		
Lao People's Democratic Republic	9 074		

Source: FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010

Net change in forest area by country, 2005–2010 (ha/year)



Net loss	Small change (gain or loss)	Net gain
More than 500 000	Less than 50 000	50 000-250 000
250 000-500 000		250 000-500 000
50 000-250 000		More than 500 000

Source: FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010



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