

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S FORESTS REPORT 2020

FORESTS, BIODIVERSITY AND PEOPLE

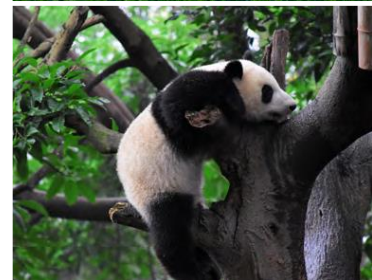
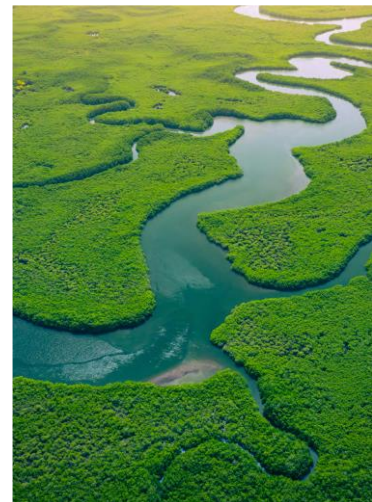
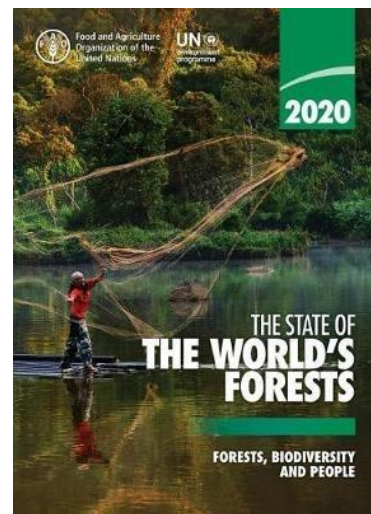
Published on the International Day for Biological Diversity (22 May 2020), [the State of the World's Forests Report 2020](#) shows that the conservation of the world's biodiversity is utterly dependent on the way in which we interact with and use the world's forests. The report was produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and technical input from the UNEP - World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

The year 2020 marks the end of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. All countries are coming together to review progress towards the Plan's five Strategic Goals and the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets to shape the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The 2020 edition of *The State of the World's Forests* takes the opportunity to examine the contributions of forests, and of the people who use and manage them, to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Forests cover just over 30 percent of the global land area, yet they provide habitat for the vast majority of the terrestrial plant and animal species known to science. Unfortunately, forests and the biodiversity they contain continue to be under threat from actions to convert the land to agriculture or unsustainable levels of exploitation, much of it illegal.

The Report launches the following key messages:

- Forests cover 31 percent of the global land area. Approximately half the forest area is relatively intact, and more than one-third is primary forest.
- The net loss of forest area has decreased substantially since 1990, but deforestation and forest degradation continue to take place at alarming rates resulting in significant loss of biodiversity.
- The world is not on track to meet the target of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests to increase forest area by 3 percent worldwide by 2030.
- Forests harbour most of Earth's terrestrial biodiversity. The conservation of the world's biodiversity is thus utterly dependent on the way in which we interact with and use the world's forests.
- The biodiversity of forests varies considerably according to factors such as forest type, geography, climate and soils – in addition to human use.
- Progress on preventing the extinction of known threatened species and improving their conservation status has been slow.
- All people depend upon forests and their biodiversity, some more than others.
- Feeding humanity and conserving and sustainably using ecosystems are complementary and closely interdependent goals.
- Human health and well-being are closely associated with forests.



- Agricultural expansion continues to be the main driver of deforestation and forest fragmentation and the associated loss of forest biodiversity.
- Actions to combat deforestation and illegal logging have gathered pace over the past decade – as have international agreements and results-based payments.
- Large-scale forest restoration is needed to meet the SDGs and to prevent, halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity.
- Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (to protect at least 17 percent of terrestrial area by 2020) has been exceeded for forest ecosystems as a whole. However, protected areas alone are not sufficient to conserve biodiversity.
- Aichi Biodiversity Target 7 (by 2020, areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation) has not been met for forests, but the management of the world's forests is improving.
- Solutions that balance conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity are critical – and possible.
- Current negative trends in biodiversity and ecosystems will undermine progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Ensuring positive outcomes for both biodiversity and people requires a realistic balance between conservation goals and demands for resources that support livelihoods.
- We need to transform our food systems to halt deforestation and the loss of biodiversity.
- Forests are increasingly recognized for their role as a *nature-based solution* to many sustainable development challenges. We must build on this momentum to catalyze bold actions to prevent, halt and reverse the loss of forests and their biodiversity, for the benefit of current and future generations.

The State of the World's Forests 2020, available in English, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, French and Russian, assesses progress to date in meeting global targets and goals related to forest biodiversity and examines the effectiveness of policies, actions and approaches, in terms of both conservation and sustainable development outcomes. A series of case studies provide examples of innovative practices that combine conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity to create balanced solutions for both people and the planet.

To know more

[The State of the World's Forests 2020 in FAO website](#)

[Digital Report 2020 online](#)

[Interactive Report](#)

[The State of the World's Forests Executive Summary](#)

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