



Deforestation Rate Declined

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Why in News

According to the **Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (FRA 2020) report**, the rate of forest loss has declined in the period of 1990-2020.

- The FRA is released by the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**.
- The FRA 2020 is **based on the assessment** of more than **60 forest-related variables in 236 countries** and territories in the period of 1990–2020.

Key Points

- **Total forest area:** The world's total forest area is 4.06 billion hectares (bha), which is 31% of the total land area. This area is equivalent to 0.52 hectares per person.
- **Top countries in forest cover** — the **Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the United States of America and China** constituted more than 54% of the world's forests.
- **Forest loss:** According to the report, the **world has lost 178 million hectares (mha) of forest since 1990**, an area the size of Libya.
- **Decline in rate of forest loss:** The rate of net forest loss decreased substantially during the period of 1990–2020.
 - It was 7.8 mha per year in the decade 1990–2000, 5.2 mha per year in 2000–2010 and 4.7 mha per year in 2010–2020.
 - This is due to a **reduction in deforestation in some countries**, plus **increases in forest area in others** through afforestation and the **natural expansion of forests**.
- **Areas that witnessed forest loss:** **Africa** had the **largest annual rate of net forest loss** in 2010–2020, at 3.9 mha, **followed by South America**, at 2.6 mha.

- **Areas that witnessed forest gain: Asia** had the **highest net gain of forest area** in 2010–2020, **followed by Oceania and Europe**.
However, Oceania experienced net losses of forest area in the decades 1990–2000 and 2000–2010.
- **Types of forest loss:** The largest proportion of the world's forests are tropical (45%), followed by **boreal, temperate and subtropical**.
Naturally regenerating forest areas worldwide **decreased** since 1990, but the area of **planted forests has** increased.
- **Plantation forest** cover is 131 mha, about 3% of the global forest area.
The **highest percent** of plantation forests are in **South America** while the **lowest are in Europe**.
- **Protected forest areas** worldwide estimate around 726 mha.
 - **South America** has the highest share of forests in protected areas, at 31%.
 - The protected forest areas increased by 191 mha since 1990.

Global Forest Resources Assessment

- The FRA presents a comprehensive view of the world's forests and the ways in which the resource is changing.
- It supports the development of sound policies, practices and investments affecting forests and forestry.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- The Food and Agriculture Organization is an **agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- FAO is also a source of knowledge and information and helps developing countries and countries in transition to modernize and **improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices and ensure good nutrition and food security** for all.
- **Formation:** 16th October 1945
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy

Source: DTE