



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## NORTH AMERICAN FOREST COMMISSION

### TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

**Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, 3 – 7 May 2010**

## GLOBAL FOREST ASSESSMENT 2010 – KEY FINDINGS

1. FAO, in cooperation with its member countries, has monitored the world's forests at 5 to 10 year intervals since 1946. These global assessments provide valuable information to policy-makers in countries, to international negotiations, arrangements and organizations related to forests and to the general public. The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (FRA 2010) covers all seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management:

- Extent of forest resources
- Forest biological diversity
- Forest health and vitality
- Productive functions of forest resources
- Protective functions of forest resources
- Socio-economic functions of forests
- Legal, policy and institutional framework

Information was also collected on trends in forest ownership and management. FRA 2010 collected and analyzed information on more than 90 variables from 233 countries and areas. More than 900 specialists contributed to the process - including 178 country correspondents and their teams.

2. The Key Findings of FRA 2010 were released on 25 March, 2010 and the main report will be presented at COFO in October. It will be complemented by a global remote sensing survey of forests, to be completed in 2011 and a series of special studies.

3. FRA 2010 found that the forests cover 31 percent of total land area of the world, just over 4 billion hectares, which corresponds to an average of 0.6 hectares per capita. The five most forest-rich countries (the Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the United States of America and China) account for more than half of the total forest area.

4. Deforestation – mainly the conversion of tropical forest to agricultural land – shows signs of decreasing in several countries but continues at an alarmingly high rate in others. Around 13 million hectares of forest were converted to other uses or lost through natural causes each year in the last decade compared to 16 million hectares per year in the 1990s. Both Brazil and Indonesia, which had the highest net loss of forest in the 1990s, have significantly reduced their rate of loss, while in Australia, severe drought and forest fires have exacerbated the loss of forest since 2000.
5. Primary forests account for 36 percent of the total forest area – but have decreased by more than 40 million hectares since 2000. This decrease, 0.4 percent over a ten-year period, is largely due to reclassification of primary forest to "other naturally regenerated forest" because of selective logging and other human interventions.
6. The area of planted forest is increasing and now represents 7 percent of the total forest area, or around 264 million hectares. During the period 2005-2010, the area of planted forest increased by about 5 million hectares per year – mostly through afforestation, particularly in China.
7. Twelve percent of the world's forests, or more than 460 million hectares, are designated for the conservation of biological diversity. This area has increased by more than 95 million hectares since 1990, of which the largest part (46 percent) was designated between 2000 and 2005. Most but not all of these forests are located inside protected areas.
8. Legally established protected areas now cover an estimated 13 percent of the world's forests and also this area has increased by more than 90 million hectares since 1990 – with two-thirds of this increase since 2000.
9. Forest fires are severely underreported at the global level. For those countries which did report, an average of one percent of all forests was reported to be significantly affected each year by forest fires. Pests and diseases, natural disasters and invasive species are causing severe damage in some countries. The mountain pine beetle has devastated more than 11 million hectares of forest in Canada and the western United States since the late 1990s – an unprecedented outbreak exacerbated by higher winter temperatures.
10. Thirty percent of the world's forests, close to 1.2 billion hectares are primarily used and managed for the production of wood and non wood products.
11. **Regional summary:**
  - North America contains 679 million hectares of forests, or 17 percent of the global forest area. Overall, the forest area has increased by about 2.2 million hectares since 1990 equivalent to an average increase of 110 000 hectares per year over the last 20 years.
  - Ownership: the vast majority of the forests in Canada are publicly owned, in USA more than half are privately owned, while for Mexico there is limited information and most of the forests are declared as having unknown ownership.
  - In terms of designated use and management, 14 percent of all forests in North America are designated primarily for production of wood and non-wood forest products, 15 percent for conservation of biological diversity, 68 percent for multiple uses, and 3 percent is reported as unknown. The forest area designated for protection of soils and water and for social services as the primary objective of management is less than one percent. However these purposes are often included in the objectives of multiple use areas and as a secondary objective in other areas.
  - Around 275 million hectares or 41 percent of the total forest area in the region is primary forest. Together, these forests represent 20 percent of the total area of primary forest in the world. Primary forests cover 53 percent of the total forest area in both Mexico and Canada and 25 percent of the forest area in USA.

- In terms of “Other natural regenerated forests”, 54 percent of the total forest area in region falls under this category with 68 percent of the total forest area in the USA, 44 percent in Canada, and 42 percent in Mexico.
- Just over 5 percent of the forests in North America are planted or sown. In terms of percentage of the forest area in each country 3 percent of forests in Canada, 5 percent in Mexico and 8 percent in the USA are planted.
- The value of industrial wood removals doubled between 1990 and 2005, but has since fallen dramatically.
- Canada reported that more than 29 000 students graduated in forestry in 2005, while USA reported just over 5 000 and Mexico just over 1 000 – both for 2008.
- All three countries have a forest policy with a national scope adopted or amended in 1969 in USA, 2001 in Mexico and 2008 in Canada. Subnational forest policies also exist in all three countries, while Mexico is the only country which reported having a national forest programme, initiated in 2007.

**Copies of the Key Findings of the Global Forest Resources Assessment can be found at FAO’s website: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra/fra2010/en/>**