



Forestry Department

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**GLOBAL FOREST RESOURCES
ASSESSMENT**

COUNTRY REPORTS

**GREENLAND
(DENMARK)**

FRA2005/033
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The Forest Resources Assessment Programme

Sustainably managed forests have multiple environmental and socio-economic functions important at the global, national and local scales, and play a vital part in sustainable development. Reliable and up-to-date information on the state of forest resources - not only on area and area change, but also on such variables as growing stock, wood and non-wood products, carbon, protected areas, use of forests for recreation and other services, biological diversity and forests' contribution to national economies - is crucial to support decision-making for policies and programmes in forestry and sustainable development at all levels.

FAO, at the request of its member countries, regularly monitors the world's forests and their management and uses through the Forest Resources Assessment Programme. This country report forms part of the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005 (FRA 2005), which is the most comprehensive assessment to date. More than 800 people have been involved, including 172 national correspondents and their colleagues, an Advisory Group, international experts, FAO staff, consultants and volunteers. Information has been collated from 229 countries and territories for three points in time: 1990, 2000 and 2005.

The reporting framework for FRA 2005 is based on the thematic elements of sustainable forest management acknowledged in intergovernmental forest-related fora and includes more than 40 variables related to the extent, condition, uses and values of forest resources. More information on the FRA 2005 process and the results - including all the country reports - is available on the FRA 2005 Web site (www.fao.org/forestry/fra2005).

The Global Forest Resources Assessment process is coordinated by the Forestry Department at FAO headquarters in Rome. The contact person for matters related to FRA 2005 is:

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The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005 Country Report Series is designed to document and make available the information forming the basis for the FRA 2005 reports. The Country Reports have been compiled by officially nominated country correspondents in collaboration with FAO staff. Prior to finalisation, these reports were subject to validation by forestry authorities in the respective countries.

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1 Table T1 – Extent of Forest and Other wooded land

1.1 FRA 2005 Categories and definitions

Category	Definition
Forest	Land spanning more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than 5 meters and a canopy cover of more than 10 percent, or trees able to reach these thresholds <i>in situ</i> . It does not include land that is predominantly under agricultural or urban land use.
Other wooded land	Land not classified as “Forest”, spanning more than 0.5 hectares; with trees higher than 5 meters and a canopy cover of 5-10 percent, or trees able to reach these thresholds <i>in situ</i> ; or with a combined cover of shrubs, bushes and trees above 10 percent. It does not include land that is predominantly under agricultural or urban land use.
Other land	All land that is not classified as “Forest” or “Other wooded land”.
Other land with tree cover (Subordinated to “Other land”)	Land classified as “Other land”, spanning more than 0.5 hectares with a canopy cover of more than 10 percent of trees able to reach a height of 5 meters at maturity.
Inland water bodies	Inland water bodies generally include major rivers, lakes and water reservoirs.

1.2 National data

1.2.1 Data sources

References to sources of information	Quality (H/M/L)	Variable(s)	Year(s)	Additional comments
Fl. Rune (pers. comm.)	L	Forest, Other wooded area	2005	As no formal inventory exists for Greenland, the knowledge of local experts is the basis of the information.
FAOSTAT	M	Land Area, Inland water		

1.2.2 Classification and definitions

No definitions and classifications exist for forest and other wooded land, but an attempt has been made to estimate the areas using the FAO definitions.

1.2.3 Original data

There is limited information available on the vegetation and the forest areas of Greenland. In the interior Greenland between 60°10'N and 61°20'N minor areas in the bottom of climatically protected valleys are covered by a natural forest of *Betula pubescens* with a low copse-like underforest of *Salix glauca*. Occasional it is mixed with *Sorbus groenlandica*. The tallest birch trees reach just above 10 metres in the interior behind Nanortalik (60°17'N). Further north they do not exceed 7 metres. The total forest area reaching above 5 metres is below 200 ha.

Furthermore, a few small plantations with conifers have been established at the fiords Tasermiut and Tunulliarfik in South Greenland. The most successful species are *Larix siberica*, *Pinus contorta*, *P. silvestris*, and *Picea sp.* The tallest trees reach about 7 metres, and seem to be resistant to the harsh winter climate. The total area is less than 20 ha.

There are larger areas which fulfil the criteria for being Other wooded land. It is areas with dense copse vegetation of 0.5-4 metres height. By far the most common species in the copse is *Salix glauca*, in the southernmost part of the country often accompanied by *Betula pubescens* and single specimens of *Sorbus groenlandica*. In West Greenland between 61°N and 66°N *Alnus crispa* is the only accompanying species. It may have 7-8 metres long, down-bended trunks which, however, hardly rise more than 2-3 metres above ground. North of the polar circle only *Salix glauca* may reach above 0.5 metre. The willow copses are best developed on south facing slopes and on moist ground in the bottom of low-land valleys, but there is much variation in these areas. An estimate of their total area is subject to a large uncertainty and needs more definite surveys. Assuming that not more than 0.1 % of the ice-free land between 60°N and 68°N along the west coast of Greenland is covered with these vegetation types, their area is less than 7500 ha, but this figure may prove to be erroneous.

1.3 Analysis and processing of national data

1.3.1 Estimation and forecasting

There is no basis for any forecasting.

1.4 Data for National reporting table T1

FRA 2005 Categories	Area (1000 hectares)		
	1990	2000	2005
Forest	0.22	0.22	0.22
Other wooded land	7.5	7.5	7.5
Other land	41037	41037	41037
...of which with tree cover	ID	ID	ID
Inland water bodies	0	0	0
TOTAL ¹⁾	41045	41045	41045

1) The total country area listed in Table T1 excludes areas of permanent ice.

1.5 Comments to National reporting table T1

There is limited information available on the vegetation and the forest areas of Greenland. The data on forest and other wooded land are highly uncertain, and there is no formal inventory or land cover mapping done for Greenland according to the FAO forest definitions. Since no formal inventory has been done for Greenland, data are only provided for table T1.