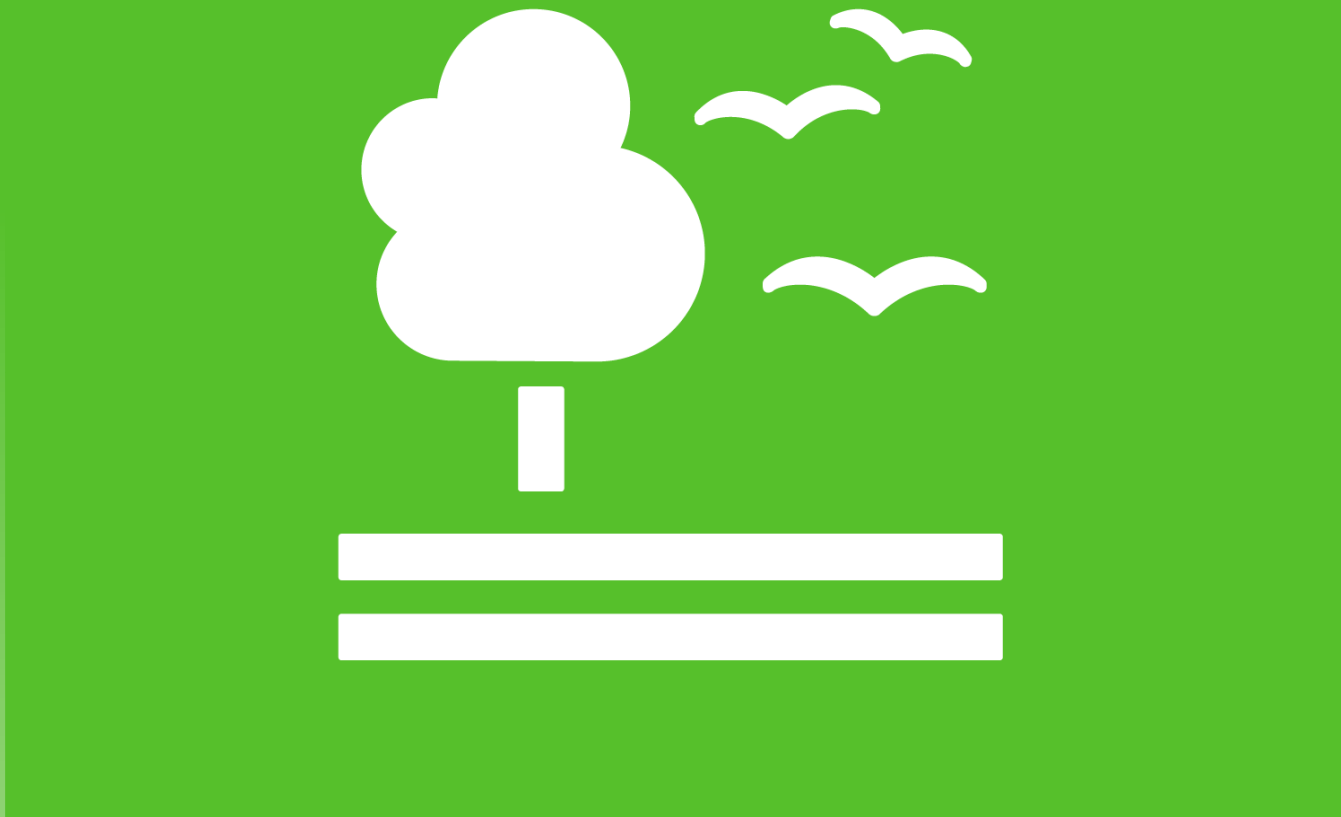


15 LIFE ON LAND



The Sustainable Development Goals Extended Report 2022

Note: The Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNSD) prepares the annual The Sustainable Development Goals Report, also known as the glossy report, based on storyline inputs submitted by UN international agencies in their capacity as mandated custodian agencies for the SDG indicators. However, due to space constraints, not all information received from custodian agencies is able to be included in the final glossy report. Therefore, in order to provide the general public with all information regarding the indicators, this 'Extended Report' has been prepared by UNSD. It includes all storyline contents for each indicator as provided by the custodian agencies and is unedited. For instances where the custodian agency has not submitted a storyline for an indicator, please see the custodian agency focal point information linked for further information.

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Target 15.1: By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements

Indicator 15.1.1: Forest area as a proportion of total land area

Significant progress around the world towards sustainable forest management, but unsustainable agricultural practices and uneven regional responses means forest loss is still high

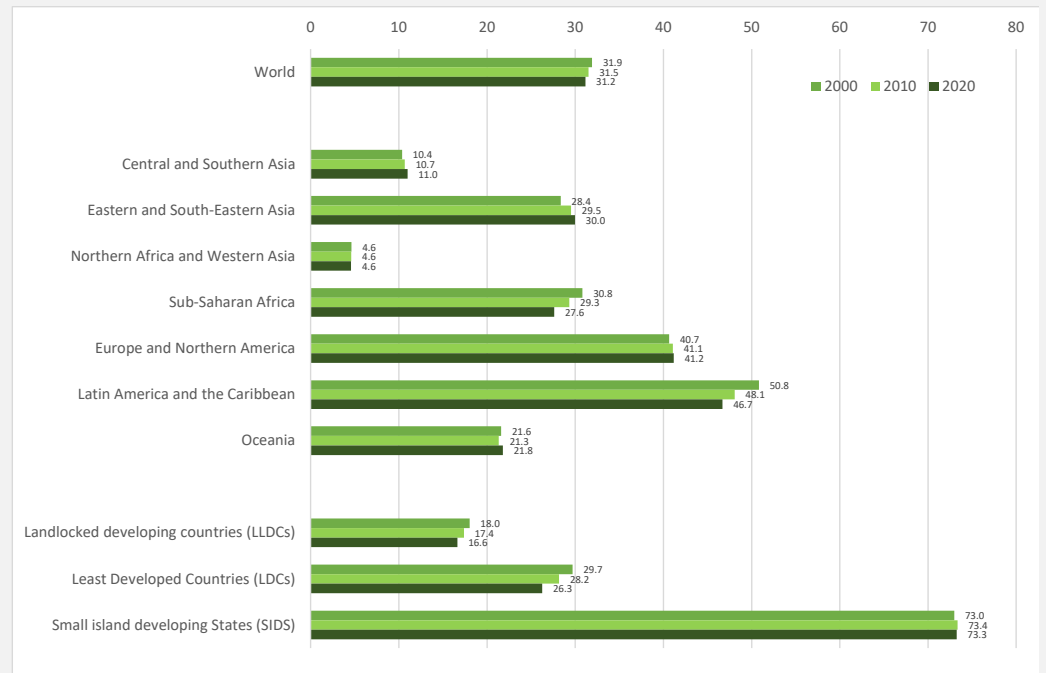
The world's forest area continues to decrease but at a slightly slower rate than previous decades. The proportion of forest area fell from 31.9 percent of the total land area in 2000 to 31.2 percent in 2020. This represents a net loss of almost 100 million ha of the world's forests in two decades.

Changes in forest area varies widely from region to region. Asia, Europe and Northern America showed an overall increase in forest area from 2000 to 2020 due to afforestation, landscape restoration efforts and natural expansion of forests. On the other hand, significant forest losses occurred in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa due to the conversion of forests into agricultural land used for crops and grazing.

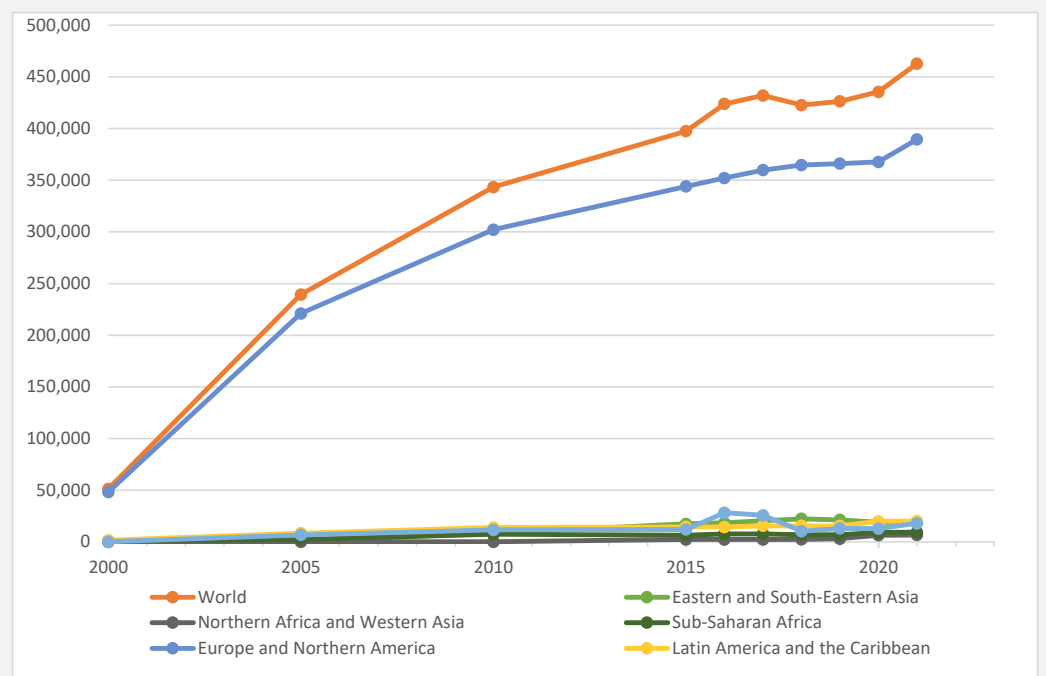
Despite the overall loss of forest, the world continues to progress towards sustainable forest management. Since 2010, there has been a 35 percent increase in forests under certification schemes and the proportion of forest within protected area increased globally from 17 to 18 percent. Forests are also accumulating more biomass and carbon per hectare. Furthermore, the total percentage of world forests under a long-term management plan increased from 54 percent in 2010 to 58 percent in 2020. While almost all forests in Central Asia, Western Asia and Europe fall under a management plan, the proportion of forests under a plan remains low in Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Although the short and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on forest are difficult to measure, the pandemic has likely affected forests and forestry by intensifying the pressure on forest resources and changing the dynamics on land use and forest products demand.

Forest area as proportion of total land area (percent)



Certified forest area (1000 ha)



Dashboard for SDG indicator 15.2.1

SDG Region	Progress between 2000-2010 and 2010-2020 decades		Progress between 2010 and 2020		
	Annual forest area change rate ¹⁾	Above-ground biomass stock in forest (t/ha)	Proportion of forest area within legally established protected areas	Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan	Forest area certified ²⁾ (2020-2021)
World	●	●	●	●	●
Central and Southern Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Central Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Southern Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Eastern Asia	●	●	●	●	●
South-Eastern Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Northern Africa and Western Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Northern Africa	●	●	●	●	●
Western Asia	●	●	●	●	●
Sub-Saharan Africa	●	●	●	●	●
Europe and Northern America	●	●	●	●	●
Europe	●	●	●	●	●
Northern America	●	●	●	●	●
Latin America and the Caribbean	●	●	●	●	●
Oceania	●	●	●	●	●
Oceania (exc. Australia and New Zealand)	●	●	●	●	●
Australia and New Zealand	●	●	●	●	●
Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)	●	●	●	●	●
Least Developed Countries (LDCs)	●	●	●	●	●
Small island developing States (SIDS)	●	●	●	●	●

¹⁾ The annual forest area change rate is calculated using compound interest formula.

Legend:
 ● Positive change
 ● No/small change
 ● Negative change
 No certified area

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment Website: <http://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/en/>
- FAO The State of the World's Forests 2020 Website: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8642en>
- FAO The impacts of COVID-19 on the forest sector: How to respond? Website: <http://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1273752/>

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Anne Branthomme, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Indicator 15.1.2: Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type

Global coverage by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas has increased from around a quarter of each site covered by protected areas on average to nearly one half over the last two decades, and encouragingly,

Both biodiversity and human-driven threats to it vary dramatically around the surface of our planet. Sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity – are called “Key Biodiversity Areas”, identified through nationally led processes in all the world’s countries, and documented in the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas. Measures for safeguarding the biodiversity of specific sites, such as the establishment and management of protected areas or “other effective area-based conservation measures” have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing the rate of biodiversity loss. As such, the coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures is a crucial indicator of progress towards SDG targets 14.5 (for marine), 15.1 (for terrestrial and freshwater), and 15.4 (for mountains).

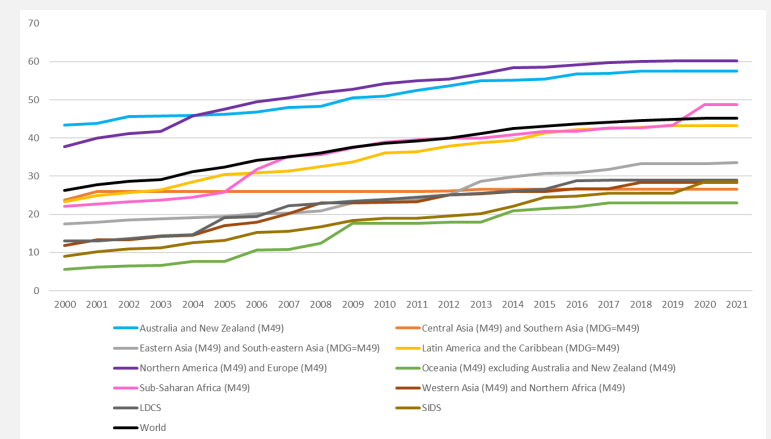
Globally, the indicator reveals substantial progress over the last two decades, with the mean percentage coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures increasing from a little over one quarter in 2000, up towards one half in 2021. This is the case across Key Biodiversity Areas in marine, terrestrial, and freshwater ecosystems, as well as in mountains. While this progress is encouraging, there is still a very large room for improvement, with more than half of the extent of each Key Biodiversity Area on average still not safeguarded to retain the biodiversity for which it is globally significant.

There is considerable variation among regional groupings in both the overall mean coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures today, and in the rate at which this has increased over the last 20 years. Regions that still have particularly low coverage (less than 35%) across marine, terrestrial, freshwater, and mountain Key Biodiversity Areas comprise Western Asia & Northern Africa, Central Asia & Southern Asia, Eastern Asia & Southeastern Asia, and Oceania. In addition, coverage for freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas is still below 35% in Australia and New Zealand (although it exceeds 50% for marine, terrestrial, and mountain Key Biodiversity Areas in this region). Coverage is also low (again, below 35%) for marine Key Biodiversity Areas in Least Developed Countries, and for marine, terrestrial, and mountain Key Biodiversity Areas in Small Island Developing States.

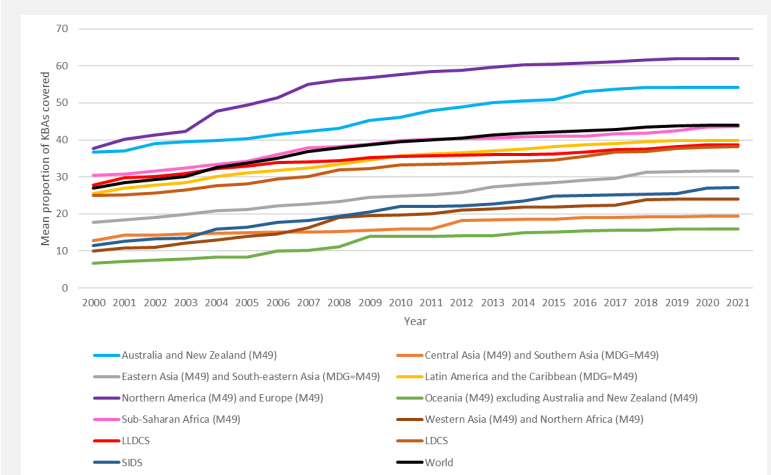
Considering the rate of increase over the last two decades reveals considerable success even in some of the regions where overall coverage is still low. Most notably, mean coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures has more than doubled over the last 20 years in Western Asia & Northern Africa, across marine, freshwater, terrestrial, and mountain environments. It has also more than doubled for marine and terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas in Oceania, and for marine Key Biodiversity Areas in Sub-Saharan Africa. The trend has also been encouraging in Small Island Developing States, where mean coverage of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas has increased from just one sixth in 2000 to more than three-fifths in 2021.

Mozambique provides an example of a country that has made excellent progress towards SDG targets 14.5.1, 15.1.2, and 15.4.1, more than doubling mean coverage of its Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures over the last two decades. Over the last three years, the country has also undertaken a comprehensive process to refine the identification of its Key Biodiversity Areas, delineating 25 terrestrial sites as well as four in the marine environment. These data are being used in Mozambique’s National Territorial Plan and National Marine Spatial Plan to highlight where harmful development should be avoided and to guide protected area expansion.

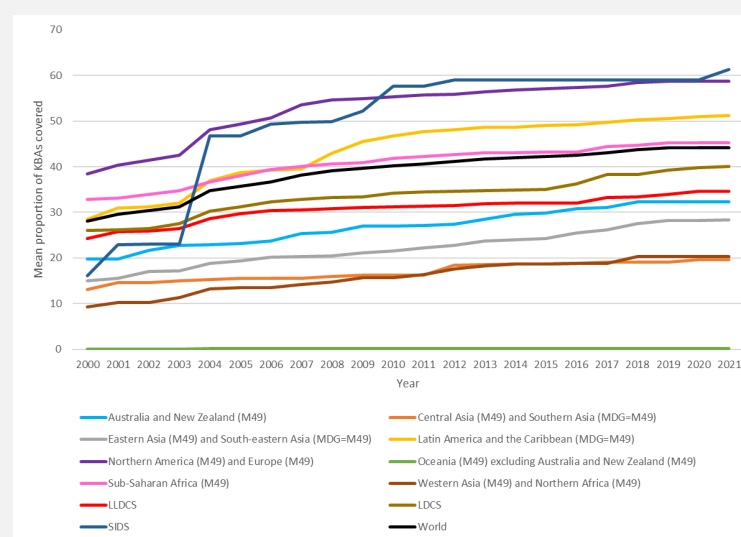
14.5.1 - marine



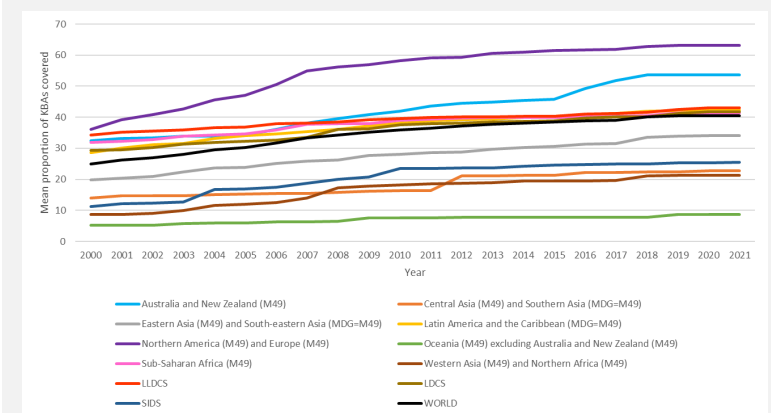
15.1.2 - terrestrial



15.1.2 – freshwater



15.4.1 – mountains



Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Ed Lewis, UNEP-WCMC; Stu Butchart, BirdLife International; Tom Brooks, IUCN; Ash Simkins, Birdlife International

Custodian agency(ies): UNEP-WCMC, UNEP, IUCN

Target 15.2: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally

Indicator 15.2.1: Progress towards sustainable forest management

Significant progress around the world towards sustainable forest management, but unsustainable agricultural practices and uneven regional responses means forest loss is still high

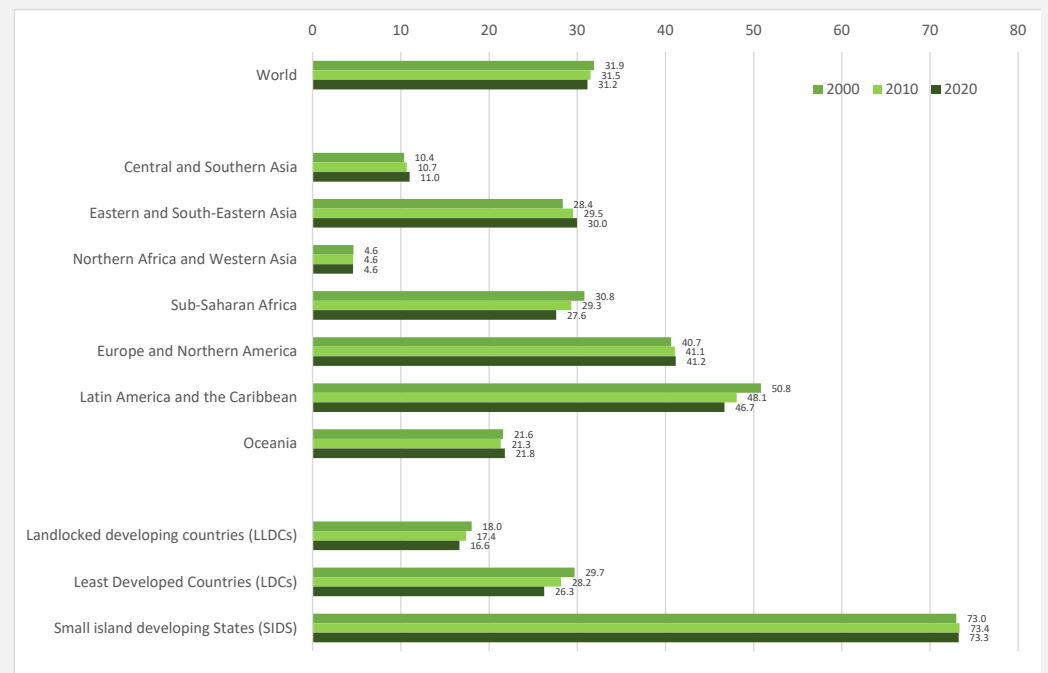
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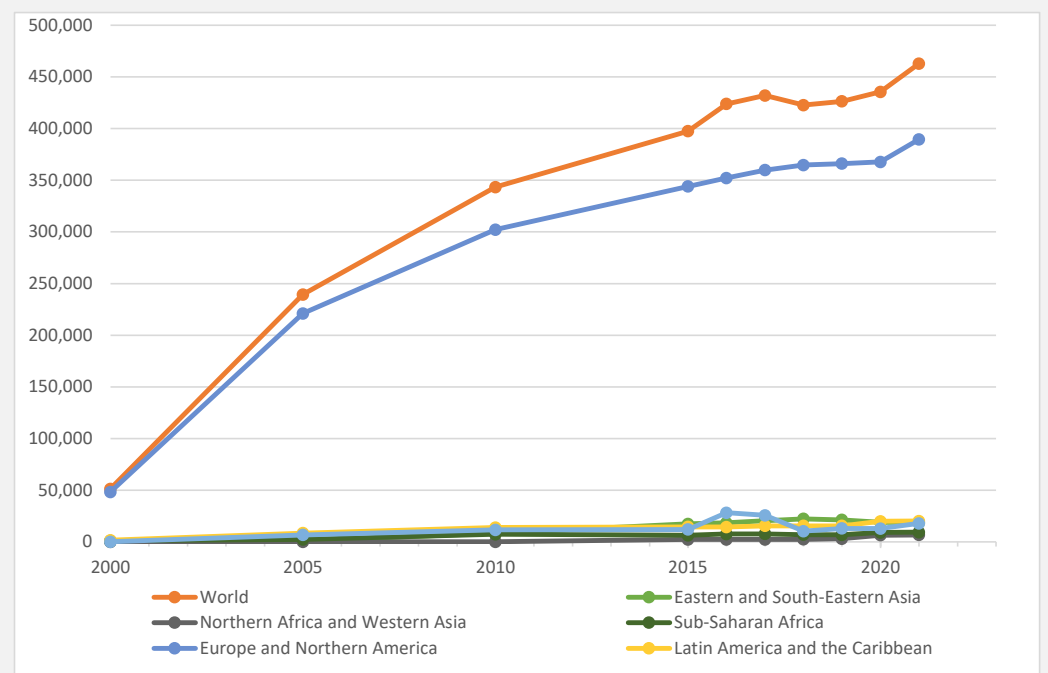
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Forest area as proportion of total land area (percent)



Certified forest area (1000 ha)



Dashboard for SDG indicator 15.2.1

SDG Region	Progress between 2000-2010 and 2010-2020 decades	Progress between 2010 and 2020				Progress between 2020 and 2021
	Annual forest area change rate ¹⁾	Above-ground biomass stock in forest (t/ha)	Proportion of forest area within legally established protected areas	Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan	Forest area certified ²⁾ (2020-2021)	
World	●	●	●	●	●	
Central and Southern Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Central Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Southern Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Eastern Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
South-Eastern Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Northern Africa and Western Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Northern Africa	●	●	●	●	●	
Western Asia	●	●	●	●	●	
Sub-Saharan Africa	●	●	●	●	●	
Europe and Northern America	●	●	●	●	●	
Europe	●	●	●	●	●	
Northern America	●	●	●	●	●	
Latin America and the Caribbean	●	●	●	●	●	
Oceania	●	●	●	●	●	
Oceania (exc. Australia and New Zealand)	●	●	●	●	●	
Australia and New Zealand	●	●	●	●	●	
Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)	●	●	●	●	●	
Least Developed Countries (LDCs)	●	●	●	●	●	
Small island developing States (SIDS)	●	●	●	●	●	

¹⁾ The annual forest area change rate is calculated using compound interest formula.

● Positive change
● No/small change
● Negative change
● No certified area

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Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Anne Branthomme, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Target 15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world

Indicator 15.3.1: Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area



<p>Custodian agency(ies): UNCCD</p>

Target 15.4: By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development

Indicator 15.4.1: Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity

Global coverage by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas has increased from around a quarter of each site covered by protected areas on average to nearly one half over the last two decades, and encouragingly,

Both biodiversity and human-driven threats to it vary dramatically around the surface of our planet. Sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity – are called “Key Biodiversity Areas”, identified through nationally led processes in all the world’s countries, and documented in the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas. Measures for safeguarding the biodiversity of specific sites, such as the establishment and management of protected areas or “other effective area-based conservation measures” have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing the rate of biodiversity loss. As such, the coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas by protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures is a crucial indicator of progress towards SDG targets 14.5 (for marine), 15.1 (for terrestrial and freshwater), and 15.4 (for mountains).

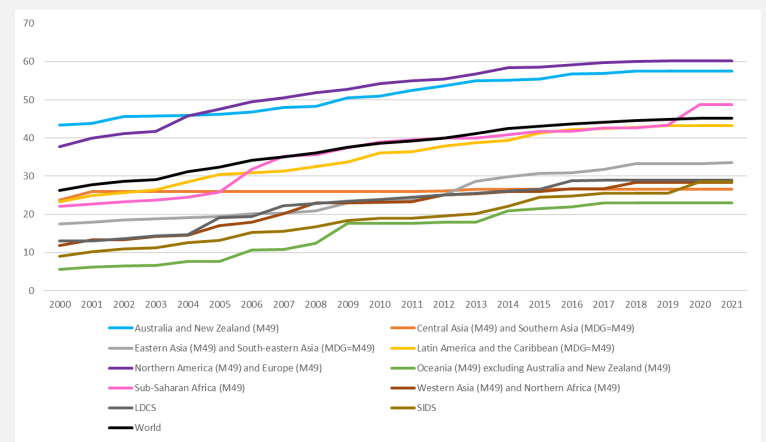
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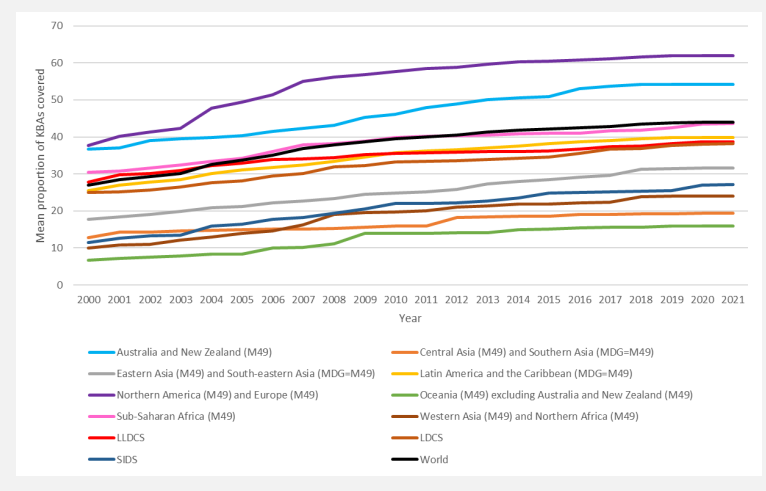
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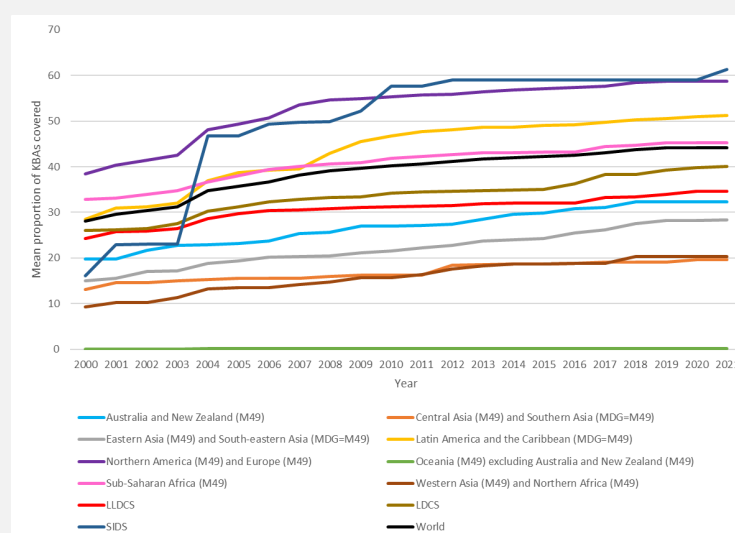
14.5.1 - marine



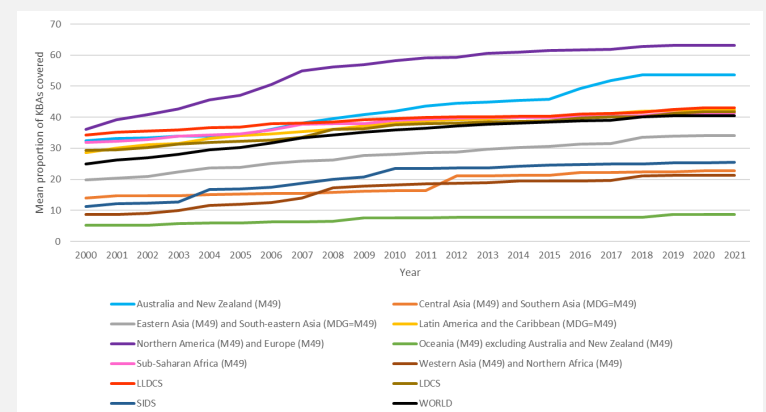
15.1.2 - terrestrial



15.1.2 – freshwater



15.4.1 – mountains



Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Ed Lewis, UNEP-WCMC; Stu Butchart, BirdLife International; Tom Brooks, IUCN; Ash Simkins, Birdlife International

Custodian agency(ies): UNEP-WCMC, UNEP, IUCN

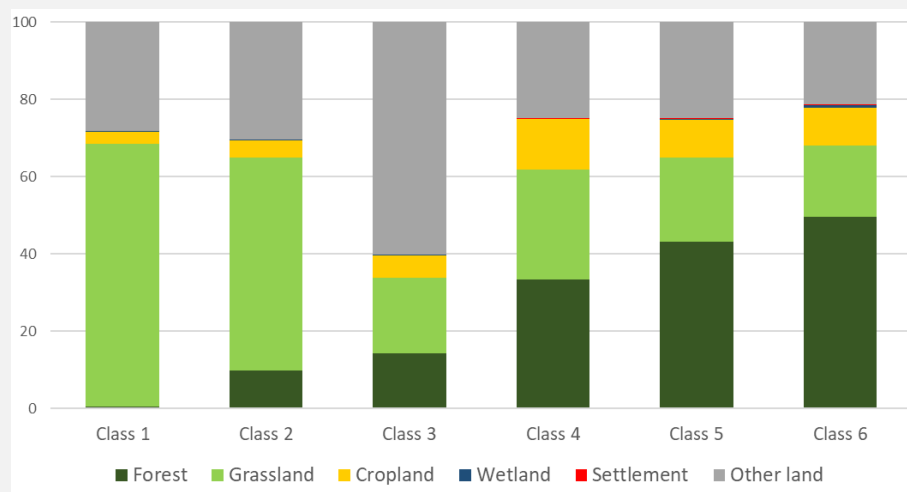
Indicator 15.4.2: Mountain Green Cover Index

Mountain green cover remains stable at about three-quarters of the world's mountain area.

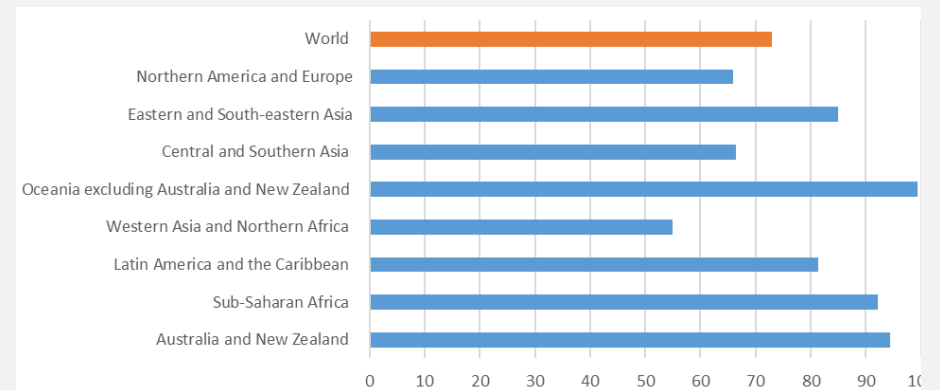
Despite constituting only about one quarter of the earth's land area, mountain regions contribute disproportionately to global biodiversity, hosting more than 85% of the world's species of amphibians, birds and mammals. In addition, they provide vital resources, such as clean water, to a significant proportion of the global population. However, mountains are threatened by multiple drivers of change, including climate change, land conversion, pollution, species introduction and overexploitation of natural resources. The interaction of these factors can irreversibly affect mountain ecosystems and their biodiversity.

An analysis of mountain green cover and its changes over time can provide information about the status of mountain ecosystems and their capacity to support sustainable development. Mountain green cover index has remained roughly stable at about 73% over the 2000-2020 period, with a slight decrease (0.09%) since 2015. The role of climatic factors in mountain green cover is evident at regional level (Figure 2). Tropical and sub-tropical regions characterized by low or mid-altitude mountain ranges tend to show the highest green cover values (i.e. Oceania). Conversely, regions characterized by high-altitude mountain ranges located in temperate and boreal zones, where mountain environmental conditions are less favourable to vegetation growth, tend to show lower green cover values (i.e. Northern America and Europe). Regions with a high proportion of arid areas, such as Northern Africa, also tend to register lower mountain green cover values.

Global mountain cover, disaggregated by mountain class and land cover type, 2020 (percentage)



Mountain green cover index by region, 2020 (percentage)



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- SDG Indicator 15.4.2 Metadata: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-15-04-02.pdf>
- De Simone, L.; Navarro, D.; Gennari, P.; Pekkarinen, A.; de Lamo, J. (2021) Using Standardized Time Series Land Cover Maps to Monitor the SDG Indicator "Mountain Green Cover Index" and Assess Its Sensitivity to Vegetation Dynamics. ISPRS Int. J. Geo-Inf., 10, 427. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijgi10070427>

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Javier de Lamo, FAO; Anssi Pekkarinen, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Target 15.5: Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species

Indicator 15.5.1: Red List Index

Species extinction risk continues to increase around the world, with particular severity in Asia, and in Small Island Developing States.

The Red List Index is calculated on the basis of repeat assessments of entire species groups for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: it encompasses data for all amphibians, birds, mammals, corals, and cycads, about 25,000 species in total. In 2021, all dragonfly species were assessed for the Red List for the first time, and these will be incorporated into the Red List Index in coming years. The Red List Index reveals that globally species extinction risk has deteriorated by more than 10% over the last three decades. However, there is wide variation between regional groupings in both the overall prevalence of extinction risk, and in the rate of deterioration.

Both Central & Southern Asia and Eastern & South-east Asia suffer from greater extinction risk (i.e. lower index values) than the global total. Flagship examples of threatened species occurring across many countries through these regions include Tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Endangered), Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*, Endangered), Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*, Critically Endangered), and Helmeted Hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Critically Endangered). The Small Island Developing States face a similarly high extinction risk prevalence, with very large numbers of threatened species only found in single island nations. For example, Haiti is the only home to no fewer than 27 species of threatened amphibians, such as the Short-nosed Green Frog (*Eleutherodactylus brevirostris*, Critically Endangered).

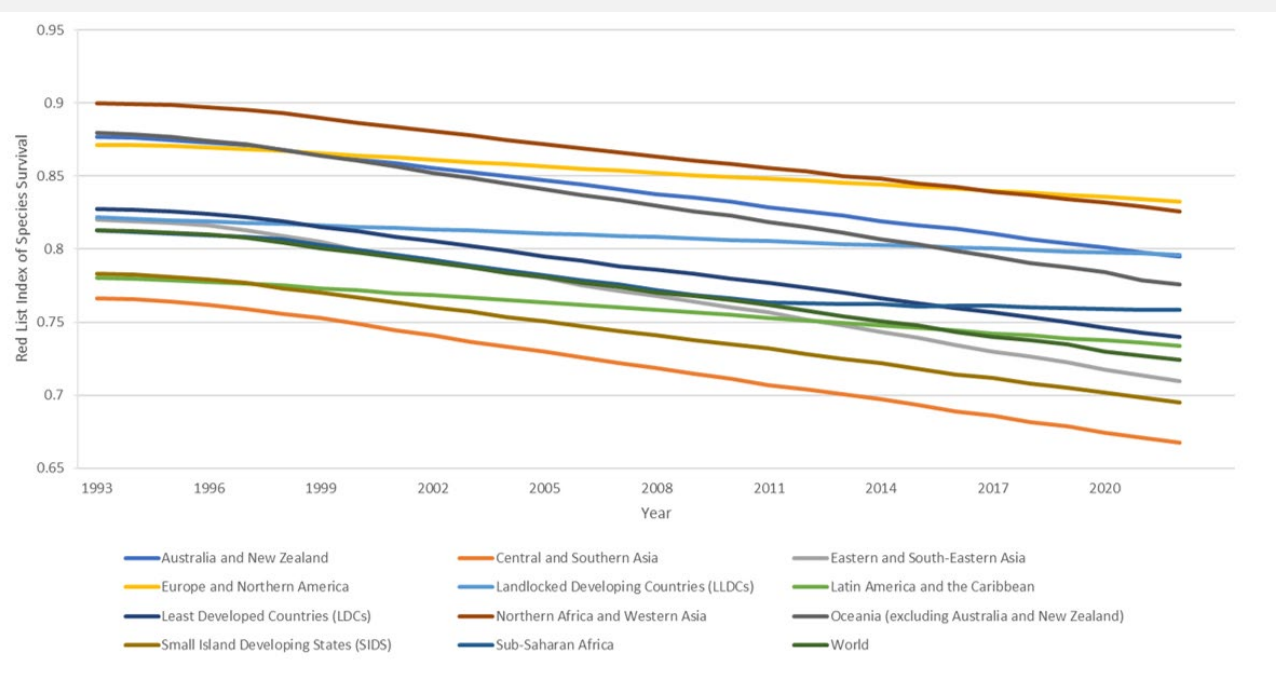
Rate of deterioration over the last 30 years is similarly variable, with deteriorations faster than the global average suffered in Northern Africa & Western Asia, Australia & New Zealand, Oceania, Central & Southern Asia, and Eastern & South-east Asia, as well as Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. The most prevalent drivers of these declines are unsustainable harvest of wild species, unsustainable agriculture, and unsustainable urbanisation, with the impacts of invasive alien species also particularly severe, especially in island nations.

An important innovation over 2021 was the launch of the Species Threat Abatement & Restoration metric, derived from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. This allows any institution to understand the potential of specific conservation or restoration actions in specific places to contribute towards Sustainable Development Goal 15 in reducing human-induced species extinction risk to zero. This will in turn provide crucial support towards achieving the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, to be agreed through the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022. It is available for use through the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool.

On the negative side, political instability in Eastern Europe is likely to have negative impacts on species extinction risk in the region, jeopardising the successes of recent decades in the conservation of species such as European Bison (*Bison bonasus*, Near Threatened).

It is not yet possible to assess the full impacts of COVID-19 on the achievement of SDG15, but these will likely be primarily negative but indirect, above all in reducing capacity to implement conservation actions (e.g. through restrictions on travel) and diversion of conservation funding towards urgent medical response (e.g. vaccine deployment). There may be some positive indirect impacts, resulting from reduction of particular threats (e.g. fewer alien species invasions with reduced global travel), but given others have increased (e.g. persecution), these are unlikely to be sufficient to offset the negative impacts.

Red List Indices of species survival for different regions. An index value of 1.0 equates to all species being classified as Least Concern. An index value of 0 equates to all species having gone extinct.



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>
- Species Threat Abatement & Restoration metric: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/assessment/star>
- Dragonflies threatened as wetlands around the world disappear: <https://www.iucn.org/news/species/202112/dragonflies-threatened-wetlands-around-world-disappear-iucn-red-list>
- Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool: <https://www.ibat-alliance.org/star?locale=en>

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Thomas Brooks, IUCN; Craig Hilton-Taylor, IUCN; Ackbar Joolia, IUCN; Stuart Butchart, BirdLife International

Custodian agency(ies): IUCN

Target 15.6: Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed

Indicator 15.6.1: Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits

Continued progress in establishing access and benefit-sharing frameworks

Since the adoption of 2030 Agenda, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity celebrated the 10 years since its adoption, and the number of its Parties nearly doubled. As of February 2022, 132 countries and the European Union had ratified the Protocol and 68 countries had at least one legislative, administrative or policy measure in place to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. Furthermore, 3411 internationally recognized certificates of compliance – as proof that prior informed consent was granted and mutually agreed terms were established for access – were issued by 25 countries through the Nagoya Protocol’s clearing-house mechanism.

With regard to the International Treaty, since 2015, the number of its Contracting Parties has increased from 135 to 148. As of February 2022, 79 countries had submitted their national report to inform about their implementation of International Treaty’s provisions, including on access and benefit-sharing measures, which is a huge increase from 12 countries in 2016. The number of SMTA has been also increasing, from 55,352 in 2015 to 81,556 in 2022, indicating that more users are benefiting from accessing plant genetic resources for research, breeding and training.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, delays in legislative processes and in the implementation of capacity development activities have been reported and this is likely to have delayed progress towards the target for some countries. High impact has been observed at the level of collaborative activities, such as technical cooperation for better management of genetic resources. Preliminary analysis of data available have revealed that the restrictions related to the pandemic made difficult the distribution of crop materials from gene banks, particularly during 2020. Yet, many of them managed to send the shipments after the lockdown with minor or moderate impact, particularly in big collections.

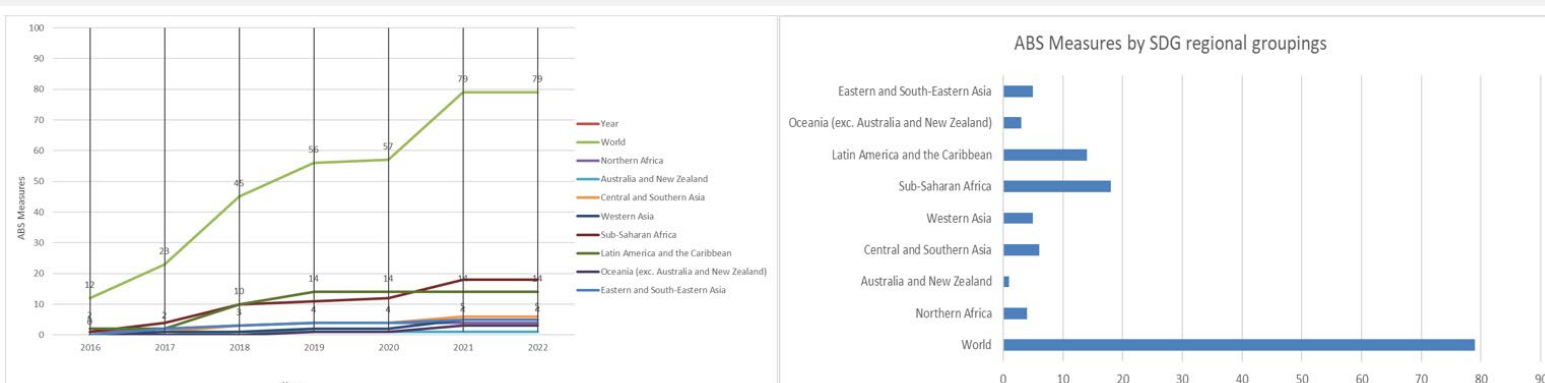
Based on the datasets available for this indicator, 39 countries have access and benefit-sharing measures in place for both the Nagoya Protocol and the International Treaty. The International Treaty and the Nagoya Protocol have been recognized as mutually supportive instruments that promote the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources. Cooperative activities have been carried out by the Secretariats of the two instruments and by other stakeholders to support countries in their efforts to better implement relevant measures in harmony.

In this context, it should be noted that new indicators for access and benefit-sharing are expected to be developed in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, currently being negotiated under the process led by the Convention on Biological Diversity. This provides an important opportunity to further improve data collection and analysis on the benefits shared from utilization of genetic resources, to accelerate global efforts to conserve and sustainably use genetic resources, as well as to enhance the mutually supportive implementation of access and benefit-sharing instruments.

Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTAs) issued under the International Treaty on PGRFA



ABS measures reported through the Online Reporting System on Compliance of the International Treaty on PGRFA



In Murehwa, a district in Zimbabwe, most subsistence farmers specialized in vegetable and maize farming over the past decades. However, due to effects of climate change, farmers have recently been confronted with higher temperatures, droughts, and shifting rain patterns. As a result, the production of maize – which requires a lot of rainfall to reach maturity and is heavily affected by drought – led to lost harvests.

One of the International Treaty’s operational mechanisms for access and benefit-sharing, the Benefit-sharing Fund, establishes links between genebanks and farming communities, so farmers can access seeds that are adapted to their needs. In a project that was also active in other districts in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, farmers in Murehwa received varieties of sorghum, millets, cowpeas and other crops from national and regional genebanks. The varieties were selected for their drought-tolerance and shorter maturity period, so they could be grown in the less predictable rainfall patterns that prevailed in the project districts. Responding to other preferences expressed by farmers, crops such as groundnuts and beans were reintroduced from genebanks, to contribute to nutritious meals.

In the project, farmers enhanced the varieties that best suited their local context, by selecting well performing crops in their fields. Next to these activities, farmers are storing the seeds in community seed banks, to ensure they can access the seeds at close distance and at the time that they need it.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- Convention on Biological Diversity, “The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing” (Factsheet): <https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/factsheets/nagoya-en.pdf>
- The Nagoya Protocol’s Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House: <https://absch.cbd.int/>
- FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Elements to Facilitate Domestic Implementation of Access and Benefit-Sharing for Different Subsectors of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture: <http://www.fao.org/3/i5033e/i5033e.pdf>
- Educational Module on the International Treaty’s Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing: <https://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/news/news-detail/en/c/1472941/>
- Benefit-sharing fund of the International Treaty, “Voices of Diversity – Messages for Plant Genetic Diversity”: <https://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/benefit-sharing-fund/voices-diversity/en/>
- The Online Reporting System on Compliance of the International Treaty on PGRFA: <http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/areas-of-work/compliance/compliance-reports/en/>

- Easy-SMTA of the International Treaty on PGRFA: <https://mls.planttreaty.org>

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Custodian agency(ies): CBD-Secretariat

Target 15.7: Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products

Indicator 15.7.1/15.c.1: Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked



<p>Custodian agency(ies): UNODC,CITES</p>

Target 15.8: By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species

Indicator 15.8.1: Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species



[Custodian agency\(ies\):](#) IUCN

Target 15.9: By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts

Indicator 15.9.1: (a) Number of countries that have established national targets in accordance with or similar to Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 in their national biodiversity strategy and action plans and the progress reported towards these targets; and (b) integration of biodiversity into national accounting and reporting systems, defined as implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting

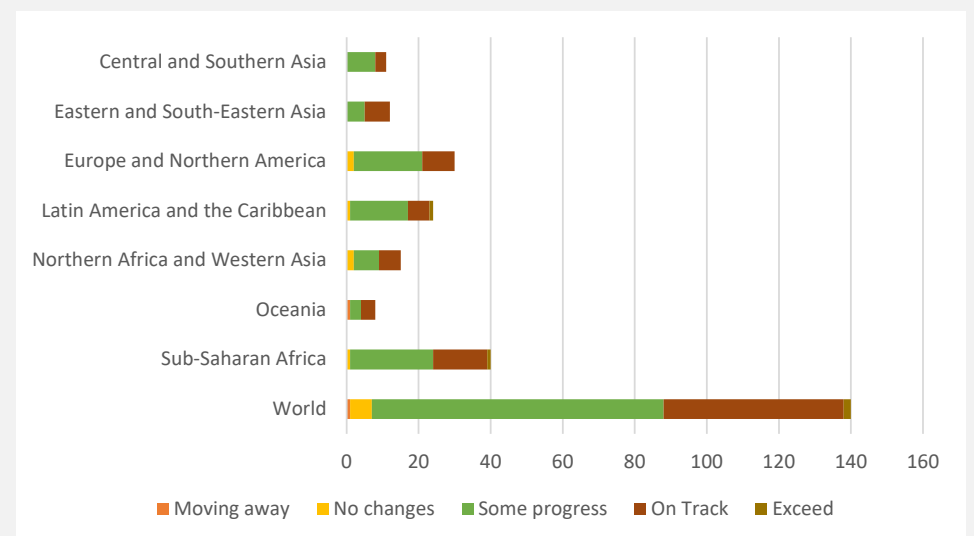
Integration of ecosystem and biodiversity values across national decision making, and planning, accounting and reporting processes, is essential for achievement of the SDGs

Biodiversity directly or indirectly contributes to the attainment of most of the Sustainable Development Goals. There has been a steady upward trend the number of countries incorporating biodiversity values into national accounting and reporting systems and the majority of countries have established national targets in relation to Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 (see chart). By January 2022, of the countries which have assessed progress towards their national targets, more than a third are on track to reach (36%) or exceed them (1%). More than half (58%) have made progress towards their targets but not at a rate that will allow them to meet the target. Few Parties report that they are making no progress (4%) towards the target or are moving away from reaching it (1%). However of the Parties which have assessed progress, few (6%) have national targets similar to the scope and level of ambition of Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 and are on track to meet them. Therefore, despite the important progress that has been made, Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 was not met by 2020.

Currently there is an important opportunity to integrate biodiversity considerations into economic recovery measures being developed to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby contributing to recovery, ensuring the possibility of a sustainable future, while reducing the risk of future pandemics. However, to date only about 20% of the more than 3200 billion USD invested in such measures are considered to have positive environmental impacts, while 10% are considered to have mixed or negative impacts. The remaining 69%, while not specifically identified as negative are unlikely to be environmental benign. The better integration of ecosystem and biodiversity values in national and local development strategies, planning processes, will be key in addressing this challenge.

While many countries are on track to integrate biodiversity values into relevant planning processes, the limited progress globally on this issue undermines efforts to reach most of the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 15. It also indirectly drives pressure on biodiversity which, among other things, threatens the continued provision of nature's contributions to people and threatens around 1 million species with extinction within the coming decades. It is also a major barrier to undertaking the transformational changes required to bring about a world living in harmony with nature. The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity are currently developing a post-2020 global biodiversity framework which will follow from the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Number of countries, by region and globally, reporting different levels of progress towards their national targets in support of the attainment of Aichi Biodiversity Target 2, by January 2022



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- For further information on progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 see the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook - <https://www.cbd.int/gbo5>.
- For further information on the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework see <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020>
- For further information on biodiversity and covid-19 recovery plans see CBD/SBSTTA-SBI-SS/2/3

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Jillian Campbell, CBD; Kieran Noonan Mooney, CBD

Custodian agency(ies): CBD-Secretariat, UNEP

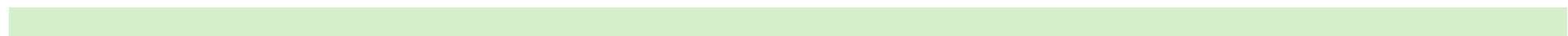
Strengthening national statistical systems remains crucial for making nature count and building back better

Despite a greater need than ever for statistics on the environment-economy nexus that go beyond GDP, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the ability of governments to mainstream biodiversity values into national accounting and reporting. As of March 2022, 89 countries have implemented the international statistical standard, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), as a way to make nature count in policy and build back better through accounts for natural resources and/or ecosystems (see chart). This number is unchanged from 2020, which can be explained primarily due to the strain the COVID-19 pandemic has put on national statistical offices. Many national statistical offices have been forced to put activities and plans on hold, particularly in terms of capacity development and new activities. Moreover, there has been a tendency for policy makers to de-prioritize the environment in their recovery plans. Yet, in order to build back better, all pillars of sustainability and their interconnections need to be taken into account.

However, there are some bright spots in the situation. The number of countries (70) which regularly compile and disseminate the accounts has remained stable from 2020 to March 2022. Encouragingly, there has been a 28 per cent decrease in the number of countries which only compile the accounts but a 42 per cent increase in the number of countries compiling and publishing the accounts (though not on a regular basis). This indicates that countries are making progress in integrating the SEEA into their statistical production processes and making this information readily available for policy makers and other users.

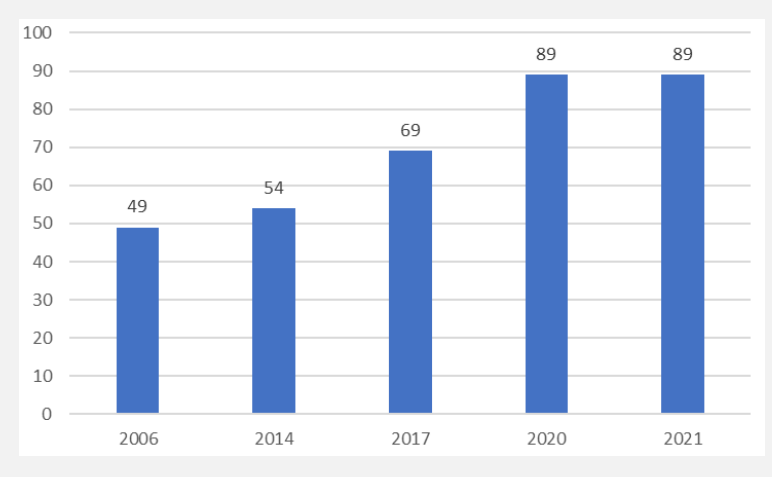
It should also be noted that four countries have started compiling the newly adopted SEEA Ecosystem Accounting (EA) in 2021, contributing to a total of 36 countries compiling the SEEA EA. The SEEA EA was adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2021 and provides a way for policymakers to understand how our economic activities affect our ecosystems as well as the contributions ecosystems make to our economy and humanity, such as clean air and pollination.

The number of countries implementing the SEEA is expected to grow more quickly in the coming years, as the COVID-19 situation stabilizes and improves. In particular, it is expected that there will be a significant increase in the number of countries implementing the SEEA EA. In the UN report, Our Common Agenda, the Secretary General urged all Member States to begin implementation of the SEEA EA as a way to go beyond GDP. To assist Member States in implementation, the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting has created a global implementation strategy for the SEEA EA and set a target of having at least 60 countries implementing at least one account of the SEEA EA by 2025. However, greater funding and implementation resources to build capacity and strengthen national statistical offices are critical for reaching this implementation target and SDG target.



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

Number of countries implementing the SEEA, 2006-2021



- Report of the 2021 Global Assessment on Environmental-Economic Accounting and Supporting Statistics: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/documents/BG-3I-Global-Assessment-E.pdf>
- Implementation Strategy for the SEEA EA: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/documents/BG-3I-implementation-strategy-for-the-SEEA-ecosystem-accounting-E.pdf>
- SEEA website: <https://seea.un.org>

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Alessandra Alfieri, UNSD; Jessica Ying Chan, UNSD

Custodian agency(ies): UNSD, UNEP

Target 15.a: Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems

Target 15.b: Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

Indicator 15.a.1/15.b.1: (a) Official development assistance on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and (b) revenue generated and finance mobilized from biodiversity-relevant economic instruments

a) ODA for biodiversity increases in 2020

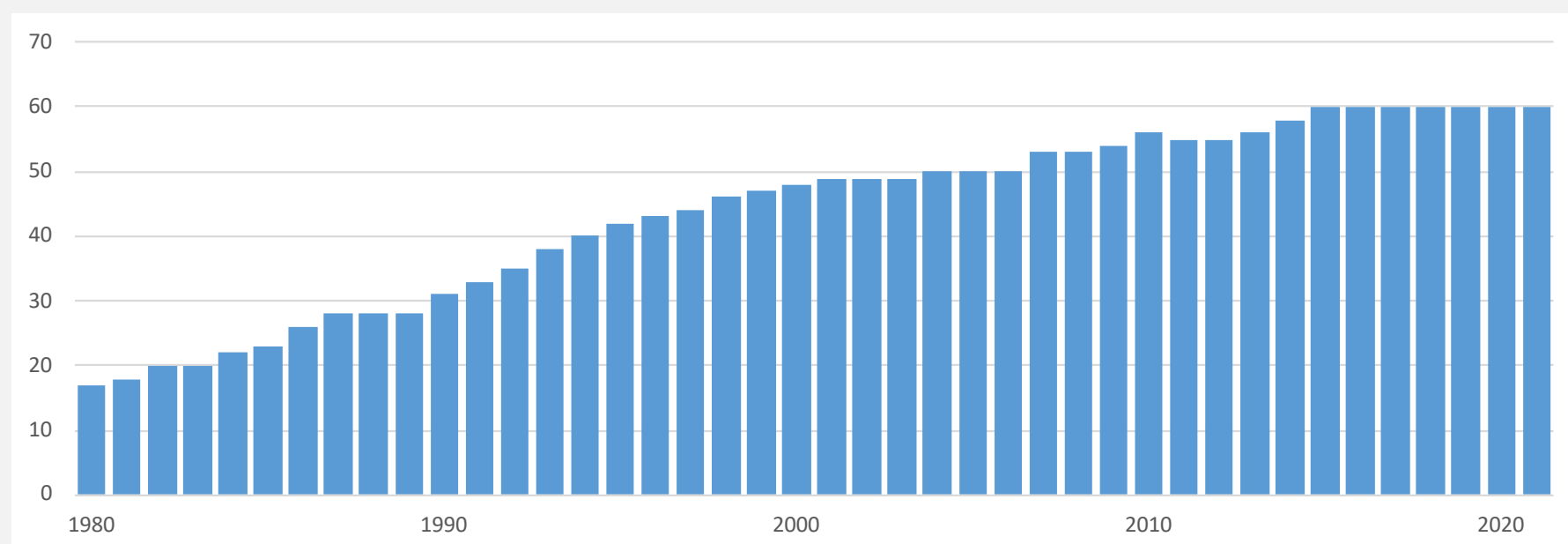
In 2020, DAC members' ODA in support of biodiversity was USD 6.1 billion, an increase of nearly 9% in real terms over 2019.

b) Revenue generated and finance mobilized from biodiversity relevant economic instruments

A variety of economic instruments are available to incentivize biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. These include biodiversity-relevant taxes, fees and charges, tradable permit schemes, biodiversity offsets and payments for ecosystem services. These policy incentives are also able to generate revenue of mobilise finance for biodiversity (OECD, 2021).

Biodiversity-relevant taxes include taxes on pesticides, fertilisers, forest products and timber harvests. Based on the polluter pays principle, these instruments place an additional cost on the use of the natural resource or the emission of a pollutant, to reflect the negative environmental externalities that they generate. As such, they provide incentives for both producers and consumers to behave in a more environmentally-sustainable way. The number of biodiversity-relevant taxes has increased since 1980, though there has been a plateau since 2010. A total of 234 biodiversity-relevant taxes are currently reported to the OECD PINE database, spanning 62 countries. In OECD countries, these biodiversity-relevant taxes generate USD 10.6 billion a year in revenue (2016-2020 average). Across all countries reporting, the total revenue generated by biodiversity-relevant taxes is USD 11.8 billion a year.

Number of countries with biodiversity-relevant taxes, 1980 to 2021



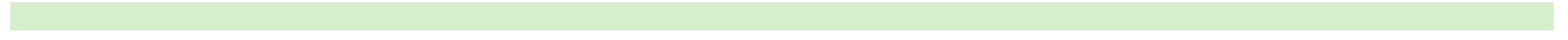
Note: Two additional countries have biodiversity-relevant taxes, but they are not included in this figure as starting dates are not available
Source: OECD Pine database, accessed 28 July 2021

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Custodian agency(ies): OECD, UNEP, World Bank

Target 15.c: Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities

Indicator 15.7.1/15.c.1: Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked



<p>Custodian agency(ies): UNODC,CITES</p>
