

1. ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

Use of forest resources

Forests are among the most diverse and widespread ecosystems on earth, and have many functions: they provide timber and other forest products; have cultural values; deliver recreation benefits and ecosystem services, including regulation of soil, air and water; are reservoirs for biodiversity; and act as carbon sinks.

The impact from human activities on forest health and on natural forest growth and regeneration raises widespread concern. Many forest resources are threatened by overexploitation, fragmentation, degradation of environmental quality and conversion to other types of land use. The main pressures result from human activities, including agriculture expansion, transport infrastructure development, unsustainable forestry, air pollution and intentional burning of forests.

Definitions

The indicator presented here refers to the intensity of use of forest resources (timber). It relates actual harvest or fellings to annual productive capacity. Annual productive capacity is either a calculated value, such as annual allowable cut, or an estimate of annual growth for existing stock. It should be noted that the national averages presented here may conceal variations among forests.

Volumes of annual harvest and annual growth, along with forest area and exports of forestry products, are given as complements.

These indicators give insights into quantitative aspects of forest resources. They present national averages that may conceal important variations among forests. They should be read with information on forest quality (e.g. species diversity, including tree and non-tree species; forest degradation; forest fragmentation) and be complemented with data on forest management practices and protection measures.

Overview

At national level, most OECD countries present a picture of sustainable use of their forest resources in quantitative terms, but there is significant variation among and within countries. For countries in which longer-term trends are available, intensity of forest resource use does not generally show an increase and has even decreased in most countries from the 1950s. Since 2000, wood requirements to achieve policy objectives for renewable energy resources play an increasingly important role.

Forests are unevenly distributed: the ten most forest-rich countries account for two-thirds of the world's forest area. OECD countries account for about one-fourth of the world's forest area.

Over the past 50 years, the area of forests and wooded land has remained stable or has slightly increased in most OECD countries, but it has been decreasing at world level due in part to continued deforestation in tropical countries, often to provide land for agriculture, grazing and logging. "The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity study" (TEEB) has indicated that the aggregate loss of biodiversity and ecosystem service benefits associated with the global loss of forests is between USD 2 trillion and USD 5 trillion per year.

Comparability

Data on the intensity of use of forest resources can be derived from forest accounts and from international forest statistics and the FAO/UNECE Forest Resource Assessments for most OECD countries, although differences in the variables monitored result in interpretation difficulties. Historical data often lack comparability or are not available over longer periods.

Latest year available: data prior to 2009 were not considered. For additional notes, see the Annex.

Sources

OECD (2015), "Forest Resources", *OECD Environment Statistics* (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00600-en>.

FAO (2010), *Global Forest Resource Assessments*, www.fao.org/forestry/fra/en.

FAO (2015), *FAOSTAT* (database), <http://faostat.fao.org>.

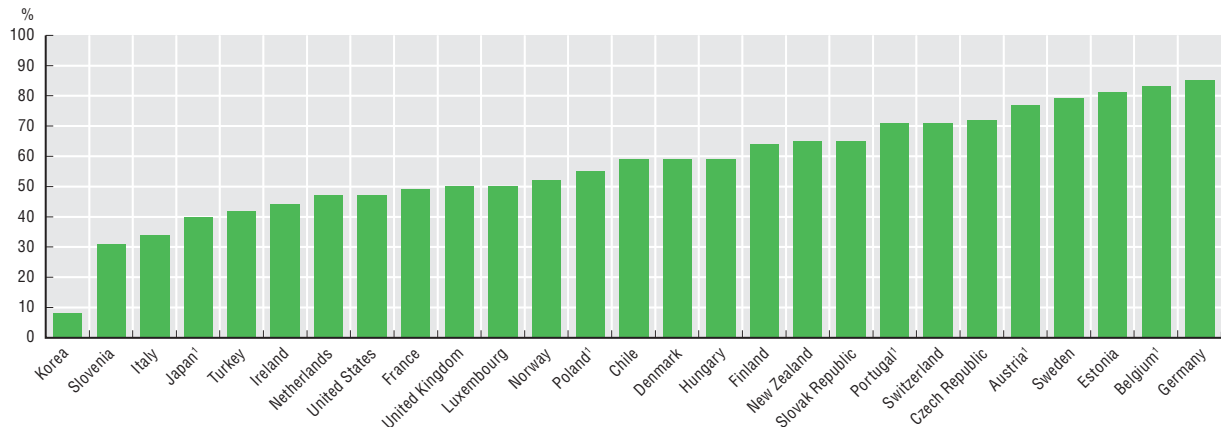
Further information

OECD (2012), *OECD Environmental Outlook to 2050: The Consequences of Inaction*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264122246-en>.

TEEB, *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*, www.teebweb.org.

Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

Figure 1.28. Intensity of use of forest resources, latest available year
Fellings as % of annual growth



1. Data refer to the mid-2000s.

Source: OECD (2015), "Forest Resources", OECD Environment Statistics (database).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933261958>

Table 1.9. Forest resources

	Annual fellings	Annual growth	Intensity of use of forest resources							Forest land	Exports of forestry products
	Million m ³	Million m ³	Fellings as % of annual growth							% of total area	% of national exports
	2013 or latest	2013 or latest	1950s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	Mid-2000s	2013 or latest	2012	2013
Australia	25.6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	0.6
Austria	..	..	..	..	..	66	..	77	..	47	3.1
Belgium	..	..	..	..	..	85	65	83	..	22	1.1
Canada	152.0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34	4.3
Chile	56.7	95.9	183	..	..	30	45	53	59	22	5.2
Czech Republic	17.0	23.8	60	60	72	78	73	76	72	34	1.6
Denmark	3.9	6.7	85	118	75	36	59	53	59	13	0.3
Estonia	0.0	0.0	46	41	40	43	111	57	81	52	5.0
Finland	66.7	103.7	89	101	83	67	73	64	64	73	13.5
France	50.6	102.7	..	..	81	82	..	56	49	29	0.9
Germany	94.1	111.1	..	..	..	..	75	84	85	32	1.2
Greece	1.2	..	..	..	71	55	..	..	..	31	0.2
Hungary	7.7	13.0	..	60	70	67	62	56	59	23	0.9
Iceland	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	0.0
Ireland	3.3	7.7	..	..	..	..	72	72	44	11	0.2
Israel	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	0.1
Italy	12.8	37.2	88	..	43	42	42	37	34	32	0.8
Japan	45.9	..	..	172	72	55	29	40	..	69	0.4
Korea	10.7	111.9	..	..	4	..	..	2	8	64	0.4
Luxembourg	0.4	0.8	..	..	..	72	..	49	50	33	0.2
Mexico	5.7	..	..	..	23	24	..	..	..	33	0.1
Netherlands	1.3	2.7	..	..	..	55	57	45	47	11	0.7
New Zealand	26.1	40.4	..	..	..	..	54	51	65	31	6.9
Norway	13.0	25.3	88	63	61	62	46	49	52	28	0.8
Poland	37.8	..	49	56	59	50	53	55	..	31	1.6
Portugal	12.6	..	..	..	..	70	63	71	..	38	3.6
Slovak Republic	7.8	12.0	95	64	66	54	56	88	65	40	1.4
Slovenia	3.4	10.8	..	70	64	46	24	29	31	62	3.2
Spain	20.1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	37	1.1
Sweden	84.8	113.5	83	87	81	64	78	85	79	69	6.3
Switzerland	7.4	10.5	..	..	..	..	76	73	71	32	0.3
Turkey	17.9	42.9	..	67	82	52	..	..	42	15	0.4
United Kingdom	10.5	20.8	..	35	32	44	47	51	50	12	0.3
United States	353.8	748.3	78	73	68	84	73	62	47	33	1.2
OECD	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	1.3

Note: See the Annex for country notes.

Source: OECD (2015), "Forest Resources", OECD Environment Statistics (database); FAO (2015), FAOSTAT (database).

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