



Forestry Department

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**GLOBAL FOREST RESOURCES
ASSESSMENT 2010**

COUNTRY REPORT

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

FRA2010/029
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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 2010 (FRA 2010).

The reporting framework for FRA 2010 is based on the thematic elements of sustainable forest management acknowledged in intergovernmental forest-related fora and includes variables related to the extent, condition, uses and values of forest resources, as well as the policy, legal and institutional framework related to forests. More information on the FRA 2010 process and the results - including all the country reports - is available on the FRA Web site (www.fao.org/forestry/fra).

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 2010 is:

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The Global Forest Resources Assessment Country Report Series is designed to document and make available the information forming the basis for the FRA 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.

Contents

1 TABLE T1 – EXTENT OF FOREST AND OTHER WOODED LAND..... 5
2 TABLE T4 – FOREST CHARACTERISTICS 9

Report preparation and contact persons

No official report has been received from the British Virgin Islands.

This report is the result of a desk study prepared by the FRA secretariat in Rome, which summarizes existing available information using the established format for FRA 2010 country reports.

This country report comprises only the national reporting tables T1 and T4. For remaining tables no information is available.

1 Table T1 – Extent of Forest and Other wooded land

1.1 FRA 2010 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
Caribbean Conservation Association 1980. <i>Preliminary Data areas- British Virgin Islands: Toortula, Virgin Gorda & Anegada</i> . Caribbean Conservation Association. University of Michigan, USA.	M	Forest area	1980	Secondary source. Cited in: Deutsche Forstinventur-service GmbH/Caribbean Development Bank . 1983. <i>Regional Forestry Sector Study, Country Report- British Virgin Islands</i> . Deutsche Forstinventur-service GmbH/Caribbean Development Bank, Barbados
Blok-Meevwig, J. 1990. <i>Mangrove system of the British Virgin Islands: Resource Mapping and Assignment to protection Categories</i> . Conservation & Fisheries Department, Ministry of Natural Resources & Labour, British Virgin Islands, Technical Report No. 5; 45pp.	M	Area of Mangrove	1990	Cited in: Bacon P.R. 1993. Mangroves in the Lesser Antilles, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. In: Lacerda, L.D. 1993. <i>Conservation and sustainable utilization of mangrove forests in Latin America and Africa regions. Vol. 2 Part I- Latin America</i> . p. 155-210. Mangrove Ecosystems technical reports ITTO/ISME Project PD114/90 (F). Okinawa, Japan. 272 pp.
British Virgin Islands Government . 2001 <i>Use of the coastal zones and seabeds</i>	H	Area of Mangrove	2001	Primary source.

1.2.2 Classification and definitions

National class	Definition
Cactus/scrub	A dry evergreen scrub with cacti is typical of steep slopes, cliffs, and headlands overlooking the sea. Typically it consists of a low, open growth of small-leaved, prickly bushes, bare soil exposed between them, scattered with tall columnar cacti, agaves, and prickly pears. <i>Nopalea dejecta</i> , an arborescent species, is common at West End, Tortola, and <i>Opuntia dillenii</i> is general.
Dry woodland	The original deciduous seasonal forest of these islands in its original state probably consisted of a two-storied forest, but all the original forests of this type have been very thoroughly cut over and reduced to a much smaller and degraded bush. When land is abandoned by the shifting cultivator and reverts to bush, an invasive thicket fills up between these standard trees. At a later stage, young trees and shrubs proper to the deciduous seasonal forest join the succession, but the selective cutting of the peasantry has gradually favoured an abnormal preponderance of the worthless <i>Pisonia</i> and <i>Bursera</i> . <i>Buceras bucida</i> (<i>gigri</i>) is now rare but was probably once common along low ground
Mangroves	There are some small swamps of stunted mangrove in various places around the coasts.
Moist Forest	Probably found in the moister places of the woodland: <i>Andira inermis</i> (<i>angelin</i>) and <i>Hura crepitans</i> (<i>sandbox</i>) are present.
Rain Forest	An evergreen forest is found but reduced and xerophytic, not a true rain forest. It is found mainly on Sage Mountain, Tortola. Xerophytic Rain Forest is a low forest only 12-18 m high. Occasional trees reach considerable thicknesses, but for most part the trees are small and pole sized. The most abundant tree species are laticiferous or contain essential oils: they are evergreen with hard, shiny, thickly cutinized leaves, simple, and mesophyllous in size. Many of them have a particular type of bark, peeling off in sheets or flakes. The forest is dense and ground vegetation is sparse. Lianas and epiphytes are not much in evidence. <i>Manilkara bidentata</i> is clearly the dominant tree.

1.2.3 Original data

1980

National Classes	Area (ha)			
	Tortola Island	Virgin Gorda Island	Anegada Island	TOTAL
Rain Forest	57			57
Moist Forest	378			378
Dry woodland	851	1482	315	2648
Cactus Scrub	567	865	252	1684
TOTAL	1890	2470	630	4990

1990

Mangroves = 627 ha

2001

Mangroves = 587 ha

1.3 Analysis and processing of national data

1.3.1 Reclassification into FRA 2010 categories

National Classes	FRA Classification
Rain Forest	100% Forest
Moist Forest	100% Forest
Dry woodland	100% Forest
Cactus Scrub	100% Other Wooded Land
Mangroves	100% Forest

This gives the following reclassified data for 1980, excluding mangroves:

Forest: 3083 hectares
 Other wooded land: 1684 hectares

1.3.2 Estimation and forecasting

The 1980 data refers only to the three biggest islands: Tortola, Virgin Gorda and Anegada. However, these data are the only available for non-mangrove vegetation and has been assumed to represent all islands and to be constant for all reporting years.

The 1990 data on mangroves refers to seven islands: Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada, Great Camanoe, Jost van Dyke, Sandy Cay and Beef Island.

For the 2001 estimate of mangroves, there is no information available about what islands were covered, but it has been assumed that they were the same as for the 1990 estimate.

The area of mangroves for 2000, 2005 and 2010 were estimated by linear inter- and extrapolation using the available data for 1990 and 2001 as follows:

	1990	2000	2005	2010
Mangrove area (ha)	627	591	572	554

Due to lack of other information the estimate of forest area as reported in 1980 (3083 hectares) was added to the mangrove estimate for each reporting year to obtain the total forest area.

The area of other wooded land is assumed to be constant for all reporting years. Other land has been calculated as total land – forest – other wooded land.

1.4 Data for Table T1

FRA 2010 categories	Area (1000 hectares)			
	1990	2000	2005	2010
Forest	3.71	3.67	3.66	3.64
Other wooded land	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68
Other land	9.61	9.65	9.66	9.68
...of which with tree cover	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Inland water bodies	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	15	15	15	15

1.5 Comments to Table T1

Variable / category	Comments related to data, definitions, etc.	Comments on the reported trend
Forest		The trend only reflect the trend in mangroves. For the other types of forest no trend data is available.
Other wooded land		
Other land		
Other land with tree cover		
Inland water bodies		

Other general comments to the table

The original data for this table (except for mangroves) are from 1980 and cover only three islands, except for the estimates of mangroves which cover six islands and date from 1990 and 2001.

Expected year for completion of ongoing/planned national forest inventory and/or RS survey / mapping

Field inventory	
Remote sensing survey / mapping	

2 Table T4 – Forest characteristics

2.1 FRA 2010 Categories and definitions

Term / category	Definition
Naturally regenerated forest	Forest predominantly composed of trees established through natural regeneration.
Introduced species	A species, subspecies or lower taxon, occurring <u>outside</u> its natural range (past or present) and dispersal potential (i.e. outside the range it occupies naturally or could occupy without direct or indirect introduction or care by humans).
Characteristics categories	
Primary forest	Naturally regenerated forest of native species, where there are no clearly visible indications of human activities and the ecological processes are not significantly disturbed.
Other naturally regenerated forest	Naturally regenerated forest where there are clearly visible indications of human activities.
Other naturally regenerated forest of introduced species (<i>sub-category</i>)	Other naturally regenerated forest where the trees are predominantly of introduced species.
Planted forest	Forest predominantly composed of trees established through planting and/or deliberate seeding.
Planted forest of introduced species (<i>sub-category</i>)	Planted forest, where the planted/seeded trees are predominantly of introduced species.
Special categories	
Rubber plantations	Forest area with rubber tree plantations.
Mangroves	Area of forest and other wooded land with mangrove vegetation.
Bamboo	Area of forest and other wooded land with predominant bamboo vegetation.

2.2 National data

2.2.1 Data sources

References to sources of information	Quality (H/M/L)	Variable(s)	Year(s)	Additional comments
Blok-Meevwig, J. 1990. <i>Mangrove system of the British Virgin Islands: Resource Mapping and Assignment to protection Categories</i> . Conservation & Fisheries Department, Ministry of Natural Resources & Labour, British Virgin Islands, Technical Report No. 5; 45pp.	M	Area of Mangrove	1990	Cited in: Bacon P.R. 1993. Mangroves in the Lesser Antilles, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. In: Lacerda, L.D. 1993. <i>Conservation and sustainable utilization of mangrove forests in Latin America and Africa regions. Vol. 2 Part I- Latin America</i> . p. 155-210. Mangrove Ecosystems technical reports ITTO/ISME Project PD114/90 (F). Okinawa, Japan. 272 pp.
British Virgin Islands Government. 2001 <i>Use of the coastal zones and seabeds</i>	H	Area of Mangrove	2001	Primary source.

2.2.2 Original data

1990

Mangroves = 627 ha

2001

Mangroves = 587 ha

2.3 Analysis and processing of national data

2.3.1 Estimation and forecasting

The 1990 data on mangroves refers to seven islands: Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada, Great Camanoe, Jost van Dyke, Sandy Cay and Beef Island.

For the 2001 estimate of mangroves, there is no information available about what islands were covered, but it has been assumed that they were the same as for the 1990 estimate.

The area of mangroves for 2000, 2005 and 2010 were estimated by linear inter- and extrapolation using the available data for 1990 and 2001 as follows:

	1990	2000	2005	2010
Mangrove area (ha)	627	591	572	554

2.4 Data for Table T4

Table 4a

FRA 2010 Categories	Forest area (1000 hectares)			
	1990	2000	2005	2010
Primary forest				
Other naturally regenerated forest				
...of which of introduced species				
Planted forest				
...of which of introduced species				
TOTAL				

Table 4b

FRA 2010 Categories	Area (1000 hectares)			
	1990	2000	2005	2010
Rubber plantations (Forest)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Mangroves (Forest and OWL)	0.627	0.591	0.572	0.554
Bamboo (Forest and OWL)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

2.5 Comments to Table T4

Variable / category	Comments related to data, definitions, etc.	Comments on the reported trend
Primary forest		
Other naturally regenerating forest		
Planted forest		
Rubber plantations		
Mangroves		
Bamboo		

Other general comments to the table