



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020

Report

Malawi

Rome, 2020



FAO has been monitoring the world's forests at 5 to 10 year intervals since 1946. The Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA) are now produced every five years in an attempt to provide a consistent approach to describing the world's forests and how they are changing. The FRA is a country-driven process and the assessments are based on reports prepared by officially nominated National Correspondents. If a report is not available, the FRA Secretariat prepares a desk study using earlier reports, existing information and/or remote sensing based analysis.

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Introduction

Report preparation and contact persons

The present report was prepared by the following person(s)

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Introductory text

The forest resources in Malawi seem to be declining steadily. The reasons for the decline are attributed to agriculture expansion, dependence on wood fuel for energy, high population growth and high levels of poverty. Although efforts are being made to replace the exploited forest resources through tree planting supported by both government and donors, the gap still remains big between the harvested areas and the area rehabilitated.

Fires remain one of the biggest problems that affects management of both natural woodlands and industrial softwood plantations as well as fuelwood and poles plantation.

The extrapolated and deduced figures in the report might not give a true picture of what is happening on the ground since the last Forest resources Mapping and Biomass Assessment for Malawi was done in 1990. Since then all FRAs have been relying on extrapolations, deductions and forecasts. The government strongly feels that it is high time to undertake, with an external support, another study that will assist it properly plan and manage the resources.

1 Forest extent, characteristics and changes

1a Extent of forest and other wooded land

National data

Data sources

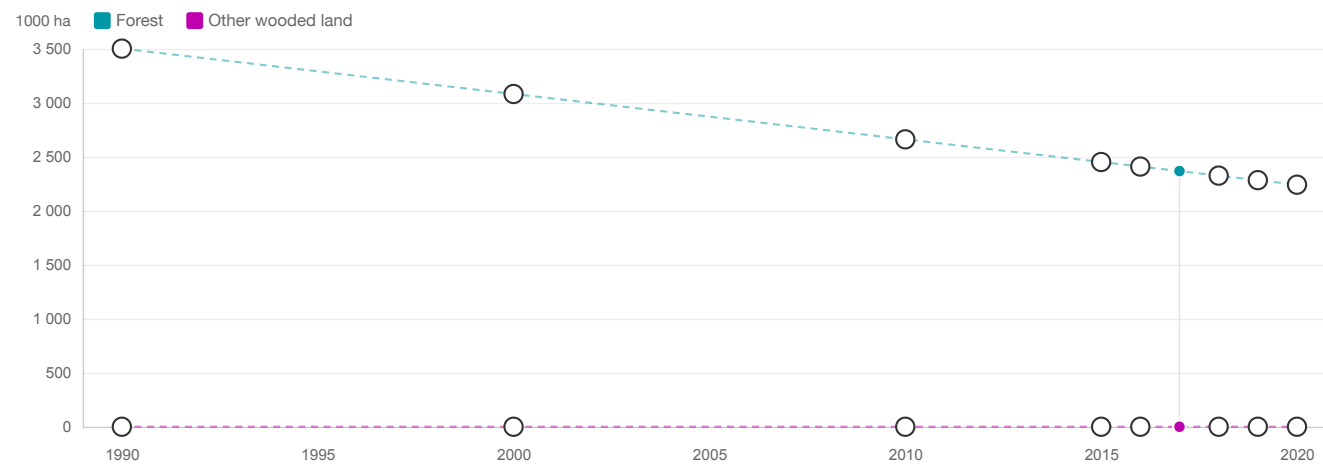
2017	References	National Forest Inventory (Malawi), Department of Forestry 2019
	Methods used	Full-cover forest/vegetation maps, National Forest Inventory
	Additional comments	

Classifications and definitions

2017	National class	Definition
	Natural Forest	
	Exotic plantation	

Original data and reclassification

2017	Classifications and definitions		FRA classes		
	Class	Area (1000 ha)	Forest	Other wooded land	Other land
	Natural Forest	2 285.70	100.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
	Exotic plantation	82.00	100.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
	Total	2 367.70	2 367.70	0.00	0.00



FRA categories	Area (1000 ha)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Forest (a)	3 501.70	3 081.70	2 661.70	2 451.70	2 409.70	2 367.70	2 325.70	2 283.70	2 241.70
Other wooded land (a)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other land (c-a-b)	5 926.30	6 346.30	6 766.30	6 976.30	7 018.30	7 060.30	7 102.30	7 144.30	7 186.30
Total land area (c)	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00	9 428.00

The FAOSTAT land area figure for the year 2015 is used for all reference years

Climatic domain	% of forest area 2015	Override value
Boreal	0.00	
Temperate	0.00	
Sub-tropical	0.00	
Tropical	100.00	

Comments

According to latest data, the forest annual forest loss is estimated at 1.8%, which correspond to aproximately 42,000 hectares. This has been applied to the whole time series.

There are no data available on other wooded land which therefore has been reported as zero.

Data reported here are different from what was reported to FRA 2015 as new data have become available.

1b Forest characteristics

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

Department of Forestry, Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources. 1993. Forest Resources Mapping and Biomass Assessment for Malawi

National Forest Inventory (Malawi), Department of Forestry 2019

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Forest plantation:

1991 137,000 hectares

2017 82,000 hectares

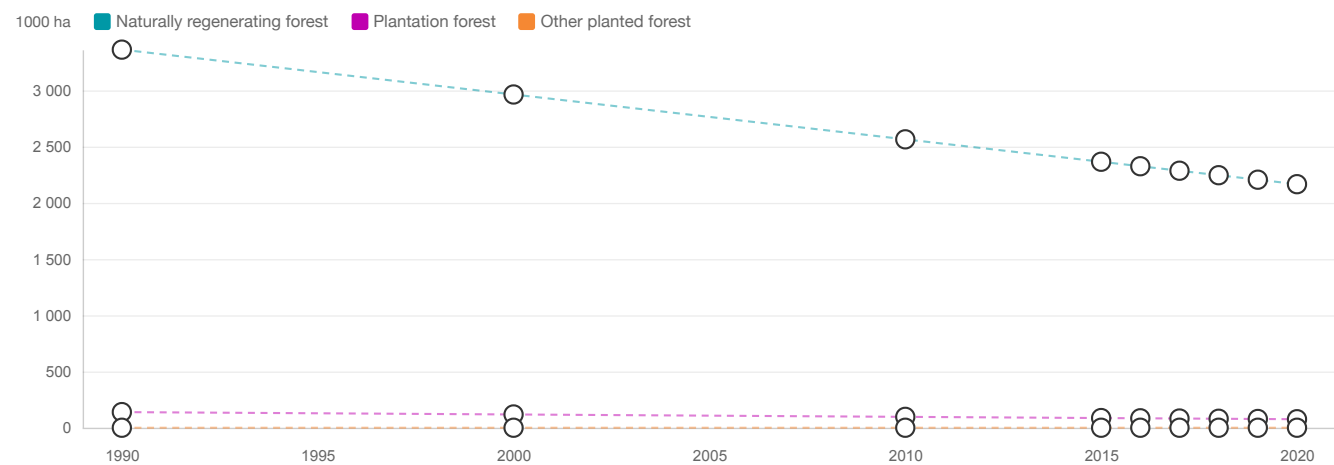
Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

A linear projection of plantation area were made based on 1991 and 2017 data. Data for Naturally Regenerating Forest was calculated as the difference between total forest area and plantation area.

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Forest area (1000 ha)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Naturally regenerating forest (a)	3 362.60	2 963.70	2 564.90	2 365.50	2 325.60	2 285.70	2 245.80	2 205.90	2 166.00
Planted forest (b)	139.10	118.00	96.80	86.20	84.10	82.00	79.90	77.80	75.70
Plantation forest	139.10	118.00	96.80	86.20	84.10	82.00	79.90	77.80	75.70
...of which introduced species	139.10	118.00	96.80	86.20	84.10	82.00	79.90	77.80	75.70
Other planted forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total (a+b)	3 501.70	3 081.70	2 661.70	2 451.70	2 409.70	2 367.70	2 325.70	2 283.70	2 241.70
Total forest area	3 501.70	3 081.70	2 661.70	2 451.70	2 409.70	2 367.70	2 325.70	2 283.70	2 241.70

Comments

1c Primary forest and special forest categories

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

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Original data

-

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

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Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Area (1000 ha)				
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020
Primary forest	1 727.00	1 330.00	734.00	721.00	708.00
Temporarily unstocked and/or recently regenerated					
Bamboos					
Mangroves	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rubber wood	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Comments

1d Annual forest expansion, deforestation and net change

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

-

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

-

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Area (1000 ha/year)			
	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020
Forest expansion (a)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
...of which afforestation				
...of which natural expansion				
Deforestation (b)	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00
Forest area net change (a-b)	-42.00	-42.00	-42.00	-42.00

Comments

1e Annual reforestation

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

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Original data

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Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

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Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Area (1000 ha/year)			
	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020
Reforestation				

Comments

1f Other land with tree cover

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

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Original data

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Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

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Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Area (1000 ha)				
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020
Palms (a)					
Tree orchards (b)					
Agroforestry (c)					
Trees in urban settings (d)					
Other (specify in comments) (e)					
Total (a+b+c+d+e)	–	–	–	–	–
Other land area	5 926.30	6 346.30	6 766.30	6 976.30	7 186.30

Comments

No data available to report on this table.

2 Forest growing stock, biomass and carbon

2a Growing stock

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

Malawi REDD+ Program - National Forest Reference Level. Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, 2019

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Growing stock was estimated from data on above-ground biomass in table 2c, applying the biomass conversion and expansion factor of 1.5 as of the IPCC 2006 guidelines, giving an estimated growing stock of 52.5 m³/hectare.

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

The average growing stock was used for all years, and also applied to the plantations in absence of specific data on plantation stocks.

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Growing stock m³/ha (over bark)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Naturally regenerating forest	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50
Planted forest	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50
...of which plantation forest	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50
...of which other planted forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Forest	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50	52.50
Other wooded land									

FRA categories	Total growing stock (million m³ over bark)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Naturally regenerating forest	176.54	155.59	134.66	124.19	122.09	120.00	117.90	115.81	113.72
Planted forest	7.30	6.20	5.08	4.53	4.42	4.31	4.19	4.08	3.97
...of which plantation forest	7.30	6.20	5.08	4.53	4.42	4.31	4.19	4.08	3.97
...of which other planted forest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Forest	183.84	161.79	139.74	128.71	126.51	124.30	122.10	119.89	117.69
Other wooded land	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Comments

2b Growing stock composition

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

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National classification and definitions

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Original data

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Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

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Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Scientific name	Common name	Growing stock in forest (million m³ over bark)				
			1990	2000	2010	2015	2020
Native tree species							
#1 Ranked in terms of volume							
#2 Ranked in terms of volume							
#3 Ranked in terms of volume							
#4 Ranked in terms of volume							
#5 Ranked in terms of volume							
#6 Ranked in terms of volume							
#7 Ranked in terms of volume							
#8 Ranked in terms of volume							
#9 Ranked in terms of volume							
#10 Ranked in terms of volume							
Remaining native tree species							
Total volume of native tree species			–	–	–	–	–
Introduced tree species							
#1 Ranked in terms of volume							
#2 Ranked in terms of volume							
#3 Ranked in terms of volume							
#4 Ranked in terms of volume							
#5 Ranked in terms of volume							
Remaining introduced tree species							
Total volume of introduced tree species			–	–	–	–	–
Total growing stock			–	–	–	–	–

Comments

There are no data available to complete this table.

2c Biomass stock

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

Malawi REDD+ Program - National Forest Reference Level. Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, 2019

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Carbon stocks (data from Table 4 in FREL report)		
	t/ha	
Above-ground + below-ground biomass	45.9	
AGB	37.0	Estimated using R/S ratio of 0.24
BGB	8.9	Estimated using R/S ratio of 0.24
Dead wood	2.8	
Litter	0.5	
Soil organic carbon	56.1	
Biomass stocks (estimated from carbon stocks using a carbon fraction of 0.47)		
	t/ha	
Above-ground + below-ground biomass	97.7	
AGB	78.7	
BGB	18.9	
Dead wood	6.0	

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

The same per hectare values were used for the whole time series.

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

-

FRA categories	Forest biomass (tonnes/ha)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Above-ground biomass	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70
Below-ground biomass	18.90	18.90	18.90	18.90	18.90	18.90	18.90	18.90	18.90
Dead wood	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

Comments

2d Carbon stock

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

Malawi REDD+ Program - National Forest Reference Level. Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, 2019

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Carbon stocks (data from Table 4 in FREL report)		
	t/ha	
Above + below-ground biomass	45.9	
AGB	37.0	Estimated using R/S ratio of 0.24
BGB	8.9	Estimated using R/S ratio of 0.24
Dead wood	2.8	
Litter	0.5	
Soil organic carbon	56.1	

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

The same per hectare values were used for the whole time series

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

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FRA categories	Forest carbon (tonnes/ha)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Carbon in above-ground biomass	37.00	37.00	37.00	37.00	37.00	37.00	37.00	37.00	37.00
Carbon in below-ground biomass	8.90	8.90	8.90	8.90	8.90	8.90	8.90	8.90	8.90
Carbon in dead wood	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80
Carbon in litter	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Soil carbon	56.10	56.10	56.10	56.10	56.10	56.10	56.10	56.10	56.10

Soil depth (cm) used for soil carbon estimates	30.00
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Comments

3 Forest designation and management

3a Designated management objective

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

Department of Forestry, Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources. 1993. Forest Resources Mapping and Biomass Assessment for Malawi . Implementing agency: Satellitbild

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Data extracted from report to FRA 2015:

Data year 1991:

Type	Area (ha)
Forests in Forest reserves	768 594
Forests in National Parks	398 454
Forests in Game Reserves	359 439
Forests in Proposed Forest Reserves	144 511
Forests in the Blantyre Fuelwood Planning Area	60 280
Forest plantations	137 000

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

In absence of time series data, the same values are used for the whole time series.

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

Production: Forest in forest reserves + Forests in the Blantyre fuelwood planning area + Forest plantations

Conservation: Forests in National parks, Forests in Game Reserves

Remaining area classified as unknown.

Primary designated management objective

FRA 2020 categories	Forest area (1000 ha)				
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020
Production (a)	965.80	965.80	965.80	965.80	965.80
Protection of soil and water (b)					
Conservation of biodiversity (c)	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90
Social Services (d)					
Multiple use (e)					
Other (specify in comments) (f)					
None/unknown (g)	1 778.00	1 358.00	938.00	728.00	518.00
Total forest area	3 501.70	3 081.70	2 661.70	2 451.70	2 241.70

Total area with designated management objective

FRA 2020 categories	Forest area (1000 ha)				
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020
Production					
Protection of soil and water					
Conservation of biodiversity					
Social Services					
Other (specify in comments)					

Comments

In absence of time series data, the 1991 data were used for production and conservation for all years, however it is likely that the forest loss also has affected - at least partly - the areas of forest reserves, national parks and game reserves.

3b Forest area within protected areas and forest area with long-term management plans

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Data extracted from report to FRA 2015:

Data year 1991:

Type	Area (ha)
Forests in Forest reserves	768 594
Forests in National Parks	398 454
Forests in Game Reserves	359 439
Forests in Proposed Forest Reserves	144 511
Forests in the Blantyre Fuelwood Planning Area	60 280
Forest plantations	137 000

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

-

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

The following national classes are considered as protected areas: National Parks and Game Reserves. The total of these two is reported as forest area within protected areas.

FRA categories	Area (1000 ha)								
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Forest area within protected areas	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90	757.90
Forest area with long-term forest management plan									
...of which in protected areas									

Comments

In absence of time series data, the 1991 data were used for protected areas for all years, however it is likely that the forest loss also has affected - at least partly - the areas of national parks and game reserves.

There are no data available on forests under forest management plan.

4 Forest ownership and management rights

4a Forest ownership

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

-

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

-

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

-

FRA categories	Forest area (1000 ha)			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
Private ownership (a)				
...of which owned by individuals				
...of which owned by private business entities and institutions				
...of which owned by local, tribal and indigenous communities				
Public ownership (b)				
Unknown/other (specify in comments) (c)	–	–	–	–
Total forest area	3 501.70	3 081.70	2 661.70	2 451.70

Comments

4b Holder of management rights of public forests

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

-

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

-

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

-

FRA categories	Forest area (1000 ha)			
	1990	2000	2010	2015
Public Administration (a)				
Individuals (b)				
Private business entities and institutions (c)				
Local, tribal and indigenous communities (d)				
Unknown/other (specify in comments) (e)	–	–	–	–
Total public ownership	–	–	–	–

Comments

5 Forest disturbances

5a Disturbances

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

-

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

-

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

-

FRA categories	Area (1000 ha)																	
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Insects (a)																		
Diseases (b)																		
Severe weather events (c)																		
Other (specify in comments) (d)																		
Total (a+b+c+d)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total forest area	3 081.70	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2 661.70	–	–	–	–	2 451.70	2 409.70	2 367.70

Comments

5b Area affected by fire

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Data up to 2012 extracted from the report to FRA 2015.

Data 2013 to 2017 as follows:

		Fire Damage (ha)				
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Land Area Burnt		9,211.77	7,929.20	9,671.73	8,270.46	7,330.49
Forest Area Burnt	Plantations	3,578.60	2,177.32	2,988.48	2,381.25	2,454.88
	Natural Woodlands	1,337.42	1,266.01	1,137.66	1,152.69	1,474.86
	Total	4,916.02	3,443.33	4,126.14	3,533.94	3,929.74
		Number of Fires				
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
		10,209	8,945	10,070	10,023	7,854

Analysis and processing of national data

Estimation and forecasting

-

Reclassification into FRA 2020 categories

-

FRA categories	Area (1000 ha)																	
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total land area affected by fire				594.25	489.95	581.70	502.11	531.32	533.46	391.81	476.44	465.05	488.24	921.18	792.92	967.17	827.05	733.05
...of which on forest				46.66	53.49	59.90	71.93	95.49	63.05	29.70	73.33	57.46	84.81	491.60	344.33	412.61	353.39	392.97

Comments

5c Degraded forest

Does your country monitor area of degraded forest		No
If "yes"	What is the national definition of "Degraded forest"?	
	Describe the monitoring process and results	

Comments

6 Forest policy and legislation

6a Policies, Legislation and national platform for stakeholder participation in forest policy

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

-

Indicate the existence of	Boolean (Yes/No)	
	National	Sub-national
Policies supporting SFM	Yes	No
Legislations and regulations supporting SFM	Yes	No
Platform that promotes or allows for stakeholder participation in forest policy development	Yes	No
Traceability system(s) for wood products	No	No

Comments

6b Area of permanent forest estate

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

Data extracted from report to FRA 2015:

Data year 1991:

Type	Area (ha)
Forests in Forest reserves	768 594
Forests in National Parks	398 454
Forests in Game Reserves	359 439

These three national classes are considered to be the Permanent Forest Estate.

FRA 2020 categories	Forest area (1000 ha)					
	Applicable?	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020
Area of permanent forest estate	Yes	1 526.50	1 526.50	1 526.50	1 526.50	1 526.50

Comments

In absence of time series data, the 1991 data were used for the Permanent Forest Estate for all years, however it is likely that the forest loss also has affected - at least partly - the areas of forest reserves, national parks and game reserves.

7 Employment, education and NWFP

7a Employment in forestry and logging

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

Lebedys, A. 2003. Trends and current status of the contribution of the forest sector to national economies, (final draft).FAO, Rome

Annual Economic Report 2008, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
808	821	911	921	921	927	938	955	975	996	996

Employment in forestry, logging and related services = 100% Primary production of goods

The 2000 data were used for 2010 and 2015.

FRA 2020 categories	Full-time equivalents (1000 FTE)											
	1990			2000			2010			2015		
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Employment in forestry and logging	0.81			1.00			1.00			1.00		
...of which silviculture and other forestry activities												
...of which logging												
...of which gathering of non wood forest products												
...of which support services to forestry												

Comments

Using data from the National Statistical Service of Malawi, data was calculated by taking the employment per cubic metre of round wood production for the year 2000 and using the production data in the years 1990-1999 to estimate the likely level of employment. For this reason, the data is considered to be an under-estimate. Data taken from the Malawi Government Annual Economic Report 2008. Some of the data is based on Lebedys' document

7b Graduation of students in forest-related education

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

-

FRA 2020 categories	Number of graduated students											
	1990			2000			2010			2015		
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Doctoral degree												
Master's degree												
Bachelor's degree												
Technician certificate / diploma												
Total												

Comments

7c Non wood forest products removals and value 2015

National Data

Data sources + type of data source eg NFI, etc

-

National classification and definitions

-

Original data

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	Name of NWFP product	Key species	Quantity	Unit	Value (1000 local currency)	NWFP category
#1						
#2						
#3						
#4						
#5						
#6						
#7						
#8						
#9						
#10						
All other plant products						
All other animal products						
Total					-	

Name of currency	
------------------	--

Comments

8 Sustainable Development Goal 15

8a Sustainable Development Goal 15

SDG Indicator 15.1.1 Forest area as proportion of total land area 2015

Indicator	Percent							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Forest area as proportion of total land area 2015	32.69	28.23	26.00	25.56	25.11	24.67	24.22	23.78

Name of agency responsible	
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SDG Indicator 15.2.1 Progress towards sustainable forest management

Sub-Indicator 1	Percent						
	2000-2010	2010-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Forest area annual net change rate	-1.45	-1.63	-1.74	-1.77	-1.81	-1.84	-1.87

Name of agency responsible	
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Sub-Indicator 2	Forest biomass (tonnes/ha)							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Above-ground biomass stock in forest	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70	78.70

Name of agency responsible	
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Sub-Indicator 3	Percent (2015 forest area baseline)							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas	30.91	30.91	30.91	30.91	30.91	30.91	30.91	30.91

Name of agency responsible	
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Sub-Indicator 4	Percent (2015 forest area baseline)							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Proportion of forest area under long-term forest management plan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Name of agency responsible	
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Sub-Indicator 5	Forest area (1000 ha)							
	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Forest area under independently verified forest management certification schemes	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	–	–