



CIFOR in Eastern and Southern Africa

Photo by Olivier Girard/CIFOR

Eastern and Southern Africa's Forests and Woodlands

Eastern and Southern Africa is home to 50% of Africa's population and hosts around 88% of the continent's forests and woodlands. These forests and woodlands are rich in biodiversity, including most of the world's iconic large animals and seven of the world's biodiversity 'hotspots'.

The 28 countries of Eastern and Southern Africa are diverse in their forest and woodland endowment and in many factors relevant to forest and woodland conservation and use such as population size, density and urbanization; structure of the economy and level of economic development; agricultural and natural resources potential; and institutional arrangements such as tenure.

Despite the great diversity, the region's forests and woodlands face common pressures such as large-scale conversion to commercial agriculture, unsustainable levels of forest-product harvesting, and loss of ecosystem function and biodiversity. In addition, Eastern and Southern Africa is facing challenges directly related to forests such as food security and nutrition, meeting household energy needs, climate change mitigation and adaptation, reducing poverty, governance and law inadequacies, and disparities in access to land.

CIFOR's efforts in the region: An integrated approach

CIFOR's work in Eastern and Southern Africa fosters an appreciation of the importance of forest and woodland resources to livelihoods, national economies, and the wider development agenda. These ecosystems contribute environmental services and physical products across local, national, regional and international scales. Around 300 million people in Eastern and Southern Africa depend on these forests and woodland ecosystems for their livelihoods.

CIFOR's work focuses on the major challenges in the region and recognizes the critical role forests and woodlands play in working toward solutions. We use quality science to inform and facilitate policy, market development, technological advances, and institutional innovations. We ensure research results in action by working with multiple partners and stakeholders, from small scale resource managers to national policy makers, private sector actors, regional economic commissions and international organizations.

CIFOR has offices in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia. Our research teams draw on a pool of expertise from staff at our headquarters in Indonesia, and from our offices across Africa and South America.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, CIFOR currently has projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We work with many local partners to address the complex and dynamic forces that impact forests and people. These projects focus on three main themes: 1. forest governance, trade and investment; 2. landscapes and climate change; and 3. smallholder livelihoods and production systems.

Forest governance, trade & investment

Sustainable land-based investments

Investments in land-based industries have social and environmental consequences that are often under-regulated. CIFOR's research aims to increase understanding of the role and process of these investments, enhance the policies affecting their regulation, and improve the impacts they have on landscapes and livelihoods.

Forest governance and trade

The key players and power structures in the socio-economic model of forest trade and forest governance have considerable impact on the management of forested landscapes and on the illegal timber trade. CIFOR's research investigates the complexities of timber commodity chains and contributes to policy and regulatory options in East Africa to minimize the flow of illegal timber.

Landscapes and climate change

Climate change mitigation & adaptation

Land-use and land cover changes are major contributors to climate change, which in turn poses a major threat to agriculture and rural livelihoods. Large areas in the region have been converted to agriculture with largely unknown consequences. CIFOR's research investigates the consequences of land-use change and options for mitigation, and aims to share knowledge to facilitate the development of effective adaptation strategies using ecosystem based approaches.

REDD+ initiatives

CIFOR's research on REDD+ is about identifying what works and putting that into practice. Researchers are focused on gathering and sharing knowledge to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and impacts of REDD+ and its benefit sharing mechanisms. Some of the project goals are poverty reduction, enhancement of non-carbon ecosystem services, and protection of local livelihoods, rights and tenure.

Smallholder livelihoods and production systems

Gender, tenure and community rights

Over half of people in the region live in rural areas where they depend on forests and woodlands for their livelihoods. Yet there are often user and ownership-rights challenges, particularly for poor smallholders, women and marginalized groups, and gender-inequitable decision making. CIFOR's research provides information and tools to strengthen and secure land and forest tenure, and improve women's participation in forest decision-making.

Food security, nutrition and health

Although the majority of people in the region depend on forests and woodlands for food, fuelwood, building materials, medicines, and fodder, these resources are often not sustainably managed or developed sustainably to improve livelihoods. CIFOR's research investigates and promotes the links between maintenance of forests and tree cover and improved rural nutrition and agricultural systems.

Partnerships

CIFOR is committed to fostering strategic partnerships with other organizations working towards similar goals, and to jointly building research capacity for impact. We are proud to be working in close partnership with governments, funders, multilateral organizations, regional and national research organizations, NGOs, and community partners in Eastern and Southern Africa. Together, we inform and stimulate evidence-based change.

Contact us

Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 7224 444

Regional Coordinator: Dr Phosiso Sola

Email: p.sola@cgiar.org

Ethiopia Office, Addis Ababa

Tel: +251 116 1720 00

Team Leader: Dr Habtemariam Kassa

Email: h.kassa@cgiar.org

Zambia Office, Lusaka

Tel: +211 266 762, 211 266 854

Team Leader: Dr Davison Gumbo

Email: d.gumbo@cgiar.org

CIFOR Headquarters

Bogor, Indonesia

Tel: +62 251 8622 622

Email: cifor@cgiar.org



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
Forests, Trees and
Agroforestry

Produced by CIFOR as part of the CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (CRP-FTA). This collaborative program aims to enhance the management and use of forests, agroforestry and tree genetic resources across the landscape from forests to farms. CIFOR leads CRP-FTA in partnership with Bioversity International, CIRAD, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

cifor.org/forests-trees-agroforestry

cifor.org | blog.cifor.org



Center for International Forestry Research

CIFOR advances human well-being, environmental conservation and equity by conducting research to help shape policies and practices that affect forests in developing countries. CIFOR is a member of the CGIAR Consortium. Our headquarters are in Bogor, Indonesia, with offices in Asia, Africa and South America.

