



Forests and human well-being

SDGs in focus



Read all Forests and human well-being highlights: ar2016.cifor.org/HWB

Tens of millions of rural households in tropical countries gain significant income, food, fuel and shelter from forests, which also contribute to the wider local and national economy. However, the part forests play in human well-being and prosperity is often underappreciated or overlooked by strict conservation approaches and poverty-reduction policies. As a result, missed opportunities and unintended consequences can further drive forest loss and undercut rural livelihoods. New patterns – such as rapid land use changes and fast growth in migration and urbanization in developing countries – raise additional questions and require novel approaches.

The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) is building evidence of how forests contribute to human well-being, to give policy makers the solid base they need to make effective decisions that support both forests and people.

Research priorities

Effects of migration, urbanization and remittances on gender and forest dependence

- **Migration and forest dependence:** Two major projects aim to better understand the changing patterns of migration from forest lands in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Nepal, Peru and Tajikistan. Researchers are studying how remittances that are sent back to forest-dependent communities influence forest use, livelihoods and gender roles. The team is also evaluating policies and programs that promote sustainable forest management and improved livelihoods.

Enhancing income and livelihoods from forests

- **Haze-free sustainable livelihoods:** Research focuses on boosting the livelihoods of communities who live in peatland areas in Riau Province, Indonesia, working with government programs and private companies.
- **Climate-resilient livelihoods in high-carbon forests and peatlands:** In collaboration with Kyoto University, this project aims to understand the drivers and impacts of deforestation and forest fire in peatlands and to explore climate-smart livelihood options for people managing these ecosystems.

Quantifying and realizing forest benefits using large data sets

- **Applying lessons from the Poverty and Environment Network (PEN):** CIFOR is analyzing the PEN data set on how rural households use forest resources to contribute

to their livelihoods, exploring links between household economy and key issues such as conservation policies and climate change. Findings are shared with partners such as the World Bank, and some countries have begun applying PEN's methodologies in national surveys.

Coping with risk in smallholder landscapes

- **The ASEAN–Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change:** The third phase of this project is assessing the risks faced by smallholders in Southeast Asia who practice swidden farming, or shifting cultivation. CIFOR is looking at how incentives affect forests and land use decisions in rural landscapes in light of changing demographics and land uses, including how people can best adapt to climate change.

The forest–farm interface

- **The West Africa Forest–Farm Interface Project (WAFFI):** Smallholders in southern Burkina Faso and northern Ghana often make their living through a mix of agriculture, forestry, livestock and natural resource management. CIFOR is building evidence to inform policies that currently treat forests and agriculture separately, along with doing research on programs to alleviate poverty, create livelihoods and support gender equality.
- **The Forest–Farm Interface Project in Ethiopia:** CIFOR is analyzing historical trends to better understand land use changes on the borders of Ethiopia's natural forests. The project aims to identify the legal and institutional gaps that lead to high rates of deforestation in these landscapes, and documents community practices that maximize conservation and agricultural production.

Benefit sharing

- **Safeguards and benefit sharing in Burkina Faso, Indonesia and Peru:** This project builds on CIFOR's previous research on benefit sharing, safeguards and policy network analysis in REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation). Research focuses on identifying ways to provide incentives and alternative livelihoods to communities, along with analyzing the safeguards in place to ensure REDD+ does no harm to local people and the environment.

The way we work

- **Rigorous research methods:** Through cutting-edge research, CIFOR generates global tools that can help communities sustainably manage forests and increase the role forests play in human well-being.
- **Multifaceted collaboration:** The forests and human well-being team works in a number of countries and with other CIFOR teams in cross-thematic areas, such as REDD+, migration and urbanization, managing forest frontiers and coping with risk.

- **Capacity building:** Projects are designed to create opportunities for training and scientific interactions. Engaging national researchers in the design and implementation of research, co-publishing the results and returning results to communities lie at the heart of our work.
- **Sustainable development:** In order to achieve the greatest impact, all of the forests and human well-being team's work is designed to contribute to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), particularly Goal 1: No poverty, Goal 3: Good health and well-being, and Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities.

Outreach

Team members present their findings at different national and international forums to share results and inform key decision makers at both national and global levels, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Poverty and Environment Partnership (PEP) and the World Bank. Findings are also shared through presentations, news stories, videos and at events across the globe.

Capturing the true value of forests for people

Long underestimated by policy makers, the true scope of income drawn from wild forest resources worldwide was brought to light by CIFOR's Poverty Environment Network (PEN), the world's largest database of tropical forests and rural livelihoods. Now, developing countries have a novel tool to inform policy, thanks to a new (and heavily PEN-based) forestry module and sourcebook created for the World Bank's Living Standard Measurement Study (LSMS) surveys.

Project: Poverty Environment Network (PEN).

Countries: 24 countries across Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

Read more: ar2016.cifor.org/HWBstory

24 countries 364 villages 8,000+ households

33 partners
[mostly PhD students]

The sourcebook is the most visible output of this work, but the biggest outcome is the partnership that has evolved over several years.

Gero Carletto, Manager of the LSMS in the Development Data Group at the World Bank



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
Forests, Trees and
Agroforestry

The CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA) is the world's largest research for development program to enhance the role of forests, trees and agroforestry in sustainable development and food security and to address climate change. CIFOR leads FTA in partnership with Bioversity International, CATIE, CIRAD, ICRAF, INBAR and TBI.



Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

CIFOR advances human well-being, equity and environmental integrity by conducting innovative research, developing partners' capacity, and actively engaging in dialogue with all stakeholders to inform policies and practices that affect forests and people. CIFOR is a CGIAR Research Center, and leads the CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA). Our headquarters are in Bogor, Indonesia, with offices in Nairobi, Kenya; Yaounde, Cameroon; and Lima, Peru.

