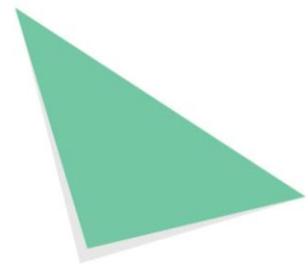


# Two Sides Facts



## The Myth: Making paper destroys forests.

## The Fact: Paper production supports sustainable forest management.

The U.S. paper industry promotes sustainable forestry and depends on sustainable forest growth to provide a reliable supply of wood fiber. Paper manufacturers do this by encouraging forest sustainability through their purchase and use of certified wood fiber and by promoting sustainable forest management policies and practices at home and around the globe. By providing a dependable market for responsibly grown fiber, the paper industry encourages landowners to continue managing their forestland instead of selling it for development or other non-forest uses.

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*All cited facts are quoted directly from the source unless otherwise noted. Where indicated, Two Sides U.S. has summarized lengthy information, but links original sources are provided in the footnotes. Information in brackets was added by Two Sides U.S. for clarification purposes.*

### How does the U.S. paper industry promote and support sustainable forest growth?

- Sustainable forest management is commonly viewed as one of the most important contributions that the forestry sector can make to sustainable development.<sup>1</sup> [The future of a thriving print and paper industry, and all its economic spin-offs, also depends on well-managed and healthy forests].
- The income landowners receive for products grown on their land encourages them to maintain, renew and manage this valuable resource sustainably. This is an especially important consideration in places facing economic pressures to convert forestland to non-forest uses.<sup>2</sup>
- (*Two Sides Summary*) As part of its *Better Practices, Better Planet 2020* initiative, the U.S. paper and forest products industry is encouraging forest sustainability by seeking further increases in the amount of fiber procured from certified forest lands or through certified fiber sourcing programs in the U.S. by 2020. The industry is also working with governments, industry and other stakeholders to promote policies around the globe to reduce illegal logging. *Better Practices, Better Planet 2020* is one of the most extensive and quantifiable set of sustainability goals for a major manufacturing industry in the United States. AF&PA member companies are committed to achieving these goals by transparently reporting the industry's progress through an annual report on paper recovery and a biennial Sustainability Report published by their primary trade group, the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA).<sup>3</sup> [AF&PA compiles and

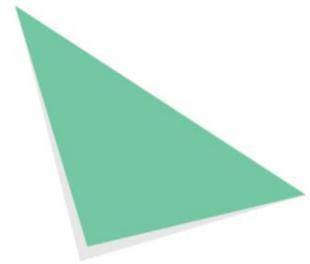
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<sup>1</sup> [UN FAO, 1995.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [WBCSD and NCASI, 2005.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [AF&PA, 2011.](#)

# Two Sides Facts



analyzes data from member companies that make more than 75% of the U.S.'s pulp, paper, paper-based packaging and wood building materials.]

- All members of the American Forest and Paper Association owning forestland must conform to one or more of the major credible certification systems in the United States. These include: the seven regional forest management standards developed for the U.S. by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) program; and systems endorsed by the international Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). In North America, PEFC has endorsed the Canadian Standards Association program and the American Tree Farm System®.

In addition, all AF&PA members sourcing fiber directly from the forest are required to adhere to the organization's Sustainable Procurement Principles. These principles require support of programs that supply regionally appropriate information and services to forest landowners regarding best management practices; reforestation; afforestation (conversion of non-forested land to forests); visual quality management; management of harvest residue; conservation of critical wildlife habitat; threatened and endangered species; and Forests with Exceptional Value. Among other things, these principles encourage the use of qualified resource professionals and loggers when applying sustainable forest management principles and encourage programs for the purchase of raw material from recognized qualified logging professionals.<sup>4</sup> [AF&PA compiles and analyzes data from member companies that make more than 75% of the U.S.'s pulp, paper, paper-based packaging and wood building materials.]

## What is the evidence that U.S. forests are not being destroyed by papermaking, and what are the causes that may contribute to future destruction?

- In the United States, we grow more trees than we harvest. The country continues to benefit from a large and diverse forest inventory distributed across about one-third of total land area. The amount of U.S. forestland has remained essentially the same for the last 100 years at about 750 million acres, even though the U.S. population tripled during the same period.<sup>5</sup>
- Over the last 50 years, the volume of trees growing on U.S. forestland increased 49%.<sup>6</sup>
- The gross statistics on forest area mask substantial fragmentation and outright losses in U.S. forest land at the regional level, particularly in areas adjacent to growing urban areas or where recreational development is prominent. Fragmentation and loss is further compounded by the sale of forest lands to firms and individuals whose primary focus is not active forest management for timber production, forest conservation, or other purposes. With the loss of an active management focus and the revenue streams

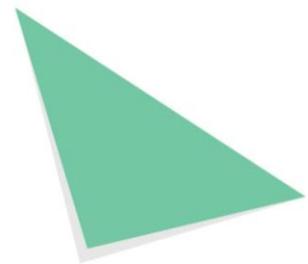
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<sup>4</sup> [AF&PA, 2010.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [USDA Forest Service, 2010.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [SAF, 2007.](#)

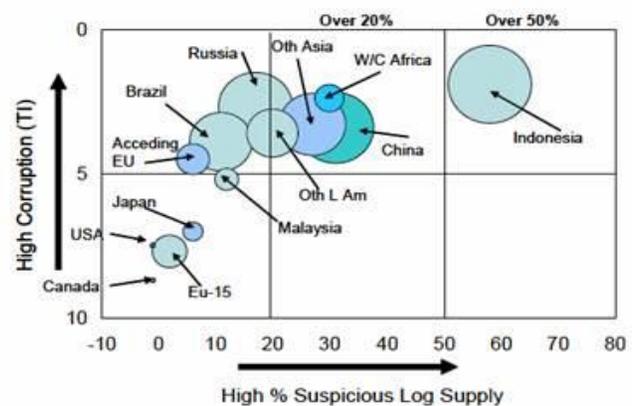
# Two Sides Facts



that often accompany it, the survival of these forests and their associated ecosystem services is in question.<sup>7</sup>

- While total forestland area in the U.S. has been relatively stable over the last century, a net loss of 20 million acres (2.7%) is projected between 2000 and 2050. Most of that loss will be caused by development.<sup>8</sup>
- Steady demand for residential and other development continues to fragment forest ecosystems both in urban areas and in more natural environments that are targets for vacation and retirement home development.<sup>9</sup>
- Since the mid-1990s, integrated paper companies (industrial landowners) have sold most of their land and these large-scale timberland ownerships have been restructured into Timber Management Organizations (TIMOs) or Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), which are primarily managers and holders of timberlands for institutional investors. This shift occurred, in part, due changes in the U.S. tax code. These changes have led to the widespread sale of productive timberland, including subdivision of land into small parcels for development, increasing forest fragmentation across the United States.<sup>10</sup>
- Globally, outbreaks of forest insect pests damage some 86 million acres of forest annually, primarily in the temperate and boreal zone. The mountain pine beetle has devastated more than 27 million acres of forest in the western United States and Canada since the late 1990s – an unprecedented outbreak exacerbated by higher winter temperatures.<sup>11</sup>
- Perhaps not surprisingly, illegal forest activity is also more pronounced where corruption is high. The adjacent figure displays the relationship between corruption and illegal logging using our independently derived estimates of suspicious log supply in elected countries. With almost 60% of its production suspect, Indonesia stands out as the country with both the highest rate of illegal activity and the most suspicious volume.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 2: Corruption and Illegal Forest Activity



Note: Size of bubbles represents volume of suspect roundwood, including imports. Sources: Transparency International; WRI/SCA estimates of illegal logging

<sup>7</sup> [Ibid, USDA Forest Service, 2010](#)

<sup>8</sup> [USFS, 2007.](#)

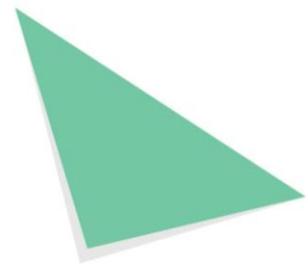
<sup>9</sup> [Ibid, USDA Forest Service, 2010.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Binkley, C., 2007.](#)

<sup>11</sup> [UN FAO, 2010.](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Seneca Creek Associates LLC and Wood Resources International LL](#)

# Two Sides Facts



## Can responsible forest management be both commercially and environmentally beneficial?

- Responsibly managed forests are necessary for the maintenance of biodiversity and ecosystems services, both on individual sites and within the wider landscape. Forest management, including intensive commercial management, can be a critical and cost-effective conservation tool within larger-scale conservation strategies. Well-managed commercial or community forests can for example provide vital buffers for and links between protected areas. Forest management should therefore seek to maintain forest quality and not degrade either the timber resource or the range of associated goods and services (non-timber forest products, environmental services, biodiversity, spiritual values, recreational uses, etc.).<sup>13</sup>
- Well-managed forests maintain biodiversity and other important ecosystem services such as protection of water sheds. These forests also provide benefits for local people.<sup>14</sup>

## Who owns U.S. forestland and how much of it is certified?

- Fifty-six percent of the 751 million acres of U.S. forestland (420 million acres) is privately owned. Of this private forest land, 62 percent (260 million acres) is owned by families and individuals in what we call “family forests.” America’s 10 million family forest owners are diverse and dynamic. They are pivotal for the protection and sustainable management of our forests across the landscape. The remaining private forest land is owned by corporations, conservation organizations, clubs, Native American tribes, and others.

Forty-four percent of U.S. forestland is publicly owned. The Federal government administers 76% of the public forestland. State forestry, park and wildlife agencies account for most of the 21 percent of public forestland that is state-owned. The remaining 3% of the public forestland is owned by local governments, such as counties and towns (see figure below).<sup>15</sup>

- (*Two Sides Summary*) Forest certification remains a proven way to promote environmental and social responsibility. The three major U.S. certification systems – Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®), Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC®) and American Tree Farm System – certify a combined total of more than 118 million acres<sup>16</sup>, representing 28% of privately owned. U.S. forestland.

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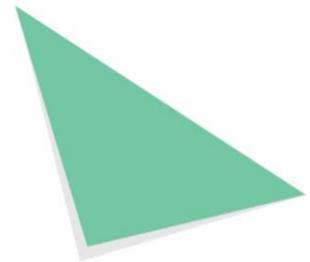
<sup>13</sup> [WWF, 2010a.](#)

<sup>14</sup> [WWF, 2010b.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [U.S. Forest Service, 2009.](#)

<sup>16</sup> [SFI Progress Report, 2011.](#)

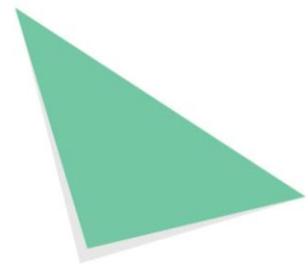
# Two Sides Facts



- While in different manners, the ATFS, FSC and SFI systems include the fundamental elements of credibility and make positive contributions to forest sustainability. Proponents of individual certification programs often promote their option as the best or only option. This has little to do with quality and everything to do with marketing and selling their program. No certification program can credibly claim to be "best", and no certification program that promotes itself as the only certification option can maintain credibility. Forest ecosystems are complex and a simplistic "one size fits all" approach to certification cannot address all sustainability needs.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> [National Association of State Foresters, 2008.](#)

# Two Sides Facts



## What is the definition [and perception] of deforestation?

- [Two Sides Summary] Deforestation is the removal of a forest or stand of trees where the land is thereafter converted to a non-forest use<sup>18</sup>. Examples of deforestation include conversion of forestland to farms, ranches, or urban use.
- [Two Sides Summary] The term *deforestation* is often misused to describe any activity where all trees in an area are removed. However in temperate climates, the removal of all trees in an area—in conformance with sustainable forestry practices—is correctly described as *regeneration harvest*<sup>19</sup>. In temperate climates, natural regeneration of forest stands often will not occur in the absence of disturbance, whether natural or anthropogenic<sup>20</sup>.
- A reduction in forest area can happen through either of two processes: deforestation and natural disasters. Deforestation, which is by far the most important, implies that forests are cleared by people and the land converted to another use, such as agriculture or infrastructure. Natural disasters may also destroy forests, and when the area is incapable of regenerating naturally and no efforts are made to replant, it too converts to other land.

An increase in forest area can also happen in two ways: either through afforestation (i.e. planting of trees on land that was not previously forested) or through natural expansion of forests (e.g. on abandoned agricultural land, a process which is quite common in some European countries). Where part of a forest is cut down but replanted (reforestation) or grows back on its own within a relatively short period (natural regeneration), there is no change in forest area.<sup>21</sup>

## What are the causes of deforestation and where is it occurring?

- At a regional level, South America suffered the largest net loss of forests between 2000 and 2010 – about 4.0 million hectares per year – followed by Africa, which lost 3.4 million hectares annually. Oceania also reported a net loss of forest (about 700 000 ha per year over the period 2000–2010), mainly due to large losses of forests in Australia, where severe drought and forest fires have exacerbated the loss of forest since 2000. The area of forest in North and Central America was estimated as almost the same in 2010 as in 2000. The forest area in Europe continued to expand, although at a slower rate (700 000 ha per year) than in the 1990s (900 000 ha per year). Asia, which had a net loss of forest of some 600 000 ha annually in the 1990s, reported a net gain of forest of more than 2.2 million hectares per year in the period 2000–

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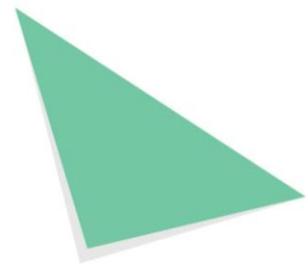
<sup>18</sup> [SAF, Dictionary of Forestry](#)

<sup>19</sup> [SAF, Dictionary of Forestry](#)

<sup>20</sup> Oliver, C.D. Forest Development in North America following major disturbances. *For. Ecol. Mgmt.* 3(1980):153–168

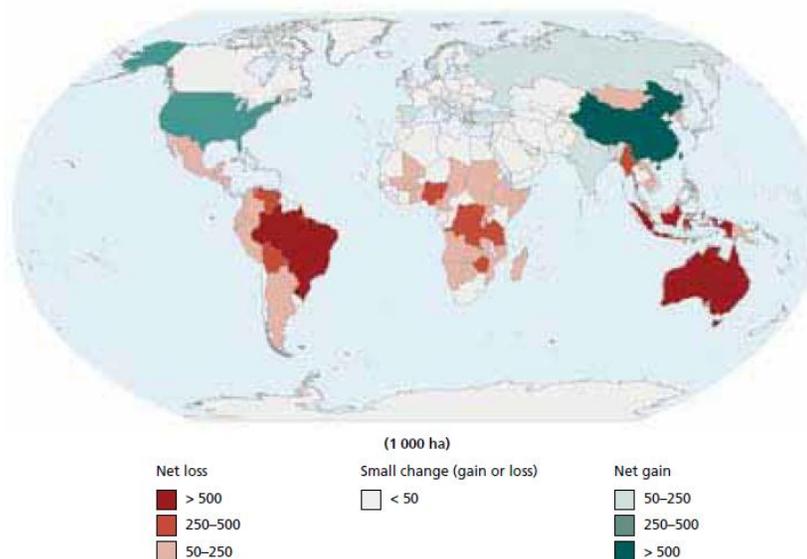
<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, [FAO](#)

# Two Sides Facts



2010, primarily due to the large-scale afforestation reported by China and despite continued high rates of net loss in many countries in South and Southeast Asia (see figure below).<sup>22</sup>

FIGURE 5  
Annual change in forest area by country, 2005–2010



- [Two Sides Summary] According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat, the overwhelming direct cause of deforestation is agriculture. Subsistence farming is responsible for 48% of deforestation; commercial agriculture is responsible for 32% of deforestation; logging (legal and illegal) is responsible for 14% of deforestation and fuel wood removals make up 5% of deforestation.<sup>23</sup>
- The paper industry is a relatively small user of wood. Of the wood extracted from the world's forests, 53% is used for energy production, 28% is used by sawmill and only around 11% is used directly by the paper industry.<sup>24</sup>
- Among countries with a per capita GDP of at least US\$4,600, net deforestation rates have ceased to increase.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> [Ibid, FAO](#)

<sup>23</sup> [UNFCCC, 2007](#)

<sup>24</sup> [UN FAO statistics](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Kauppi, P. et al. 2006.](#)