



Deforestation study

Rwanda

Rwanda has a relatively low deforestation rate compared to neighbouring countries, with a stable forest cover of approximately 20%. The annual deforestation rate has been minimal, averaging 0.2% from 2008-2018.

However, deforestation and degradation persist due to specific drivers and regional dynamics. Major drivers include the need for fuelwood, agricultural expansion and overgrazing. Most deforestation occurs in unprotected production forests and shrublands. Government efforts focus on forest restoration and controlling land use through policies like the Forest Investment Program.

Economic contribution of land use sectors

Agriculture including agro processing

GDP

22%

Export

36% (informally exported)

Labour

70%

Major Value Chains

- Food crops: beans, maize, sweet potatoes, banana, vegetable and rice dominate subsistence farming. Cash crops include fruits and vegetables
- Export crops: coffee, tea and horticultural products (flowers and fruits)
- Livestock: dairy, small ruminants' poultry both for domestic and export.

Key Actors

Smallholder farmers, cooperatives, exporters, private sector.

Tourism

GDP

2%

Major Value Chains

- Nature Based Tourism: Gorilla trekking in Volcanoes National Park. Other attraction includes Nyungwe Forest (biodiverse) and Akagere National Park (Wildlife)
- Cultural and Historical Tourism: Genocide Memorials, local cultural experience and craft markets.

Key Actors

Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Private Sector Operators, Local Communities, NGOs and Conservation Organization

Forestry

GDP

6%

Major Value Chains

- Production Forests
- Conservation Forestry
- Wood Processing

Key Actors

Smallholders, cooperatives, private investors, government agencies, NGOs

Aquaculture including fisheries

GDP

2%

Major Value Chains

- Capture Fisheries
- Aquaculture: growing sector focused on commercial fish farming of tilapia and other species
- Processing and trade

Key Actors

Small-scale fisheries, Aquaculture Concession Holders, Rwanda Agricultural and Animal Development Board (RAB), Traders and Retailers.

Key biodiverse rich areas

Protected Area Forests

- **Examples:** Volcanoes National Park, Nyungwe Forest National Park, Gishwati-Mukura National Park.

Forests in Unprotected Areas

- **Examples:** Congo-Nile Ridge Forest, Private and Community-Owned Forests.

Other Biodiverse Rich Areas

- **Examples:** Rwanda wetlands: Akagera and Rugezi, Lake Kivu Basin, Savannah and Shrublands.

Risks posed by land use sectors

Deforestation

- Smallholder Agriculture
- Charcoal Production

Land Degradation

- Overgrazing
- Poor Subsistence Farming Practices

High Carbon Stock (HCS) and High Conservation Value (HCV)

- Tea and Coffee Plantation
- Infrastructure Projects like road construction and hydroelectric dams

General statement of country-level deforestation risk

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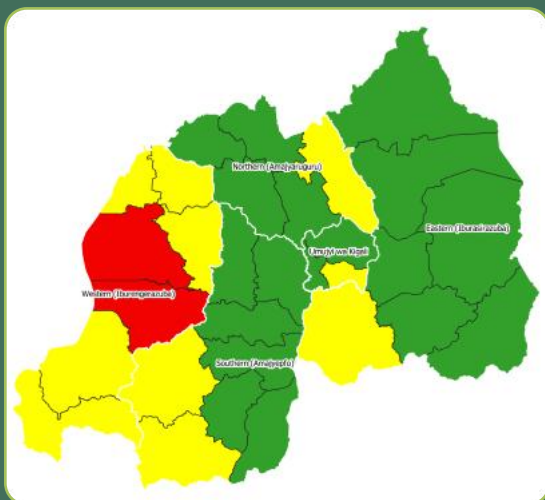
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Deforestation-risk methodology application to investment decisioning

Rwanda has low overall deforestation risk, but certain Northern, Southern, and Western regions face medium to high risks due to land use practices like smallholder farming and grazing. A risk classification matrix is recommended to evaluate projects based on investment type and district risk level. All investment proposals must include land tenure proof, GPS location, and an environmental impact assessment.

- Low-risk projects must confirm no deforestation since the cut-off year and avoid protected areas.
- Medium/high-risk projects require ex-ante analysis using GPS and deforestation maps.

Projects in protected or deforested areas after the cut-off date are ineligible. Eligible projects must be regularly monitored for environmental compliance.



Deforestation risk map

- High deforestation risk
- Medium risk
- Low risk

