Bolivia

National deforestation estimates in percent per year and agricultural statistics are from FAO (2010). Mapped sub-national estimates of the Deforestation Indicator in hectares are indicative only, given the resolution of the data source, and are from Killeen et al. 2007.

Context

Political Context
Despite government efforts to reduce deforestation, Bolivia is among the tenth highest deforestation per capita countries according to FAO statistics. During the past two decades, the Government of Bolivia has developed national laws and programs to incentivize sustainable forest and other land management, along with the reduction of deforestation. The most important laws which influence land management are the Land Law, which includes the development of land use plans at department and municipal levels, the Forest Law which incorporates land use plans at the property level, the Environmental Law, which aims to protect and conserve the environment and natural resources, and the Mother Earth Law, recently approved, which aims to protect the environment and promote the sustainable use of resources and ecosystems, especially forests. Failures during implementation of these laws, however, have contributed to insecure land tenure and in some cases misrepresentation of the laws to "justify inappropriate forest clearing instead of regulating agricultural expansion". Bolivia has been negotiating support for its REDD+ strategy with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank since 2008 and is currently working with the UN-REDD National Programme. Apart from national efforts, in 2011, the regional government of Pando approved a program to incentivize conservation of natural forest by compensating communities that preserve forest or make sustainable use of its resources (this program is currently being supported by Conservation International Bolivia).

Socio-economic Context
Bolivia is South America’s poorest country in the world with 60% of the total population affected by poverty, 47% of which live in rural areas depending directly on agriculture activities and forest resources. Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing all together contribute to 15% of the GDP and occupy 53% of the country population’s labor. Large scale agriculture is one of the most important incomes to the country. Soybean, sunflower and maize are the major producing commodities.

Deforestation Drivers
The principal drivers of deforestation are agricultural expansion, cattle ranching, forest fires, illegal logging, migration and the extension of roads. Studies suggest that deforestation associated with large scale agriculture occurs as a response to demand from export markets but is also associated with limited national policies on land use planning. The department of Santa Cruz, in the southeast, has seen most of the recent deforestation, produced by large scale, predominantly agro-industry involved in soybean production. It is expected that deforestation will also increase in the northern region of Bolivia.
References

Mapped sub-national estimates of the Deforestation Indicator in hectares are indicative only, given the resolution of the data source, and are from Killeen, T., et al (see full citation below).


2 Agricultural statistics on commodities from Unidad de Análisis de Políticas Sociales and Economías Available at: http://www.undiag.gob.bo/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=38

3 Law No.1715 Ley Del Servicio Nacional De Reforma Agraria, Bolivia. Available at: http://psaneamiento.vicepresidencia.gob.bo/PDF/TO/TO_LEY_1715.Pdf


7 The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) home page for Bolivia: http://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/BO

8 http://elliott.gwu.edu/assets/docs/acad/lahs/bolivia/forest-conservation-2012.pdf


