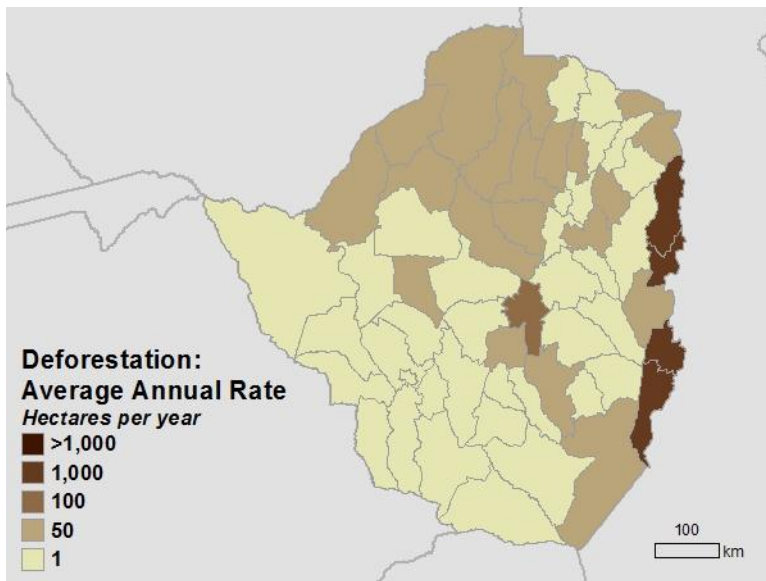


Zimbabwe



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 CI (2011), derived from the MODIS percent tree-cover change product for 2000 to 2005 (Hansen, et al 2009) .

Deforestation¹

Forest area (2010): **40%**

Primary forest area (2010): **2%**

1990-2000: **-1.58 %y⁻¹**

2000-2005: **-1.79 %y⁻¹**

2005-2010: **-1.97 %y⁻¹**

Agriculture²

Agriculture as % of GDP (2011): **13%**

Agricultural land (2009): **42.4%**

Top 3 commodities, by footprint (2010):

Maize: 1.4m ha

Sorghum: 0.27m ha

Groundnuts: 0.26m ha

Employment in agriculture (2009): **n.d.**

*Rates at sub-national level are for indicative purposes only given use of relatively coarse MODIS data

| Sub-national Region | Hectares per Year (indicative) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chimanimani | 877 |
| Chipinge | 375 |
| Mutasa | 141 |
| Nyanga | 102 |
| Chirumhanzu | 51 |

Context

Political Context

During the period 1990 to 2008, the Republic of Zimbabwe experienced a political crisis that negatively impacted the economy of the country; even though during the last few years the situation has improved, it still remains difficult³. The political situation caused an increase in deforestation and other environmental problems that the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Management (MENRM) and the Forestry Commission among others, are trying to address by putting in practice national environmental policies and strategies⁴. In early 2013, Zimbabwe's Parliament began discussing the adoption of a new national constitution⁵.

Socio-economic Context

Large proportions of the poor in Zimbabwe rely heavily on natural resources for their livelihoods. Zimbabwe has a population of 12.5 million people, 61.7% in rural communities⁶. Official poverty indicators are not available, but studies suggest 78% of the population is poor and 55% live below the food poverty line⁷. Agriculture is an important sector of the economy and represents 17.4% of the GDP⁸. The most important exports are tobacco, sugar and meat⁹.

Deforestation Drivers

In 2010, total forested area in Zimbabwe was 15.6 million hectares, but the country has been losing its forest at a rate of 327,000 hectares per year. From 1990 to 2010, the country was one of ten countries with the largest annual net loss of forest area¹⁰. During the 1980's and 1990's, deforestation and woodland degradation were associated with expansion of arable land, demand for fuel wood and construction poles, and urban expansion. Problems regarding soil erosion are linked directly with deforestation and agriculture¹¹. Policies that incentivize the establishment of plantations for maize, cotton and sunflowers also contribute to deforestation¹² as well as production of ores and metals and wood fuel¹³. Poverty and increased energy needs are ongoing challenges to maintaining forest cover, and incidences particularly in the outskirts of Rujeko C Extension, as well as one of the low-income residential areas of the city Of Masvingo¹⁴ are documented.

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