



## SDG 15: Life on Land

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.



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### An Overview

Forests cover around 30% of the Earth's surface and, in addition to providing food security (SDG 2) and shelter, forests are crucial to combating climate change (SDG 13), protecting biodiversity and the homes of the indigenous population (SDG 11). Around 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihood (SDG 1), including 70 million indigenous people, and are home to more than 80% of all terrestrial species of animals, plants and insects. However, between 2010 and 2015, the world lost 3.3 million hectares of forest areas.

Land used for agriculture (SDG 2) is also being damaged and experiencing soil degradation. 12 million hectares are lost each year (23 hectares per minute) due to drought and desertification, amounting to losses of 20 million tons of grain annually).

The world is also facing huge losses in wildlife diversity and protection. Illicit poaching and trafficking of wildlife continues to thwart conservation efforts, with nearly 7,000 species of animals and plants reported in illegal trade involving 120 countries. Of the 8,300 animal breeds known, 8% are now extinct and 22% are at risk of extinction. Micro-organisms and invertebrates are key to ecosystem services, but their contributions are still poorly known and rarely acknowledged. Land and wildlife are key to human flourishing, but current behaviours need to change if these are to be protected.

### SDG 15 Keywords

This list is comprised of the Scopus queries generated by Elsevier in order to identify research that supports SDG 15, as part of the assessment undertaken by the global THE Impact League.

Terrestrial / land / inland / freshwater and...			
biodiversity	species richness	bioeconomy	biological production
deforestation	desertification	earth system	ecological resilience
ecosystem	trophic cascade	trophic level / web	threatened species
endangered species	extinction risk	poaching	wildlife products
wildlife trafficking	wildlife market	invasive species	alien species
land use	land / soil degradation	LULUCF	land conservation
wetlands	drylands	mountainous cover	protected area
REDD	forest management	silviculture	timber harvest
illegal logging	slash-and-burn	fire-fallow cultivation	tree cover
soil / land restoration	drought	sustainable land management	mountain vegetation
habitat restoration	Red List species	extinction wave	habitat fragmentation
habitat loss	Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources	genetic resources	biological invasion
biodiversity-inclusive	forest stewardship council	rainforest alliance	forest certification
forest auditing	ecotourism	community-based conservation	human-wildlife conflict

## SDG 15 Targets & Indicators

Consider if your research could support a specific target in order to maximise impact.

TARGETS		INDICATORS	
15.1	By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	15.1.1	Forest area as a proportion of total land area
		15.1.2	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type
15.2	By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally	15.2.1	Progress towards sustainable forest management
15.3	By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world	15.3.1	Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area
15.4	By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development	15.4.1	Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity
		15.4.2	Mountain Green Cover Index
15.5	Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species	15.5.1	Red List Index
15.6	Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed	15.6.1	Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits
15.7	Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products	15.7.1	Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked
15.8	By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	15.8.1	Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species
15.9	By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts	15.9.1	Progress towards national targets established in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020
15.A	Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems	15.A.1	Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems
15.B	Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation	15.B.1	Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems
15.C	Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities	15.C.1	Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked

## **Useful Links**

- [UNEP](#)
- [Convention on Biological Diversity](#)
- [FAO – Forestry](#)
- [The New York Declaration on Forests](#)
- [UN-REDD](#)
- [United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#)
- [International Maritime Organization](#)
- [International Union for Conservation of Nature](#)