



The estimate is about eight times higher than previous estimates, and is based on tree densities measured on over 400,000 plots. It remains subject to a wide margin of error, not least because the samples are mainly from Europe and North America. The estimate suggests that about 15 billion trees are cut down annually and about 5 billion are planted. In the 12,000 years since the start of human agriculture, the number of trees worldwide has decreased by 46%. In suitable environments, such as the Daintree Rainforest in Queensland, or the mixed podocarp and broadleaf forest of Ulva Island, New Zealand, forest is the more-or-less stable climatic climax community at the end of a plant succession, where open areas such as grassland are colonised by taller plants, which in turn give way to trees that eventually form a forest canopy.