Informing IPCC accounting of forest carbon using the global forest carbon database (ForC v4.0)

Madison Williams[1], Valentine Herrmann[1], Rebecca Banbury Morgan[1,2], Ben Bond-Lamberty[3], Susan Cook-Patton[4], Helene Muller-Landau[5], Camille Piponiot[6], Teagan Rogers[1], and Kristina J. Anderson-Teixeira[1,5 *]

[1]Center for Conservatiton Ecology, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Front Royal, VA, United States
[2]School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK
[3]Joint Global Change Research Institute, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, College Park, MD, United States
[4]The Nature Conservancy; Arlington VA 22203, USA
[5]Forest Global Earth Observatory, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panama, Republic of Panama
[6]CIRAD, Montpellier, France

Correspondence: Kristina J. Anderson-Teixeira (teixeirak@si.edu)

Abstract. Forests are critical for climate change mitigation and consitute a substantial portion of planned emissions reductions under the 2015 Paris Agreement. Yet, the efficacy of greenhouse gas mitigation planning and reporting is dependent upon the quality of available emission factors data, including forest carbon (C) stocks and changes therein. Tens of thousands of relevant forest C estimates have been published, yet are not readily accesible to the practitioners compiling national greenhouse gas inventories. Many of these data have, however, been compiled in the Global Forest C database (ForC; https://forc-db.github.io/) and stand to be of value to greenhouse gas accounting if made available through the Emission Factor Database (EFDB) of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Here, we develop and document a process for semi-automated transfer of data from ForC into the EFDB, assess the data available and transferred to date, and provide recommendations for improving forest data collection, analysis, and reporting to improve accounting of forest-sector greenhoouse gas emissions and removals. We begin by reconciling terminology and mapping ForC fields into EFDB. This process required some updates to the ForC database structure, leading to the release of a new version of ForC (v4.0; described here). At the time of writing, ForC contained ## values that would qualify for inclusion in the EFDB, ## of which have been transferred to date. (Some analysis of representation/ gaps.) In the future, forest C estimates in EFDB can be improved through targetted research to fill critical gaps, reporting of information required by IPCC, and continued submission of data from scientific publications to the EFDB.

1 Introduction

Forests are critical to management of atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO_2), and thereby climate change. In recent decades, CO_2 uptake by forests, woodlands, and savannas has exceeded releases from deforestation and other severe disturbances, resulting in a net carbon CO_2 sink of ~0.88 Gt C yr^{-1} (all biomes with trees, Xu et al., 2021) to ~1.6 Gt C yr^{-1} (forests only, Harris et al., 2021). This has offset an estimated 10% to 18% of anthropogenic CO_2 emissions from fossil fuels and cement (Xu et al., 2021; Harris et al., 2021), dramatically slowing the pace of atmospheric CO_2 accumulation and climate change. Going into the future, the fate of this important CO_2 sink is highly uncertain, depending both upon forest responses to climate change, which are likely to reduce the sink strength (**?**), and on human conservation, restoration, and management of forests (**?**).

Reflecting their strong influence on Earth's climate, forests play a central role in international plans for climate change mitigation under the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015). Forest conservation, reforestation, and improved sustainable management all have significant – and relatively cost-effective – potential as climate change mitigation options, with conservation and reforestation having the fourth and fifth largest net emission reduction potentials or all mitigation options (IPCC, 2022). As of 2016, forest-based mitigation accounted for 26% of total planned greenhouse gas mitigation within Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement (Grassi et al., 2017). Yet, envisioned forest-based climate change mitigation initiatives do not always correspond to actual emission reductions through on-the-ground implementation (e.g., Badgley et al., 2022). One critical need for ensuring that forest-based climate change mitigation initiatives are effective is realistic planning and reporting, underlain by solid scientific data (Anderson-Teixeira and Belair, 2022; Deng et al., 2021).

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides guidance for national greenhouse gas inventories for reporting to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, IPCC, 2006, 2019). Under this guidance, greenhouse gas inventories include all managed land, including most of the world's forest land (Ogle, 2018). The IPCC inventory guidelines include specific instructions for accounting for greenhouse gas (mainly CO_2) exchanges between forest land and the atmosphere (IPCC, 2006, 2019). This guidance has improved over the years as more of the relevant underlying data has become available (Requena Suarez et al., 2019; Rozendaal et al., 2022), but there remains room for continuous improvement as the science advances. For example, the year following the release of the latest IPCC guidelines, Cook-Patton et al. (2020) found that the latest default rates may underestimate rates of C accumulation in regrowth forests by 32% on average and fail to capture eight-fold variation within ecozones. In addition, Cuni-Sanchez et al. (2021) found that aboveground C stocks in mature African tropical montane forests were two-thirds higher than the IPCC default values for these forests. This rapid evolution of scientific information on the climate mitigation potential of forests is beneficial to climate mitigation efforts, but requires improved mechanisms for communicating the latest information from scientific researchers to the practitioners who need reliable estimates for greenhouse gas mitigation planning. Moreover, high variability of forest C cycling within ecozones (e.g., Cook-Patton et al., 2020; **?**) implies that it is useful for practitioners to have access to locally-specific information, when available.

To improve the data accessible for C accounting, the IPCC created the Emission Factor Database (EFDB; https://www.ipcc-nggip.iges.or.jp/EFDB/main.php), which is intended as a recognized library of emission factors and other parameters that can be used for estimating greenhouse gas emissions and removals. The EFDB can be used both for efforts to tally a nation's intended or accomplished greenhouse gas reductions, or as a basis of comparison for external parties to evaluate these inventories. The EFDB encourages researchers to submit estimates of emission factors or other related parameters from peer-reviewed journal papers or other accepted sources for inclusion in the database. In the case of forests, emission factors include carbon stocks, increments ("stock changes"), and fluxes ("gains" and "losses") for various pools (IPCC, 2006, 2019).

The Global Forest Carbon Database, ForC (https://forc-db.github.io/), is the largest collection of published estimates of forest carbon stocks, increments, and annual fluxes (Anderson-Teixeira et al., 2018, 2021). For C currently contains NA records from NA plots in NA distinct geographical areas, along with records of stand age and disturbance history. As such, ForC is positioned to improve forest C accounting through the transfer of data to EFDB. The purpose of this publication is to document that process and provide recommendations for future improvements.

Here, we (1) review IPCC methods and definitions for tallying forest C; (2) describe mapping of ForC to IPCC's EFDB; (3) describe updates to ForC (ForC v4.0), most of which were implemented to facilitate data transfer to EFDB; (4) summarize the data in ForC that's relevant to EFDB and records that have been transferred to date; and (5) provide recommendations for improving data collection, analysis, database, and accounting.

2 IPCC methods and definitions

The end goal of IPCC greenhouse gas inventories is to quantify greenhouse gas emissions to, or withdrawals from, the atmosphere on an annual basis, most commonly on a national level (IPCC, 2006, 2019). For each stratum of subdivision within a land-use category, annual stock changes (ΔC; Mg C yr^{-1}) are calculated as the sum of changes in various pools, including any harvested wood products. IPCC parses forest C pools into biomass (aboveground and belowground), dead organic matter (dead wood and litter), and soil organic matter (Table 1). For each pool, ΔC may be calculated using the "Gain-Loss Method", which takes the difference between gains and losses (influx and outflux variables in Fig. 1), or using the "Stock-Difference Method", which computes ΔC based on C stocks at two points in time(IPCC, 2006). Thus, C cycle variables relevant to the IPCC methodology and to EFDB include C stocks, increments, and fluxes in the IPCC-defined pools (Fig. 1).

2.1 Carbon pools

2.1.1 Biomass

Biomass includes living vegetation, above- and below-ground.

The IPCC defines aboveground biomass as "all biomass of living vegetation, both woody and herbaceous, above the soil including stems, stumps, branches, bark, seeds, and foliage" [].

Belowground biomass is defined as "all biomass of live roots" [].

2.1.2 Dead Organic Matter

Dead organic matter includes all non-living biomass that is not within the mineral soil layer and smaller than the litter size threshold.

Dead wood is defined as…

Litter is defined as including " all non-living biomass with a diameter less than a minimum diameter chosen by the country (for example 10 cm), lying dead, in various states of decomposition above the mineral or organic soil. This includes litter (OL),

Table 1. IPCC-defined forest carbon pools with definitions and measurement methods. Definitions from IPCC Table 1.1. (See Table 1.1 in IPCC guidance).

pool	definition	important sources of estimate variation	IPCC guidance
aboveground biomass	all biomass of living vegetation, both woody and herbaceous	min dbh	acceptable to exclude understory if minor component
		biomass allometry	
		include dead standing?	no
belowground biomass	all biomass of live roots	min dbh (coarse roots)	
		allometry or assumed ratio of belowground to aboveground biomass (IPCC table 4.4)	
		min root diameter	fine roots may be excluded when they cannot be distinguished empirically from soil organic matter or litter
		sampling depth	
dead wood	all non-living woody biomass not contained in the litter, either standing, lying on the ground, or in the soil	min diameter	10 cm default, but may be chosen by country
		include belowground?	yes
litter	all non-living biomass with a size greater than the limit for soil organic matter and less than the minimum diameter chosen for dead wood, lying dead, in various states of decomposition above or within the mineral or organic soil	max diameter	10 cm default, but may be chosen by country
		layers included	includes entire O horizon
		include belowground?	yes
soil organic matter	organic carbon in mineral soils to a specified depth	sampling depth	depth = 30 cm default, but may be chosen by country

fumic (OF), and humic (OH) layers. Live fine roots (of less than the suggested diameter limit for belowground biomass) are included in litter where they cannot be distinguished from it empirically." (2003 IPCc GPG for LULUCF (https://www.ipcc-nggip.iges.or.jp/public/gpglulucf/gpglulucf_files/Glossary_Acronyms_BasicInfo/Glossary.pdf)

Not required for forest land remaining forest land under Tier 1 methodology (IPCC, 2006).

2.1.3 Soil Organic Matter

Soil organic matter is defined as “Includes organic carbon in mineral and organic soils (including peat) to a specified depth chosen by the country and applied consistently through the time series. Live fine roots (of less than the suggested diameter limit for belowground biomass) are included with soil organic matter where they cannot be distinguished from it empirically.”(2003 IPCc GPG for LULUCF (https://www.ipcc-nggip.iges.or.jp/public/gpglulucf/gpglulucf_files/Glossary_Acronyms_BasicInfo/Glossary.pdf)

3 Mapping ForC to EFDB

ForC data is incredibly valuable to EFDB and there is data which is included in the ForC database that does not meet EFDB standards. There were two main EFDB guidelines which limits the amount of data we could transfer. EFDB will not accept data which has been digitized(from graph) and ForC does.

3.1 Carbon cycle variables

Mapping of variables is shown in Fig. 1.

3.2 Land use categories

Documented at https://github.com/forc-db/IPCC-EFDB-integration/blob/main/doc/ForC-EFDB_mapping/defining_land_subcategory.md, https://github.com/forc-db/IPCC-EFDB-integration/blob/main/doc/ForC-EFDB_mapping/IPCC_LandUse_mapping.csv, and in issue #8.

The UNFCCC requires greenhouse gas reporting for all managed lands in a country, where management is defined as “human interventions and practices have been applied to perform production, ecological or social functions” [*IPCC 2006 full report REF*]. This definition is applied differently across countries, and is not clearly defined by the majority of governments (Ogle, 2018). Given this, and because the IPCC definition of management does not necessarily match that which would be reported in scientific publications and hence in ForC, we do not transfer any classification of land management status from ForC to the EFDB, but do provide auxiliary info that may be useful in making this determination (e.g., geographical location).

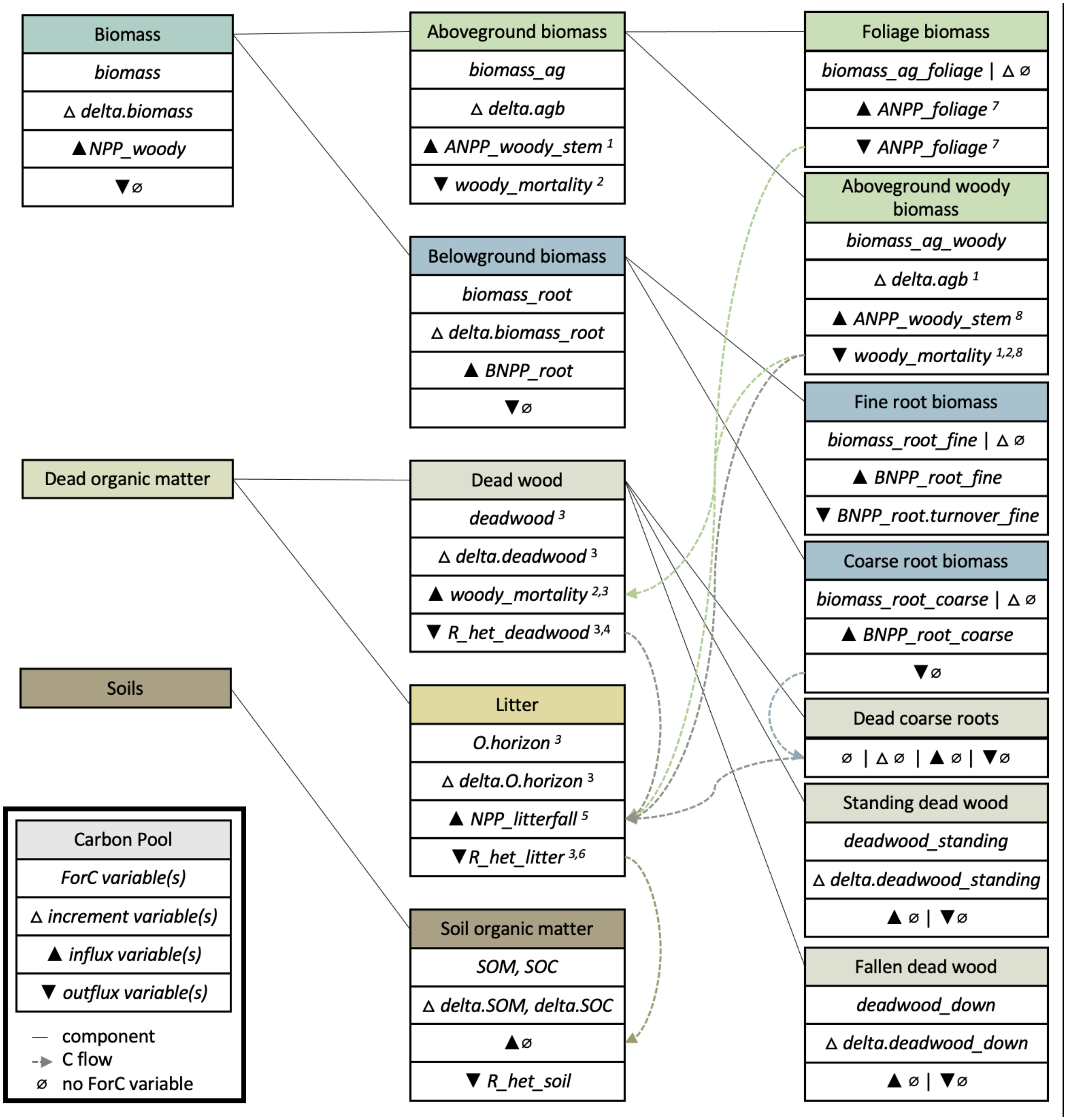

Figure 1. Schematic illustrating the carbon pools quantified under IPCC accounting; ForC variables corresponding to the stock, increment, influx and outflux; and relationships among them. In many cases, the match of ForC variables to IPCC criteria depends upon measurement protocols (e.g., minimum DBH). Additional caveats are as follows: 1- assumes that change in foliage biomass is negligible (see note 7); 2- incomplete: excludes large branch fall; also, under IPCC definitions, outflux from aboveground biomass should include all sizes, influx to deadwood should include only above the minimum diameter chosen for dead wood; 3- incomplete: excludes belowground components; 4-incomplete: excludes breakage into pieces less than dead wood threshold size; 5-incomplete: excludes woody mortality of stems <10 cm DBH, decomposition of dead wood (aboveground and coarse roots) into sizes classified as litter, may exclude branch fall; 6- measurements often limited to decomposition of relatively fine litter and may exclude branches and stems below the dead wood size threshold and/or the more decomposed layers of the O horizon; 7 - foliage production is generally measured by collecting leaf-fall, a method that assumes that the influx = outflux (foliage biomass is roughly constant year-to-year); 8 - excludes branch fall, which is necessary for a full accounting of woody productivity but is typically assumed negligible for calculations of net biomass change.

4 Updates to ForC (ForC v4.0)

To support export of data to EFDB, and to improve the overall quality of the ForC database, we defined ## new variables, implemented some modest restructuring, resolved duplicate records, and conducted quality control. This section describes changes relative to ForC v2.0 (Anderson-Teixeira et al., 2018).

4.1 Defining new variables

We added eleven increment variables to the set of named and defined variables (or 22, counting _OM and _C versions), which previously included only one (aboveground biomass increment, *delta.agb*). *(https://github.com/forc-db/IPCC-EFDB-integration/issues/6)* These are directly related to C stocks as previously defined in ForC, with "*delta.*" added in front of the variable name.

Although these variables currently lack records, the structure exists such that records can be populated over time.

To provide better definition of the previously existing variable *organic.layer*, which has a nebulous definition that reflects the varied definitions adopted by original studies, we added two clearly defined variables: *litter* (relatively undecomposed plant material/ OL horizon), and *O.horizon* (entire O-horizon, including *litter* (OL)).

4.2 ForC restructuring

4.3 Quality control measures

Prior to releasing ForC v4.0, we executed several quality control measures. First, we implemented a system of continuous integration using GitHub Actions (*sensu* Kim et al. in prep) to run some automatic checks any time the master data files are updated. Second, to improve information on geographic coordinates, we flagged and reviewed records with suspected low precision *(Issue #29)[https://github.com/forc-db/ForC/issues/229]*. Third, to identify erroneous climate data… *(Issue #212)[https://github.com/forc-db/ForC/issues/212]*.

4.4 Resolving duplicates

Because ForC v4.0 contained known duplicate records, we used R scripts to remove likely duplicates, as detailed in Anderson-Teixeira et al. (2021). Henceforth, we refer to the records with duplicates removed as "independent records".

5 Results

5.1 ForC v4.0 contents

As of April 12, 2022, ForC (v4.0) contained NA independent records (NA total), NA of which were for variables relevant to EFDB (Fig. 1). These records were distributed across all forested continents and ecozones, with particularly high concentrations

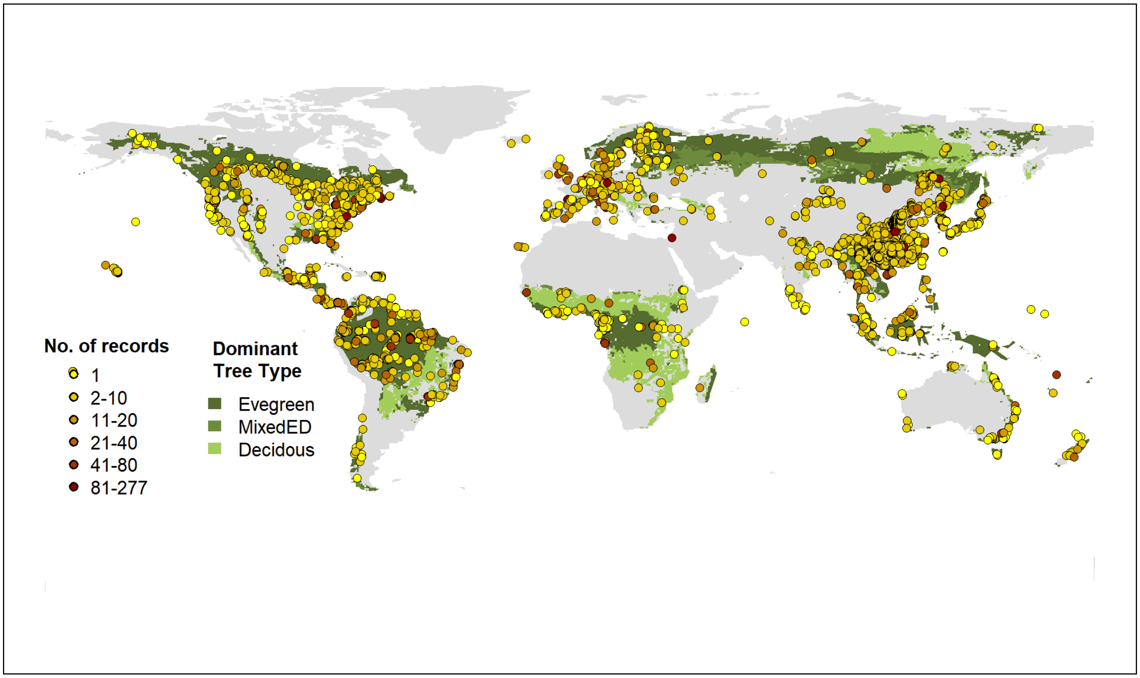

Figure 2. Map of sites in ForC shaded by number of records relavent to (circles) and transferred to (triangles) EFDB. PLACEHOLDER. We need to add records transferred to EFDB. We also need to limit map to variables relavent to EFDB. It would also be good to add an underlying map of FAP ecozones

in *[ecozone(s)]* and low concentrations in *[ecozone(s)]* (Fig. 2). The most widely represented forest type was *[type]*, followed by *[type]* and *[type]* (Fig. 3).

ForC contained data for ## of the ## variables relevant to EFDB (Table 2, Fig. 1).

5.2 Data transfers to EFDB

As of April 12, 2022, we had reviewed and sent NA, NA of which have been reviewed, accepted, and posted (Fig. 2-3, `Table r table_variables`). *[DETAILS]*

6 Recommendations

(*strongly flag both useful variables that the EFDB does not track and useful variables that papers fail to include that EFDB needs*)

6.1 Data collection and analysis needs

(Paragraph highlighting important gaps in variables / regions)

Table 2. Numbers of records of ForC variables relevant to, and sent to, EFDB. Relationships of variables to IPCC-defined forest C pools (Table 1) and to each other are illustrated in Figure 1.

variable	n in ForC	n independent records in ForC	n reviewed	n sent to EFDB	n posted to EFDB
STOCKS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_ag	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_ag_foliage	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_ag_woody	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_root	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_root_fine	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_root_coarse	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
deadwood	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
deadwood_standing	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
deadwood_down	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
O.horizon	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
SOM / SOC	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
INCREMENTS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.biomass	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.agb	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
biomass_ag_foliage	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.biomass_root	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.deadwood	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.deadwood_standing	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.deadwood_down	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.O.horizon	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
delta.SOM / delta.SOC	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
FLUXES	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NPP_woody	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
ANPP_woody_stem	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
ANPP_foliage	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
BNPP_root	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
BNPP_root_fine	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
BNPP_root_coarse	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
woody_mortality	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NPP_litterfall	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R_het_litter	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R_het_soil	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
TOTAL	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

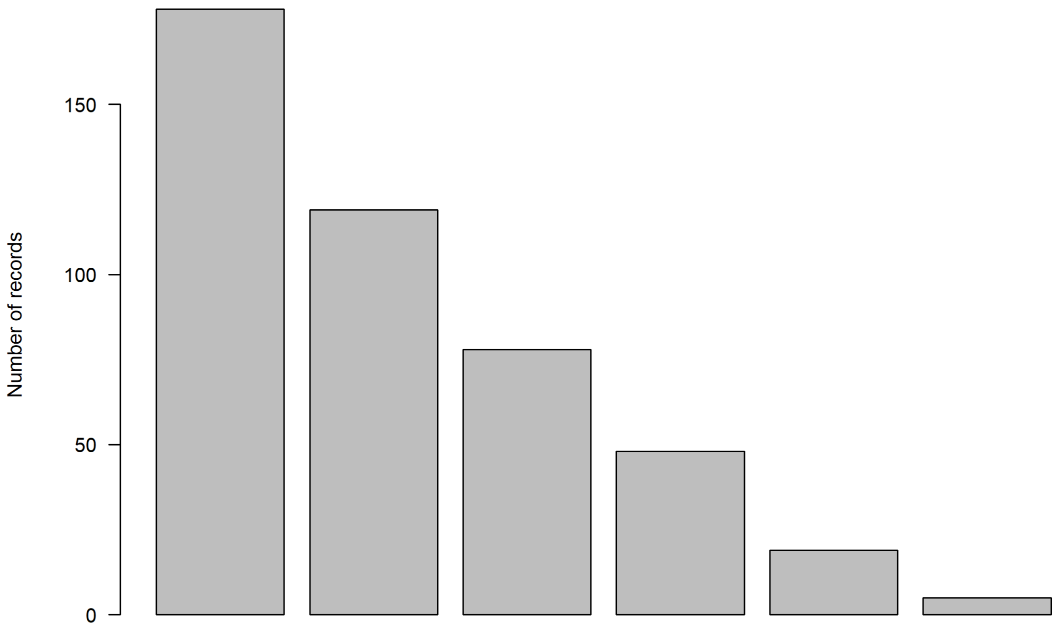

Figure 3. Historgram of number of records in ForC relavent to (grey) and transferred to (black) EFDB. PLACEHOLDER. We need to add axis labels and the two classes of records.

Several variables of value to IPCC, including standing dead wood, woody mortality, delta.agb, are not calculated and presented as frequently as are AGB and ANPP_woody, even though they can readily be derived from the same census data. We recommend that researchers calculate and report these, following the reporting guidelines specified below. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to fill data gaps by calculating these from existing census data. For example, the core census protocol of the Forest Global Earth Observatory [ForestGEO; Anderson-Teixeira et al. (2015),Davies et al. (2021)] collects the data required to calculate standing dead wood, woody mortality, and delta.agb, but these have not been calculated and reported for all sites for which the appropriate number of censuses are available (but see Piponiot et al., 2022, **?**).

A universal challenge in estimating biomass (living or dead) from forest census data is applying appropriate allometries to convert DBH measurements to biomass. *(Camille/Helene can write this paragraph easily.)*

Forest ecosystem C pools may be parsed in various ways, and while certain definitions and thresholds are more common than others, there is no single standard for measuring or reporting that is adhered to by all – or even most – studies.

6.2 Data reporting needs

We recommend that, unless they have some specific reason to do otherwise, researchers calculate and report the values according to IPCC standards:

- adopt common standards for variables like min diameter of deadwood, select soil sampling increments to include a cutoff at 30.
- report 95% CIs, SE, or STD and n
- report C variables in article text, table, or SI table. EFDB cannot accept data digitized from figures
- present calculations of all variables that would be useful to IPCC. EFDB requires that data in the database be presented in the original article, and as such cannot accept subsequent calculations. For example, if aboveground biomass and total biomass are presented, but root biomass is not presented, root biomass cannot be subsequently calculated and sent to EFDB. Similarly, fine and coarse root biomass can't be summed; soil carbon can't be summed across depth increments, etc.

For data synthesis projects, compilation can only be useful to the EFDB if they include all the required, along with transparent description on the methodology applied to derive emission factors (or have a brief description and a reference to the original source) and the original emission factor values are present (not modified/rounded).

Contributing data to ForC and/or EFDB directly will ensure its broader impact. The latter is more efficient for getting data to EFDB, but does not get the data into ForC, where it can be more broadly useful–for example, being used for basic science (e.g., Banbury Morgan et al., 2021; Anderson-Teixeira et al., 2021) or model benchmarking (Fer et al., 2021).

6.3 Database needs

There are plenty of relevant, published data that are not included in ForC. Systematic review of the literature could vastly improve data coverage. *(There are some efforts underway, including a few that Susan can specify.)*

6.4 IPCC protocol considerations

An important challenge is that forests are changing rapidly, and data collected a decade ago may no longer be relevant, particularly in the cases of C increments and fluxes.

Remote sensing biomass estimates include standing dead wood (Duncanson and MANY_MORE, 2021).

7 Conclusions

Table 3: **Mapping of ForC fields to EFDB.** See footnotes at end of table (still need to be properly inserted).

ForC table	ForC field	EFDB field	Usage	Required
Measurements	measurement.ID	Other Properties	direct mapping	(no)
	dominant.life.form	1996 Source/Sink Categories, 2006 Source/Sink Categories	used to determine land subcategories (see defin- ing_land_subcategory.md)	yes
	stand.age	1996 Source/Sink Categories, 2006 Source/Sink Categories, Parameters/ Conditions	used to determine land subcategories (see defin- ing_land_subcategory.md), directly listed in Parameters/ Conditions	(yes)
	dominant.veg, veg.notes, min.dbh	Parameters/ Conditions	direct mapping/ linking to dominant.veg description	no
	variable.name	-	link to variable info in ForC_variables table	yes
	date / start.date, end.date	Other Properties	direct mapping	no
	mean	Value	direct mapping	yes
	mean.in.original.units	Value in Common Units	direct mapping	yes
	original.units	Common Unit	direct mapping	yes
	lower95%CI, upper 95%CI, se, sd and n	Lower Confidence Limit, Upper Confidence Limit	direct or calculated	(yes)
	depth, covariate_1, cov_1.value, covariate_2, cov_2.value	Other Properties	direct mapping	no

Table 3: **Mapping of ForC fields to EFDB.** See footnotes at end of table (still need to be properly inserted). *(continued)*

ForC table	ForC field	EFDB field	Usage	Required
	allometry_1, allometry_2	Comments from Data Provider	link to biomass allometry source, when provided	no
	data.location.within.source		confirm that data weren't digitized, facilitate finding data in original publication	yes
	ForC.investigator	Data Provider, Data Provider Contact	link to Data Provider, Data Provider Contact info	yes
Sites	site.ID, sites.sitename	Other Properties	direct mapping	(no)
	lat, lon	Region/Regional conditions	direct mapping; used to extract continent, Koeppen, and FAO.ecozone	(no)
	country, state, city, masl, mat, map	Region/Regional conditions	direct mapping	no
	continent, Koeppen	Region/Regional conditions	direct mapping	auto
	soil.texture, sand, silt, clay, soil.classification	Parameters/ Conditions	direct mapping	no
	FAO.ecozone	Parameters/ Conditions	direct mapping	auto
History	date, hist.cat, hist.type	1996 Source/Sink Categories, 2006 Source/Sink Categories, Abatement/Control technologies	used to determine distmrs.type for Source/Sink Categories, generate list of events for Abatement/Control technologies	(yes)/no**
	plot.area	Other Properties	direct mapping	no
Plots	plot.ID, plot.name	Other Properties	direct mapping	(no)

Table 3: **Mapping of ForC fields to EFDB.** See footnotes at end of table (still need to be properly inserted). *(continued)*

ForC table	ForC field	EFDB field	Usage	Required
	distmrs.type	1996 Source/Sink Categories, 2006 Source/Sink Categories	used to determine land subcategories (see defining_land_subcategory.md)	auto
	distmrs.type, distmrs.year, regrowth.type, regrowth.year	Other Properties	direct mapping	auto
PFT	description	Parameters/ Conditions	direct mapping	auto
variables	variable.type	Gases	For stocks in unit of organic matter, gases include CO2, CO, CH4, NO, NO2, N2O. For increments, fluxes, and stocks in units of C, gases includes only CO2.	auto
	variable.name	C pool, Equation	link to C pool, Equation	auto
	description	Description	direct mapping	auto
	extended.description	Other Properties	direct mapping	auto
	units	Unit (ID)	link to IPCC units	auto
Citations	citation.citation	Full Technical Reference	direct mapping	yes/auto
	citation.language	Reference Language	direct mapping	yes/auto
	citation.url	URL	direct mapping	no/auto
	citation.abstract	Abstract in English	direct mapping	no/auto
	source.type	Source of Data	direct mapping	yes

‘Required’ field indicates whether the field is required by EFDB: yes = value required; (yes) = input required, missing value acceptable if not reported; auto = present within ForC infrasructure, and therefore will always be exported to EFDB ; (no) =

not required for EFDB, but required for ForC and therefore will always be exported to EFDB; no = not required, but exported to EFDB when a value is present.

** ‘(yes)’ for most recent severe disturbance; ‘no’ for other history events

9 Appendix B

Table 4: **Table of changes to ForC fields.**

Table	Column	Description	Changes	Motivation
Sites	coordinates.precision	Precision of geographic coordinates, as reported by source or estimated from maps.	field added	allow identification of records with poor coordinate precision
Measurements	data.location.within.source	Location of data within the source listed in citation.ID.	field added	facilitate review, ensure traceability
	sd, se, lower95%CI, upper 95%CI	Standard deviation, standard error, and lower and upper 95 percent confidence intvervals, respectively.	replaces 'stat' and 'stat.name'	cleaner format; ability to handle assymetrical 95 percent confidence intervals
	mean.in.original.units, original.units	mean value and units presented in original publication	fields added	provide IPCC with original units, reduce errors/improve reproducibility
	C.conversion.factor	Assumed/ measured C content of organic matter used to convert organic matter to C.	field added	track units conversion, allow back-calculation of OM if conversion factor deemed inappropriate

Table 4: **Table of changes to ForC fields.** *(continued)*

Table	Column	Description	Changes	Motivation
PFT	description	Definition of the pftcode at the community level. Differs from individual level in that properly describes mixed plant functional types.	field added	
	description.individual	Definition of the pftcode at the individual plant level.	field name change (previously ‘description‘)	
Citations	citation.citation	Full citation. Most of these records are automatically generated in R based upon DOI lookup.	field added	field required by IPCC
	citation.language	Language of original publication, automatically generated based on the title and abstract, with some manual entries and corrections.	field added	field required by IPCC
	citation.url	URL of original publication, generally retrieved automatically via URL lookup.	field added	field required by IPCC
	citation.abstract	Abstract, generally retrieved automatically via DOI lookup.	field added	field required by IPCC

Table 4: **Table of changes to ForC fields.** *(continued)*

Table	Column	Description	Changes	Motivation
	source.type	citation source type	field added	field required by IPCC
	pdf.in.repository	Indicates whether pdf of original study has been retrieved and saved in ForC's reference repository	field added	housekeeping
	EFDB.ready	Indicates whether data have been checked for export to EFDB.	field added	housekeeping

Code and data availability. use this to add a statement when having data sets and software code available

Appendix A: Mapping ForC to EFDB

CURRENT TABLE 3 GOES HERE

Appendix B: Updates to ForC

CURRENT TABLE 4 GOES HERE

Author contributions. (fill this in)

Competing interests. The authors declare no competing interests.

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