**Region: Melanesia**

Countries Include: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, West Papua (Indonesia)

**Threats to Biodiversity, Environment, and IPLC Regional Context:**

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| Country | Threats to biodiversity and environment | Threats to IPLCs, and Root Causes |
| Fiji | * Fiji’s biodiversity is constantly under pressure from all sectors. The main driver of threats to Fiji’s biodiversity is economic development and is mostly human induced. Threats include overfishing and exploitation, pollution through agricultural and industrial wastes, urbanization, agricultural development and species introduction. Several species of fish, shellfish and crustaceans have notably been introduced into Fiji, mostly for aquaculture, as ornamentals, for sports fishing or biological controls.[[1]](#footnote-0) * From 2001 to 2018, Fiji lost 40.5kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 2.6 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 16.3Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Fiji, the top 1 regions were responsible for 55 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. This region had the most relative tree cover loss at 4.4 percent compared to an average of 2.6 percent. | * Fiji is ranked 86th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While it has been slowly social, and some cohesion and political indicators over the past decade, its economic indicators are quite mixed. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Papua New Guinea | * The major threats to biodiversity include rapid and substantial forest degradation, unregulated fisheries, pollution from both sea and land, and activities of industries. It is estimated that, by 2021, most commercially accessible forests will be degraded, while most accessible forests will be under logging concessions and the remaining accessible areas subject to industrial agriculture or the impacts of a rapidly expanding human population.[[2]](#footnote-1) * From 2001 to 2018, Papua New Guinea lost 1.40Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 3.3 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 736Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Papua New Guinea, the top 9 regions were responsible for 54 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. East New Britain had the most relative tree cover loss at 9.0 percent compared to an average of 3.6 percent. | * Papua New Guinea is ranked 50th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While its economic and social indicators have been basically flat over the past decade, there have been some marked improvements on human rights and and state legitimacy and a decline in group grievance since 2016-2017. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| The Solomon Islands | * The main threats that continue to endanger the country’s biodiversity are logging, inappropriate land use practices, mining and prospecting, over-exploitation of natural resources, population growth, natural disasters, invasive species, pollution and climate change. In the terrestrial environment, industrial logging and development of large-scale monocultural agricultural plantations of oil palm, coconut and cocoa, and the clearance of land for subsistence gardens, are the major activities directly threatening biodiversity.[[3]](#footnote-2) * From 2001 to 2018, Solomon Islands lost 162kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 5.9 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 83.8Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Solomon Islands, the top 3 regions were responsible for 55 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Western had the most relative tree cover loss at 9.6 percent compared to an average of 5.4 percent. | * The Solomon Islands are ranked 56th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Most of its political, social and cohesion indicators have gradually improved over the past decade. teen basically flat over the past decade, many of its economic indicators have been worsening - with only small improvements since 2016. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Vanuatu | * The greatest threats to terrestrial biodiversity are a result of human activities. In 2013, the Vanuatu National Statistics Office estimated the population of Vanuatu to have a growth rate of 2.3 percent per annum. Activities include: habitat loss; invasive alien species; urban and agricultural pollution; climate change; increasing shifting agricultural practices; natural disasters.[[4]](#footnote-3) * From 2001 to 2018, Vanuatu lost 12.2kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 1.0 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 4.44Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Vanuatu, the top 2 regions were responsible for 60 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Tafea had the most relative tree cover loss at 3.1 percent compared to an average of 1.3 percent. | * There is no data on Vanuatu on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/) * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| West Papua - Indonesia | * The main factors affecting biodiversity loss and species extinction in Indonesia are habitat degradation and fragmentation, landscape changes, overexploitation, pollution, climate change, alien species, forest and land fires, and the economic and political crises occurring in the country.[[5]](#footnote-4) * From 2001 to 2018, Papua lost 398kha of tree cover in primary forests (2001, tropics only), equivalent to a 1.6 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 249Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Papua, the top 7 regions were responsible for 51 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Kota Jayapura had the most relative tree cover loss at 9.7 percent compared to an average of 2.2 percent. | * West Papua has been the locus of a long-lasting, low-intensity conflict between separatists and the Indonesian state since the 1960s. * Indonesia is ranked 96th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While it has been slowly improving across economic, political and social indicators over the past decade. It has been improving on security apparatus but worsened on human rights - with recent plateaus for both in the past few years. * According to Global Witness, at least 1 land defender has been killed in Indonesia between 2016-2018. It is unclear if this took place in West Papua. |

1. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=fj#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=pg [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=sb#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=vu#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/?country=ID> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)