**Region: East Africa Drylands**

Countries Include: Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda

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

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| Country | Threats to biodiversity and environment | Threats to IPLCs, and Root Causes |
| Burundi | * Deforestation, bushfires, water pollution, poaching, the introduction of invasive alien species and climate change are the main threats to biodiversity in Burundi. Negative effects of climate change are increasingly jeopardizing water, agriculture, livestock, energy, forest and human health. The decline of agricultural ecosystems is mainly driven by soil degradation (due to overpopulation), unsustainable practices and poor land, and the loss of crops and cultivated plants.[[1]](#footnote-0) * From 2001 to 2018, Burundi lost 25.3kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 4.7 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 5.65Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Burundi, the top 7 regions were responsible for 53 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Bujumbura Mairie had the most relative tree cover loss at 23 percent compared to an average of 6.7 percent. | * Burundi is ranked 11th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Progress made in the early part of the last decade was sharply undone in 2016, and where there have been improvements, they have been slight. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Djibouti | * Habitat degradation. Due to overgrazing by pastoralists, deforestation for firewood and charcoal, and clearing of forests to provide land for agriculture much of Djibouti’s land base is considered to be degraded. The amount of vegetation is vastly less than it has been historically. Coral reefs and beaches are seeing degradation due to anchors, trampling, littering, souvenir collection, sewage pollution, litter, sedimentation, and overfishing. Drought and desertification. As mentioned previously, Djibouti is in its seventh consecutive year of drought. While Djibouti does periodically face drought conditions, they have become more numerous in the past 10-20 years. Climate change. As the climate gets even warmer in Djibouti the amount of vegetation may be at risk of lessening even more. It is predicted that the Horn of Africa will see more frequent extreme weather events and sea levels will rise. Pollution. Djibouti experiences high levels of air pollution. In addition, it has poor waste management and sewer systems that results in pollution of surface and groundwater.[[2]](#footnote-1) * There are no forests large enough to generate forest loss statistics in Djibouti. | * Djibouti is ranked 47th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Improvements have been consistent across most political, social, economic and cohesion indicators since 2016. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Ethiopia | * The main direct threats to Ethiopia’s biodiversity are habitat conversion, unsustainable utilization of biodiversity resources, invasive species, replacement of local varieties and breeds, climate change and pollution. Indirect causes of biodiversity loss in the country are demographic change, poverty, and lack of awareness and coordination.Of the country’s 10 ecosystems, the Afroalpine and Sub-afroalpine Ecosystem is particularly negatively affected by activities related to habitat conversion.[[3]](#footnote-2) * From 2001 to 2018, Ethiopia lost 384kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 3.2 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 120Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Ethiopia, the top 6 regions were responsible for 81 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Harari People had the most relative tree cover loss at 54 percent compared to an average of 13 percent. | * Ethiopia is ranked 21th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While there have been improvements along social and economic, and political indicators since 2017, there has been a sharp deterioration across several indicators in 2019. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Kenya | * The major threats to biological diversity in Kenya can be defined as: high population pressure; escalating poverty and conflicts; poor land use practices; inadequate laws, policies and institutional framework; poor education and inadequate involvement of the community. Other threats are invasive species (e.g. Nile perch and water hyacinth in Lake Victoria), land degradation and pollution, occasioned by poor land use practices. In addition, the tourism industry is encroaching on the fragile marine and coastal areas with the development of new hotels and access infrastructure.[[4]](#footnote-3) * From 2001 to 2018, Kenya lost 326kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 9.8 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 103Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Kenya, the top 10 regions were responsible for 56 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Uasin Gishu had the most relative tree cover loss at 32 percent compared to an average of 8.7 percent. | * Kenya is ranked 29th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been unevenly improving across economic, social and political indicators since 2010 - but worsening or stagnating along cohesion indicators. * According to Global Witness, at least 4 land defenders were killed in Kenya between 2016-2018. |
| Rwanda | * Over the years, biodiversity has been subjected to various threats causing loss to species richness, population size and ecosystem degradation. The main threats include: poaching, boundary encroachment, fires, alien invasive species, predation, deforestation, illegal mining, illegal grazing, human-wildlife conflict, damming, drops in water levels, poisoning of fish and lion, commercial fishing, lack of proper regulations, infrastructure development, water extraction, plant extraction, drainage of wetlands outside parks, plant and animal diseases transmissible from livestock to wildlife, lack of connectivity, climate change, etc.[[5]](#footnote-4) * From 2001 to 2018, Rwanda lost 32.0kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 6.4 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 8.25Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Rwanda, the top 2 regions were responsible for 56 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Umujyi wa Kigali had the most relative tree cover loss at 12 percent compared to an average of 7.2 percent. | * Rwanda is ranked 35th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been unevenly improving across economic, social and political indicators since 2016 - but worsening on cohesion indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Tanzania | * The core problems are defined as overgrazing, resource overexploitation, bushfires and the population’s dependency on fuel wood. Other factors affecting biodiversity and conservation include: poverty, inadequate information on genetic resources, inadequate awareness of communities on biodiversity conservation, inadequate alternative energy sources, influx of refugees, introduction of alien species {e.g. Nile perch (Lates niloticus), water hyacinth (Eichhromia crassipes)}, some illegal fishing, cultural belief, degradation of water quality, deforestation, illegal hunting and logging, unplanned human settlement developments and livestock migration.[[6]](#footnote-5) * From 2001 to 2018, Tanzania lost 2.37Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 9.0 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 565Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Tanzania, the top 11 regions were responsible for 38 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Dar es Salaam had the most relative tree cover loss at 33 percent compared to an average of 12 percent. | * Tanzania is ranked 35th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been worsening along most economic, social and political indicators for the past decade with only recent minor improvements since 2018-2019. It has remained mostly unchanged along cohesion indicators, with the exception of some improvements on group grievance. * According to Global Witness, at least 2 land defenders were killed in Tanzania between 2016-2018. |
| Uganda | * Threats to biodiversity are identified as encroachment (prevalent in all types of protected areas); human-wildlife conflicts; illegal grazing in national parks; poaching and illicit trade in wildlife; use of destructive fishing gears and technologies; deforestation; urbanization and industrialization; introduction of alien species; encroachment of wetlands; drainage of wetlands; replacement of local crop varieties by introduced commercial varieties; loss of other indigenous species found in cultivated areas; poverty; introduction of new breeds; systematic breed substitution and irrational genetic transformation.[[7]](#footnote-6) * From 2001 to 2018, Uganda lost 781kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 10 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 205Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Uganda, the top 11 regions were responsible for 54 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Kalangala had the most relative tree cover loss at 35 percent compared to an average of 8.5 percent. | * Uganda is ranked 24th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been worsening social indicators since 2011 while unevenly improving on political indicators since 2017. Its progress on cohesion and economic indicators has been mostly flat. * According to Global Witness, at least 1 land defender was killed in Uganda between 2016-2018. |

1. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=bi#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://usaidgems.org/Documents/FAA&Regs/FAA118119/Djibouti2012.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=et#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=ke#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/?country=RW> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=tz#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=ug> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)