

What is deforestation and why is it a concern?

Deforestation is the removal of trees and other vegetation from forests, typically for the purpose of converting the land to other uses such as agriculture, urbanization, or mining. Deforestation is a concern because forests play a crucial role in mitigating climate change, supporting biodiversity, regulating water cycles, and providing livelihoods for millions of people.

Deforestation can result in soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, desertification, decreased availability of clean water, and contribute to climate change by releasing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The loss of forests can also have a significant impact on the people and animals that depend on them for their livelihoods and survival. Deforestation is a major environmental issue that requires urgent action to be taken to protect forests and the benefits they provide.

While analyzing ForestQuery's data on global deforestation from 1990 to 2016, I was able to discover a few key findings:

1. Global deforestation: The world's total forest area decreased from 41282694.9 sqkm in 1990 to 39958245.9 sqkm in 2016, a loss of 1324449, or 3.21%.
2. Regional outlook: The region with the highest relative forestation was Latin America & Caribbean, with 46.16%, and the region with the lowest relative forestation was the Middle East & North Africa, with 2.07% forestation in 2016.
3. Success stories: China increased in forest area from 1990 to 2016 by 527229.062, making it a bright spot in the data at the country level. Iceland had the largest percent change in forest area from 1990 to 2016, increasing by 213.66%.
4. Largest concerns: Brazil, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nigeria, and Tanzania saw the largest absolute decrease in forest area from 1990 to 2016. Togo, Nigeria, Uganda, Mauritania, and Honduras had the largest percent decrease in forest area over the same time period. Four of the top 5 countries in percent decrease in forest area were in Sub-Saharan Africa.