



North
American

Forest
Commission



Inventory and Monitoring Working Group

In 1998, the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) established an Inventory and Monitoring Working Group (IMWG) to collaborate and share information on forest inventory, monitoring and assessment approaches, interests and methods; to learn from each other's experiences; and to adopt common approaches where possible to create consistency in transnational assessments. The IMWG has been meeting regularly since 2000.



Mission

To share research and information and take advantage of opportunities for collaboration and scientific exchange on forest inventory, monitoring and assessment throughout North America in support of sustainable forest management.

Objectives

1. Identify and take advantage of opportunities for increasing scientific and technical collaboration and consistency in national inventory, monitoring and assessment among the three North American countries and globally;

2. Foster compatible approaches to forest inventory, monitoring and assessment in the three countries;
3. Evaluate the use of remote sensing and other technologies to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of forest inventory, monitoring and assessment;
4. Sponsor and facilitate exchanges to build capacity and increase our understanding of different approaches to forest inventory, monitoring and assessment;
5. Advise member countries about the current status of respective forest inventory, monitoring and assessment programs; and
6. Foster communication with other NAFC working groups.

Current Activities/Impacts

North American Forest Database

The IMWG is currently developing a North American Forest Database (NAFD) for managing forest inventory data and enabling consistent, continental-scale forest assessment. The NAFD establishes a platform for enhanced North American forest inventory and monitoring data integration and complements the national forest assessment tools of Canada, Mexico and the USA and the UN FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA).

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The first stage of NAFD development is focused in three areas: (i) continental-scale forest ecosystem classification (in collaboration with the Commission for Environmental Cooperation); (ii) forest assessment terminology and reporting data harmonization; and (iii) database and tool development. Future stages may include expansions into additional content areas (more reporting variables), time-series, and lower-level information such as compiled field and remote sensing survey plot data for scientific applications.

Mangrove Inventory, Monitoring and Assessment

The unique form of mangrove trees makes them very difficult to measure using standard forestry techniques. The IMWG is sponsoring and facilitating exchanges to develop improved measurement techniques and build capacity, including introduction of field techniques perfected in Mexico to the US FIA program and exploring new remote sensing techniques in collaboration with NASA scientists.

Global Forest Resources Assessment

The IMWG is collaborating with experts from the FAO Forestry Program and National Correspondents from around the world to improve national, regional

and global forest assessment data for the 2020 Global Forest Resources Assessment.

Publications & Links

- Brochure: North American Forest Database
Available at:
<https://www.fs.fed.us/global/nafc/inventory/aboutus.htm>
- Map: North American Forests
Available at: <http://www.cec.org/tools-and-resources/map-files/north-american-forests-2011>
- Scientific article: Changes in forest production, biomass and carbon: Results from the 2015 UN FAO Global Forest Resource Assessment
Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4895e/index.html>
- Scientific article: Status and trends in global primary forest, protected areas, and areas designated for conservation of biodiversity from the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015
Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4895e/index.html>

