
[Short animation - Let's define forests by their true meaning](#)

Also available in: [Afrikaans](#), [Aymara](#), [Catala](#), [Chinese](#), [Dutch](#), [Finish](#), [German](#), [Bosnian](#), [Italian](#), [Maori](#), [Mapuche](#), [Maya Kaqchikel](#), [Maya Popti](#), [Maya Tseltal](#), [Maya Tsotsil](#), [Swedish](#), [Vietnamese](#) **and** [Zulu](#)

Following FAO's criterion for the limits of tree cover for "forest" (canopy cover between 10-30%), the Kyoto Protocol defines a forest as "a minimum area of land of 0.05-1.0 hectares with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10-30 per cent with trees with the potential to reach a minimum height of 2-5 metres at maturity in situ." Other UN organizations and initiatives as well as national governments follow this definition of forests in their negotiations, programmes and policies.

This definition has important and serious implications as long as even a monoculture of exotic trees is considered to be a forest. Indeed, the global map of forests by UNEP includes the category of "exotic species plantation" within either temperate and boreal as well as tropical forest types. Thus, any policy aimed at protecting forests could end up protecting monoculture tree plantations.

It is crucial to challenge this definition and make efforts to change it in order to recover the real meaning of the forest.

For you who live in the forest, does FAO's criterion have any meaning? For you who does not live in the forest but are convinced of the importance to conserve the world's forests, does FAO's criterion really depict a forest?

Let us show up the colours, the vibrations, the life and diversity of the forest when we define it.

We invite you all to speak of the forest with live names, to build a different definition from your deep feelings and lively experiences. We encourage you to write it and send it to us at wrm@wrm.org.uy