
[Industrial Tree Plantations Invading Eastern and Southern Africa](#)

New briefing: "Industrial Tree Plantations Invading Eastern and Southern Africa"

In the context of emerging global trends in respect of escalating climate change, growing economic disparity, and increasing land degradation, including the loss of biodiversity and water resources, this joint briefing focuses on various internal and external factors determining changes in the extent of land under industrial tree plantations (ITPs) in 11 eastern and southern African countries: Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe; Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda; South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho; and Madagascar.

Within the study area, ITPs include large-scale, intensively managed, even-aged tree monocultures of mostly non-native eucalyptus, pine or acacia species, grown to supply wood for construction, as raw material for pulp, packaging and paper production processes, as biomass for generating heat or energy, or to support commercial activities such as trading in carbon credits. According to the FAO's 2015 "forest Resource Assessment", the area under ITPs in the 11 countries included in this assessment increased from 2.7 million ha in 1990, to 3.4 million ha in 2015, an increase of 25%.

The briefing aims to help explain why this expansion trend exists, to identify its drivers and its consequences, and to share this and other relevant information among local, national, regional and international organisations and policy makers within and outside of Africa. It also covers some of the main challenges that local communities face when confronted by tree plantation companies, giving examples of communities that have already experienced the invasion of their lands and lives by industrial tree plantations.

An appendix contains separate brief reviews of the situation in each of the 11 countries included, mentioning existing tree plantation projects plus new ones being developed, the actors involved, and other relevant information.

Because it was sometimes difficult to obtain reliable information, this briefing should be viewed more as a 'project in progress', than a conclusive report. Therefore, any new or additional information in respect of the 11 countries under examination, as well as from other African countries not included, will be welcomed.

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