



Goal Fifteen calls for urgent actions to protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of all terrestrial ecosystems. Although the biodiversity is persistent in all countries in the region, urgent actions are required to target the areas, species and habitats that are most at risk and likely to benefit the most from increased efforts to counteract biodiversity loss. Currently, data needed to track progress in meeting targets in areas such as desertification, territorial and freshwater biodiversity, mountain ecosystem conservation, land degradation, and illegal wildlife trades are sparse. Highlights of the baseline status of the region focus on targets related to endangered species, change in natural forest areas and government investment on protecting territorial areas.

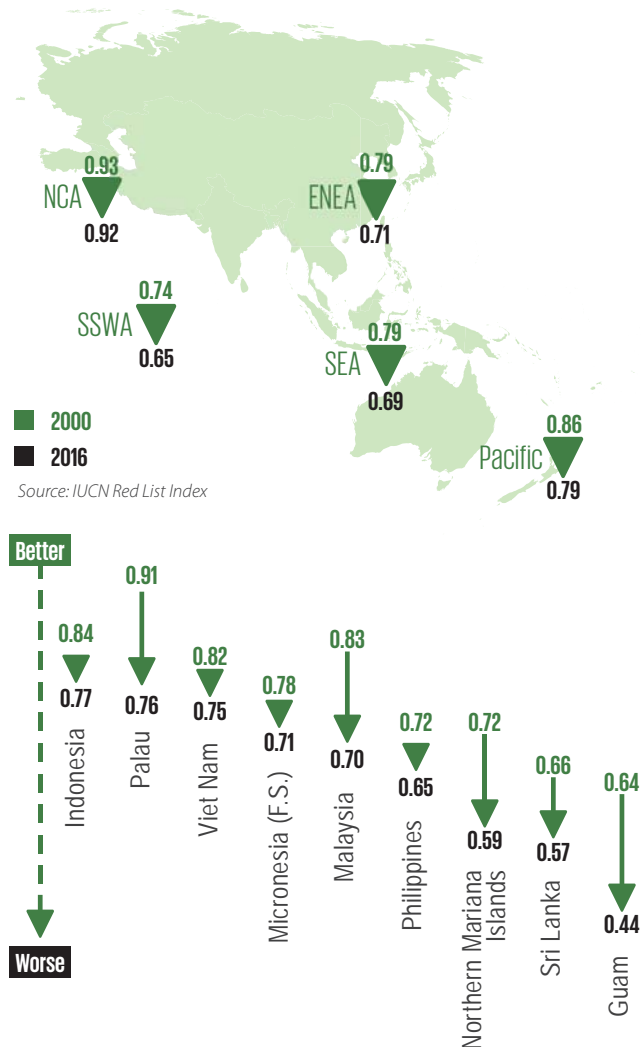
Asia-Pacific subregions are experiencing a serious loss of biodiversity

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) catalogues the plants and animals that are critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable in its “Red List”. To track trends, there is also a Red List Index whose value ranges from 1 (all species are of ‘least concern’) to 0 (all species are ‘extinct’). The world Red List Index in 2016 was 0.74. Between 2000 and 2016, all Asia-Pacific subregions showed a decline in their Red List index. Subregions in the tropical zone-- Southern and South-East Asia and the Pacific-- have the highest risks of biodiversity loss.

Between 2000 to 2016, 48 out of 57 Asia-Pacific countries experienced a loss in biodiversity. Of the nine countries showing the greatest decline (refer to chart), Guam is in a precarious position with a 0.2 points fall from an already threatened position.

Source: IUCN Red List Index

Rates of decline for Red List index, Asia-Pacific subregions and selected countries, 2000- 2016



Source: IUCN Red List Index

Natural forests have declined as a share of total forest area in all Asia-Pacific subregions within the tropical zone

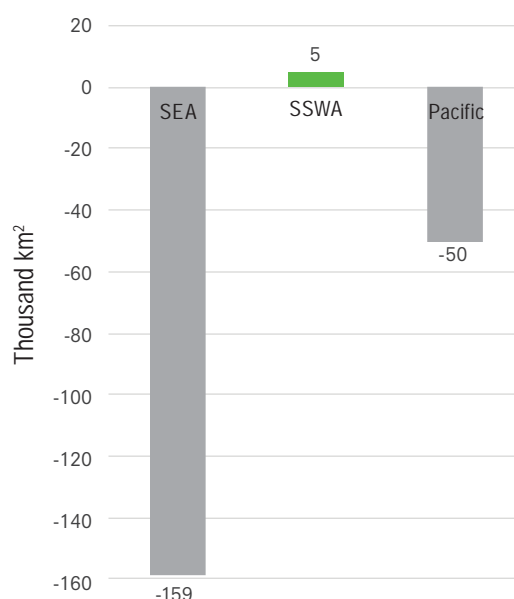
Goal 14 promotes sustainable management of all types of forests. The most important are natural forests which are hosts of many important biodiversity hot spots especially for the tropical regions which tend to have higher species density than temperate zones.

Since 1990, the area of natural forests in tropical countries in Asia and the Pacific has decreased by 5% while the area of planted forests has risen by more than 50%. As a result, planted forests have increased from 10% to 15% of total forest areas in these countries.

Note: This information is derived from the FAO's Global Forest Assessment which uses two primary sources of data: country reports prepared by national correspondents and remote sensing that is conducted by FAO together with national focal points and regional partners. FAO has warned users, however, of problems with the quality and comparability of these indicators.

The difference in Natural Forest Area (Sq KM) for Asia-Pacific subregions in Tropical Zone, between 2000 and 2015

2015	SEA	SSWA	Pacific
km ²	1,937,810	885,277	1,691,338



Governments in the Asia-Pacific region have been expanding the protected areas but the amounts they invest in maintaining these vary considerably

Governments can protect animal and plant species by preserving their habitats. Across the region governments have been creating protected areas. Globally, according to the World Database on Protected Areas, the extent of land area under nationally designated protection has been increasing. Hypothetically, this should translate to more protection for endangered species. In practice, however, such protected areas can vary considerably in the quality of the protection and the density of species that they protect.

Quality of protection of biodiversity is improved partly through public investments in protected areas. Such data are not yet regularly compiled in international databases for monitoring sustainable development progress.

Source: World Database on Protected Areas, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Terrestrial area (ha.) and public funds invested in protected areas per ha. on selected Asia-Pacific countries, latest year available (2000 - 2006)

