

KEY THREATS TO FORESTS



CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT



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Forests around the world face several key threats that can lead to their destruction or degradation. These threats not only harm the forests themselves but also the biodiversity they support and the ecosystem services they provide. Let's break down these threats into simpler terms:

DEFORESTATION

Deforestation is when trees are cut down on a large scale and the land is used for other purposes like agriculture, mining, or urban development.



Imagine a giant eraser wiping away a green patch of forest to make room for farms, cities, or mines. This not only reduces the number of trees but also harms all the animals and plants that lived in the forest, leading to loss of biodiversity.



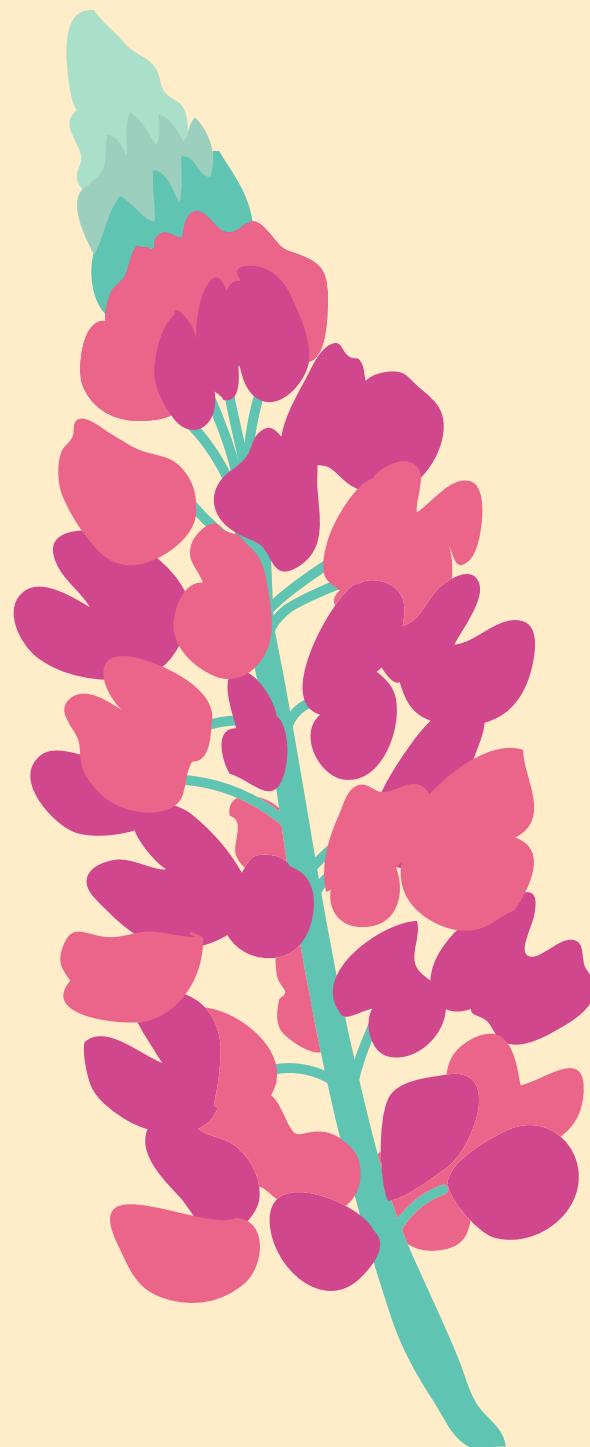


DEGRADATION AND FRAGMENTATION

Degradation happens when forests are damaged but not completely destroyed. This can be due to logging, pollution, or unsustainable use of forest resources. Imagine a forest being slowly chipped away at, becoming less healthy and vibrant over time.



Fragmentation is when large areas of forest are broken into smaller pieces by roads, cities, or farms. Imagine a puzzle that's being pulled apart, where each piece has less of the original picture. This makes it hard for animals to find food, mates, or shelter, and can isolate populations, making them more vulnerable to extinction.



INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are plants, animals, or pathogens that are not native to a forest but enter it and start to take over. They can be like uninvited guests who eat all the food and take over the house, pushing out the original inhabitants.



These species can outcompete, prey on, or bring diseases to native species, leading to changes in the ecosystem and loss of biodiversity.

FIRE

While some forests have adapted to regular fires that can help rejuvenate them, excessive or uncontrolled fires can be devastating.





These can be caused by natural factors like lightning or by human activities such as land clearing and arson. Imagine a fire getting out of control and burning large areas of forest, destroying habitats and killing wildlife. Climate change is making these fires more frequent and severe.



CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change exacerbates all the other threats to forests. It can lead to more extreme weather events, like storms and droughts, changing temperature and rainfall patterns.

This can affect the health of forests, making them more vulnerable to diseases, pests, and fires. Imagine the weather acting like a bully, stressing out the forest and making it harder for trees and animals to thrive.





Forests are under threat from a variety of human-induced and natural factors. Protecting them requires addressing these threats through sustainable management practices, conservation efforts, and global cooperation.



By understanding and mitigating these threats, we can help ensure that forests continue to support a rich diversity of life and provide essential services for the planet.