



**XV WORLD
FORESTRY CONGRESS**

Consequences for issues related to imported deforestation

A challenge to harmonize international efforts to fight against deforestation: towards a new, ecologically robust typology of the world's forests

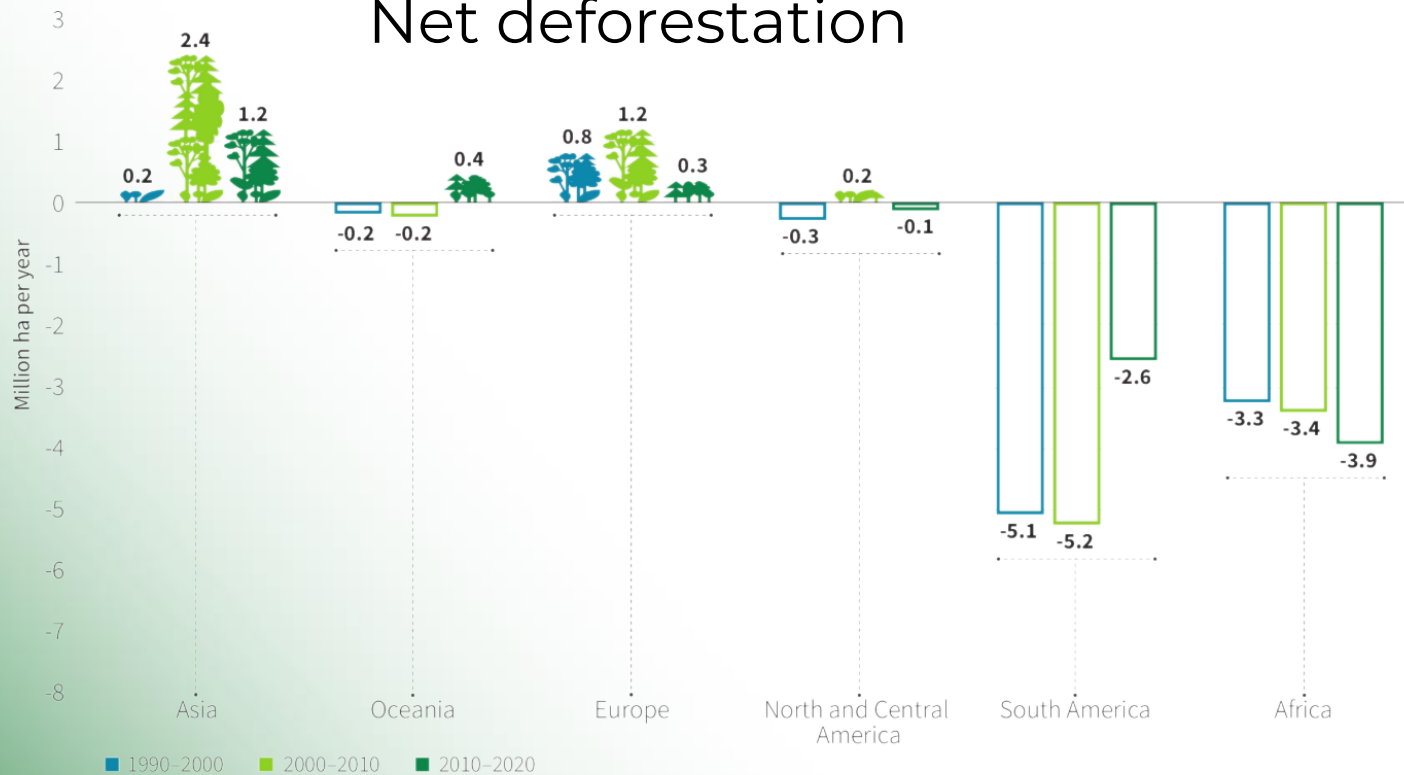
Nicolas PICARD



Deforestation is ongoing at global level

FAO FRA 2020

Net deforestation



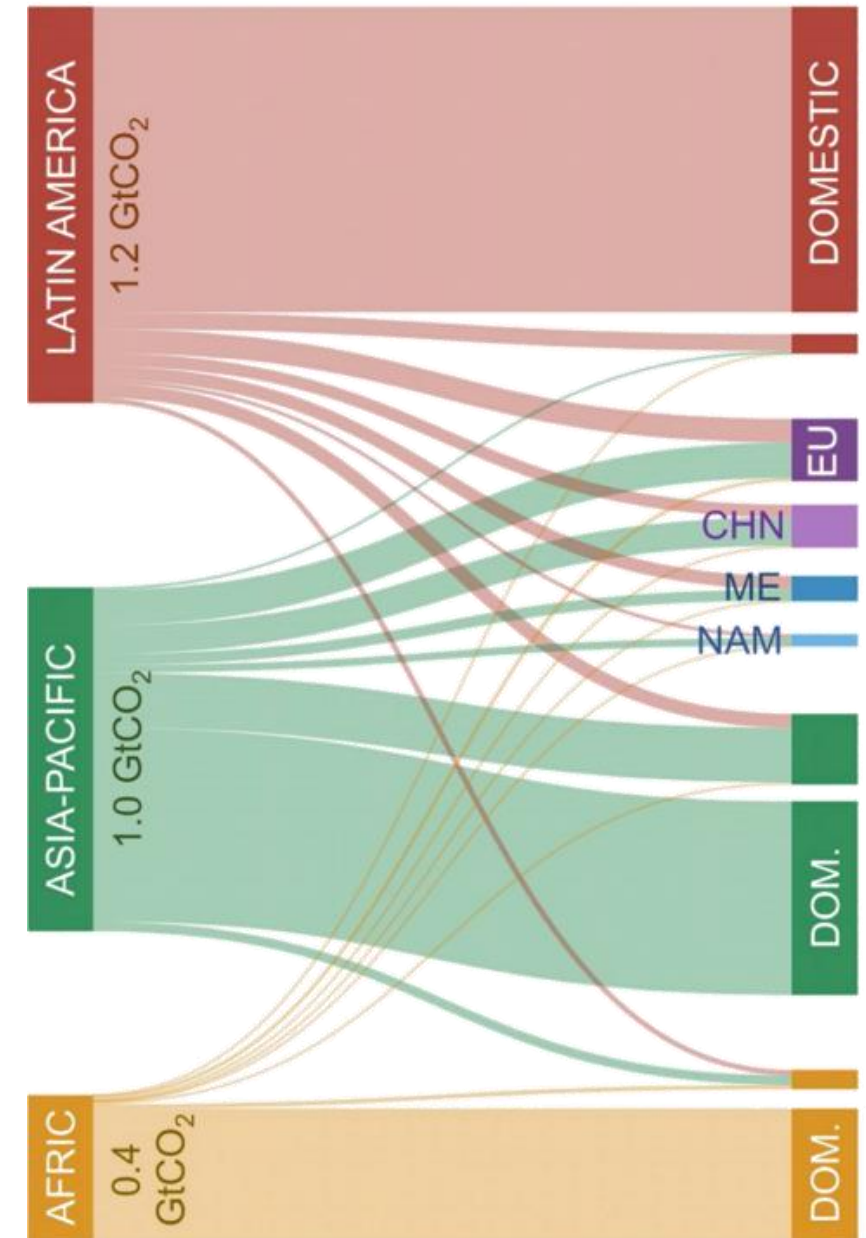
Gross deforestation

Annual rate of forest expansion and deforestation, 1990-2020



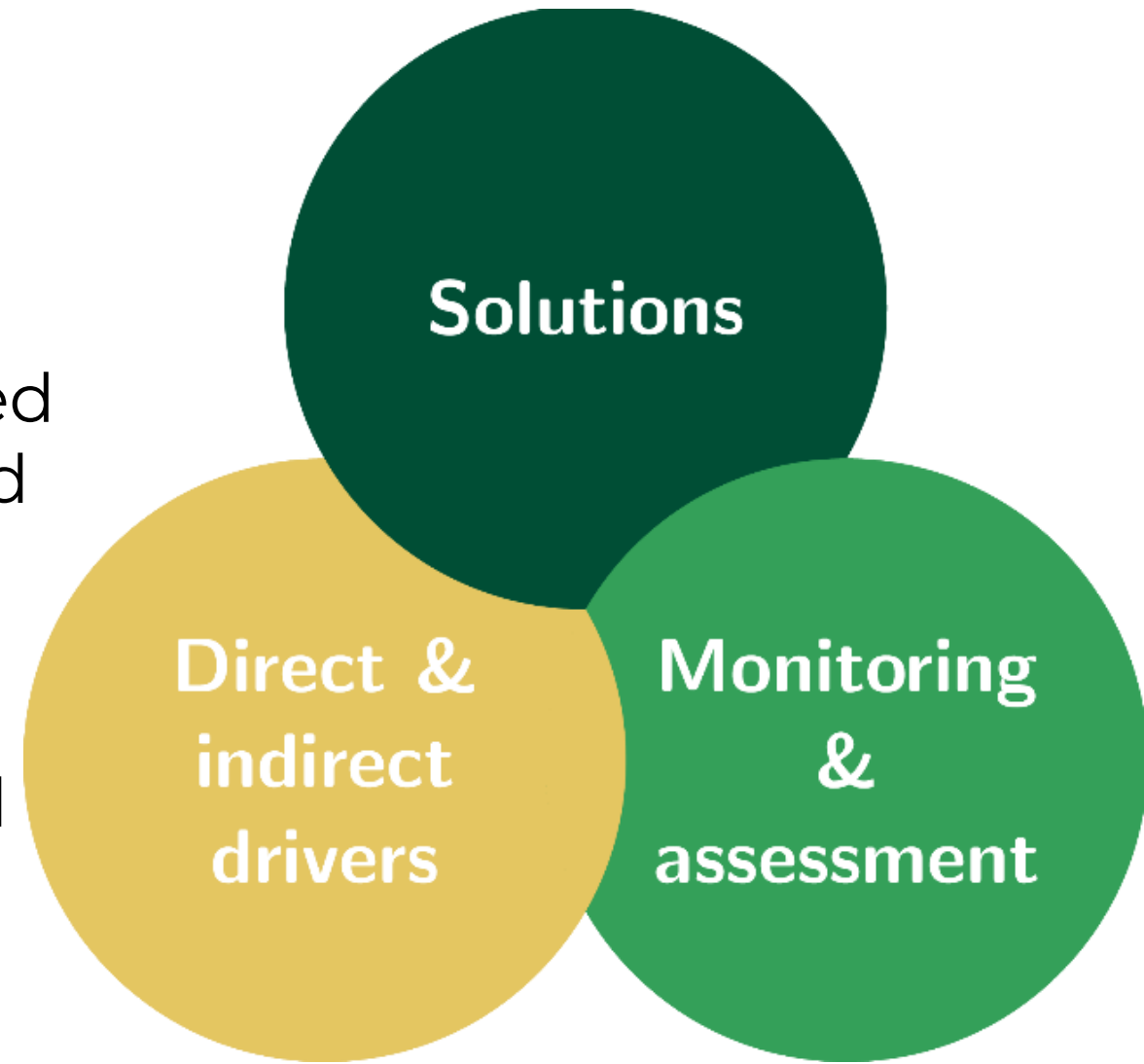
Importations of agricultural commodities matter in deforestation

- Agricultural expansion drives almost **90%** of global deforestation (FAO remote sensing survey)
- About **26%** of this deforestation is linked to international trade (Pendrill et al. 2019)
- Imported deforestation = loss of forest that the growing agricultural imports of a consumer country cause in third countries
- Largest importers of deforestation (WWF 2021)
 1. China (24%)
 2. European Union (16%)
 3. India (9%)
 4. USA (7%)
 5. Japan (5%)



Why forest definition matters for imported deforestation?

- Local measures to combat imported deforestation may be implemented without an internationally agreed definition of forests (e.g. certification, HCS...)
- However, an internationally agreed definition is needed for reporting, diagnosing deforestation fronts, assessing the impact of measures
- Operational aspects: a definition that is operationally tractable but not too simplistic, compatible with monitoring & traceability tools



Integrating deforestation and forest degradation?

- Low thresholds to define forests: emphasis put on forest degradation
- High thresholds to define forests: emphasis put on the conversion of non-forest natural ecosystems
 - Necessity to modulate thresholds depending on ecological/political criteria
 - Necessity to address forest degradation together with deforestation



An ecologically based and societally accepted definition is needed

- If there is a gap between the “ecological” definition of forests and the “regulatory” definition of forests, there may be a societal rejection of policies to combat deforestation
E.g. conversion of forests to other land uses than cropland is not considered as deforestation
- Ancillary issues:
 - Indirect land use change
 - Leaks
 - Land use succession
- Using consumer behaviour to combat imported deforestation



An internationally agreed definition of forest is needed

- If there is a gap between the definition of forests by producing countries and the definition by consuming countries, it will end up with conflicts on deforestation vs. legal land use change
- Connected issues:
 - Producing countries' buy-in vs. consumer-centric approaches
 - Equitability with respect to development / historical responsibility in deforestation
 - Policy consistency between producing and consumer countries
 - Policy coordination between different consumer countries





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In summary: Need for a definition of forests that is

- Ecologically based (incl. degradation)
- Societally accepted
- Internationally agreed

Thank you!

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