Urbanization and forest degradation in east Africa - a case study around Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

Abstract:
In this paper we examine the impact of urbanization on the forest areas around the city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Since 1990 the city has seen an annual population growth rate of 4%. We document the expansion of the city using the Global Human Settlement Layers for 1990, 2000, and 2014, derived from the global Landsat archive. At the same time we show the depletion, degradation and fragmentation of the surrounding forests that has occurred over the same period to meet the growing demand for agricultural land, fuel wood and construction material. The impact on these forests as a result of the demand from an expanding urban conglomeration is higher than would be expected from a dispersed population increase. The results show that to satisfy the demands of the city and of its expanding suburbs, forests from further afield are being depleted and that protected areas nearer the city are being compromised.

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