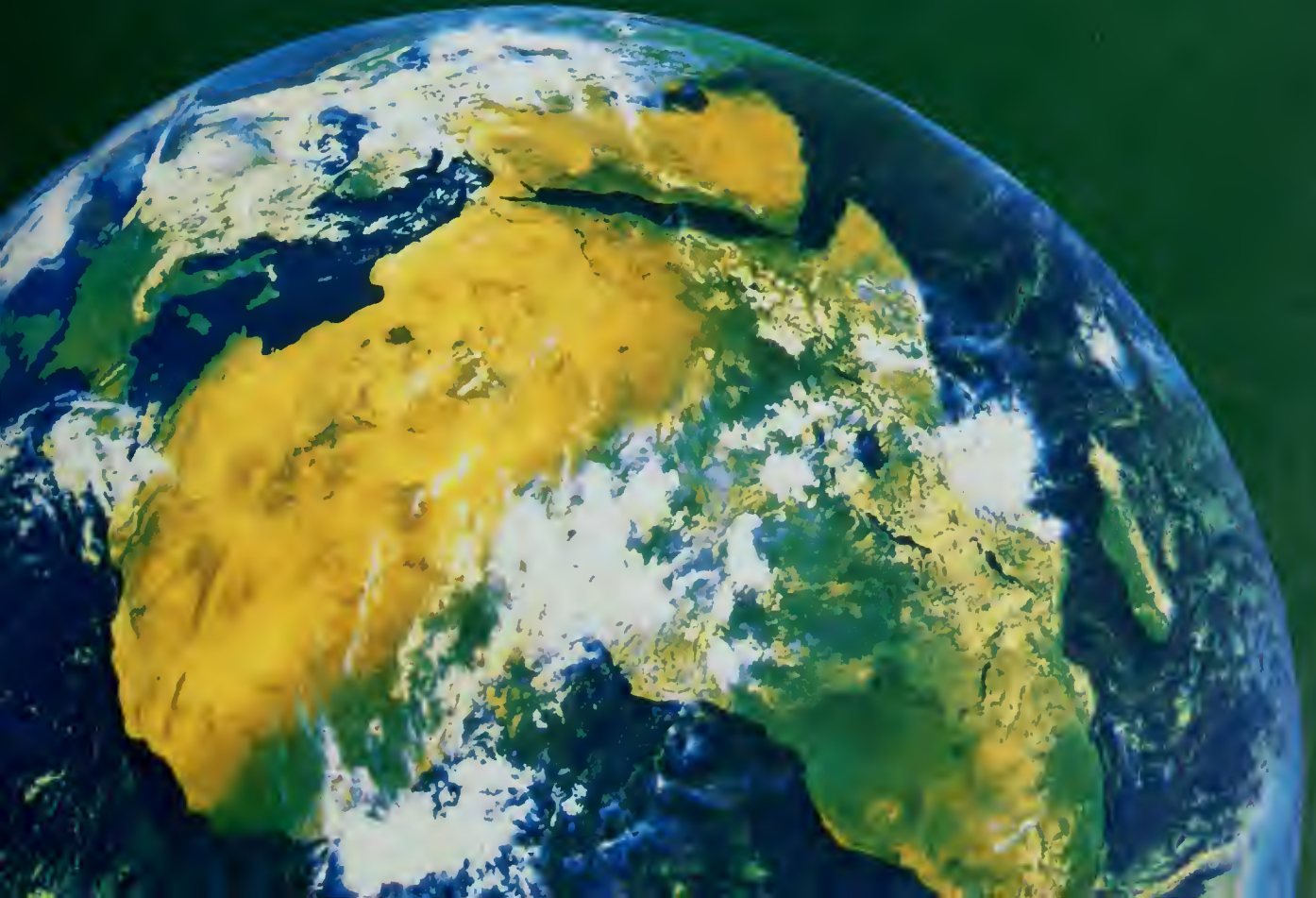


THE CONSERVATION ATLAS
OF
TROPICAL FORESTS

AFRICA



Africa's forests are being depleted at a faster rate than those of any other continent. A major increase in the population growth rate began after World War II and it is now running at an annual rate of 2.9 per cent, resulting in massive demands for agricultural land, water, fuelwood and other products. The message of this book is that forest conservation must be part of a broader process of managing the landscape.

The forests of Africa present a complex picture. The most striking picture to emerge is that only Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Zaïre still retain more than half of their original forest cover; most of the other 32 countries have less than one-fifth remaining. Nature conservation, and in particular protected areas, have had strong political support in recent years, and Africa entered the 1980s with a strong network of national parks and forest reserves. By 1991, 38 African countries had committed themselves to the Tropical Forestry Action Plan which supports conservation of ecosystems. Many other international initiatives have focused attention on the forests of Africa.


The Atlas is divided into two parts.

Part I describes the issues: history of forests and climate; biological diversity; conservation of large mammals; forest peoples; links between population, environment and agriculture; the timber trade; forest management; protected area systems; and the future for Africa's forests.

Part II is a country-by-country survey of the forests of Africa. The forest maps have been compiled from satellite and radar imagery and aerial photography, and were provided by forest departments, development agencies and international organisations. FAO and UNEP in particular have provided much appreciated co-operation, and both text and maps have been written, compiled and reviewed by a broad spectrum of specialists. They represent the best published maps of Africa's forests available today.

As the Atlas makes clear 'the knowledge and resources are now available and the time has come to translate the many plans and strategies into practical action. It is against this that our descendants will judge the success or failure of our conservation efforts.'

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AFRICA

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THE CONSERVATION ATLAS OF TROPICAL FORESTS

AFRICA

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