

Indicator 4.18:

U.S. Forest Sustainability Indicators <https://www.fs.fed.us/research/sustain/>

Proportion of forest management activities that meet best management practices or other relevant legislation to protect soil resources

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May 1, 2020

What is the indicator and why is it important?

Forestry best management practices (BMPs) to protect soil resources are a set of preventive measures designed to control soil erosion caused by forest management activities. They are designed not only to avoid excessive loss of productive soils from the landscape but also to protect receiving water bodies from excess sediment loads from accelerated erosion.

What does the indicator show?

Indicator 4.18 is closely related to Indicator 4.20: Proportion of forest management activities that meet best management practices, or other relevant legislation, to protect water related resources such as riparian zones, water quality, quantity, and flow regulation. Protection of soil resources leads to protection of water resources. The best way to protect waterbodies from excess sedimentation is to protect the soil resource from excess loss via accelerated erosion caused by unsound forest management. Because forest-related BMPs were developed and are used to protect water resources, an assessment of BMPs to protect water resources automatically provides an assessment for protecting soil resources. Therefore, this indicator is reported under Indicator 4.20.

What has changed since 2010?

See brief for Indicator 4.20.

Are there important regional differences?

See brief for Indicator 4.20.