PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Zambia is a landlocked country in southern Africa consisting primarily of high plateaus, hills, and mountains that are dissected by major river valleys, including the Zambezi, Kafue, and Luangwa. A combination of extensive burning late in the dry season, continued population growth, wood extraction (both for timber and charcoal/fuelwood), and agricultural expansion have resulted in a significant increase in the rate of deforestation and environmental degradation. The country is dominated by vast tracks of fire-prone vegetation including woodland savannas and grasslands. Bush fire is a frequent occurrence and is estimated to annually burn approximately 25% of Zambia's land base. Emissions from deforestation and other land-use changes comprise the brunt of Zambia's annual greenhouse gas contributions. Zambia has recently experienced an extraordinary increase in interest and investment in national forest inventories, forest monitoring, forest carbon estimations, forest resource assessments, and related efforts. This increased interest reflects the important linkages between landscape resources, economic development, food security and climate change in the region, where livelihoods and forest-based ecosystem services are inextricably linked.

With support from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development/Zambia, and at the request of the Government of Zambia, the U.S. Forest Service provides technical assistance and capacity building for climate change adaptation and mitigation and greenhouse gas inventories. The U.S Forest Service also collaborates with the U.S. Agency for International Development/Zambia to provide short-term technical assistance to the Zambia Forest Department and Zambia Wildlife Authority, focusing largely on forest monitoring, fire management and the mapping of land use/land cover (LULC) change.