

www.kurandaregion.org info@kurandaregion.org FB: kuranda region planning group

August 2017

MAREEBA COUNCIL FAILS KURANDA AGAIN

SOURCE: www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/L/LocalGovA09.pdf

- 4 Local government principles underpin this Act
- (2) The local government principles are—
- (a) transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest; and
- (b) sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services; and
- (c) democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement; and
- (d) good governance of, and by, local government; and
- (e) ethical and legal behaviour of councillors and local government employees.

268 Process for administrative action complaints

- (1) A local government must adopt a process for resolving administrative action complaints.
- (2) An administrative action complaint is a complaint that—
- (a) is about an administrative action of a local government, including the following, for example—
- (i) a decision, or a failure to make a decision, including a failure to provide a written statement of reasons for a decision;

LETTER 20 JUL 2017: www.kurandaregion.org/letter-to-msc-reply-to-peter-franks-msc-ceo-after-19-july-2017-council-meeting-concerns-tabled-by-community-groups-and-residents/



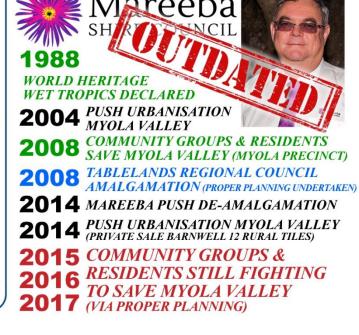
STATE OF WET TROPICS REPORT 2014-2015

Economic Value of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

The collective worth of the region's natural assets is likely to exceed \$5.2 billion; \$2.6 billion stated value associated with tourism market values plus an additional minimum of \$2.6 billion from non-market values.

The study suggests that policy and decision makers should **not focus on market values alone**, such as economic growth, when considering the **well-being and community resilience** of residents.

www.wettropics.gov.au/site/user-assets/docs/ sowt14-15b5-lr.pdf





Send your info /
concerns / updates to
open-issues@kurandaregion.org
or go to KRPG Facebook page
to comment.

We demand proper planning for Kuranda Region. Find out more. Get involved. Your concerns matter.

Community Meetings

FRIDAYS 2-4PM, 11 AUG, 25 AUG, 8 SEP, 22 SEP, 6 OCT, 20 OCT, 3 NOV, 76 High Chapparal Rd

CANDS OFF WORLD HERITAGE WET TROPICS

135 MILLION YEARS OLD. NOW UNDER THREAT **ECOLOGICALLY RARE GONDWANA RAINFOREST**



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www.wettropics.gov.au/site/user-assets/docs/ sowt14-15b5-lr.pdf

Cassowary population estimates

Only found in a few rainforest areas of

An estimated 4,400 birds in 2014; population declining SEE ATTACHMENT A 1900

northeast Queensland, Australia

K Rapid decline since the 1970s

Asset Value \$1 million (per bird)



World Heritage Wet Tropics Natural Assets Value

\$5.2 billion



Only 20-25% of former cassowary habitat remains,

and much of it is still under pressure.

Only 3% of QLD land recognised for rare ecological values.

2017



KEYSTONE SPECIES

ENDANGERED

Southern Cassowary Casuarius casuarius johnsonii

(Linnaeus, 1758)

THE KIMBERLEY

- a species that is critical abundance of many other species
- NO MORE CONCRETE IN MYOLA VALLEY

ECOLOGICAL

LANDSCAPES

GREAT SOUTH

OF AUSTRALIA

KANGAROO ISLAND

GREAT OCEAN ROAD

AUSTRALIA'S TIMELESS NORTH

WETTROPICS

AUSTRALIA'S GREEN CAULDRON

Myola Valley is not suitable for land developers or real estate speculators.

⁴ 2017 Kuranda Cassowary Population: approx. 30 birds (incl. Myola Valley)

ATTACHMENT D: CHARTS

to the functioning of the ecosystem because it affects the survival and

- one species that many others depend on

FOREST LAND CLEARING "DEVELOPMENT" BENEFITS **PROFIT** CONSULTANT **JOBS** SUSTAINABLE Net forest conversion, 1990-2010

habitat loss

deforestation of habitats

& habitat linkages

road kills are a major

cause of adult

cassowary deaths

dogs, which

attack and kill

chick, juvenile and adult birds

feral pigs,

which damage

cassowary habitat

road infrastructure

CASSOWARY EXTINCTION:

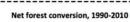
ON TRACK FOR 2047

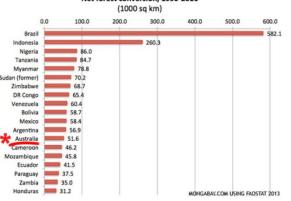
GREAT BARRIER REEF

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA'S COASTAL WILDERNESS

TASMANIA'S





At the other end of the scale, was China, where afforestation, refe million hectares of forest resulted in the net sequestration of 5.7 billion tons of CO2e. The United States (1.9 billion tons) and Vietnam (1.2 billion tons) also experienced subvery of forest carbon stocks, according to the database

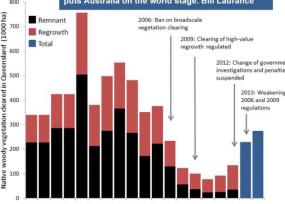
adani's f\$\$\$ing the world heritage great barrier reef. world heritage wet tropics land grab defore\$tation for profit ...



the anthropocene and the 6th global mass extinction event will take care of the tab.

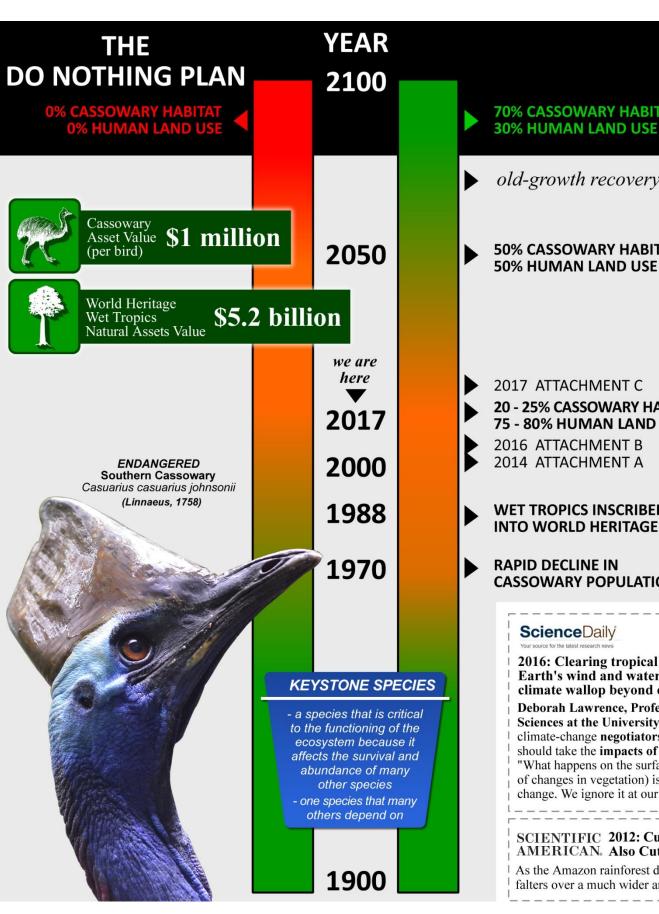
1970

SOURCE: THE CONVERSATION The re-acceleration of land-clearing in Queensland puts Australia on the world stage. Bill Laurance 2009: Clearing of high-value 2012: Change of governmen





no worries mate.



WORLD HERITAGE WET TROPICS & SOUTHERN CASSOWARY (ENDANGERED KEYSTONE SPECIES) **70% CASSOWARY HABITAT 100 YEAR RECOVERY PLAN**

- old-growth recovery
- **50% CASSOWARY HABITAT 50% HUMAN LAND USE**

- 2017 ATTACHMENT C
- 20 25% CASSOWARY HABITAT **75 - 80% HUMAN LAND USE**
- 2016 ATTACHMENT B 2014 ATTACHMENT A
- **WET TROPICS INSCRIBED** INTO WORLD HERITAGE
- **RAPID DECLINE IN** CASSOWARY POPULATION

DESIGN & DEVELOP INLAND SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL HUBS

PLANNED RECOVERY FOR **RAINFOREST HABITAT ON CHEAP** RURAL LAND IN WET TROPICS GROW ZONE

COAST TO TABLELAND HUBS MASS TRANSPORT SYSTEM DESIGNED, DEVELOPED & FUNDED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY HINT: NOT ROADS, NOT FOSSIL FUELS

2017: Distinguished Professor Bill Laurance speaking about the World Heritage Wet Tropics - ATTACHMENT C

On the Australian continent, we're talking about 1000th of Australia's continental land area.

Yet, a major analysis which looked at the biogeographic, and the biological uniqueness and irreplaceability of different ecosystems on the planet.

This was over 173,000 different protected areas on the planet ranked the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as the 6th most critical and irreplaceable.

Of World Heritage Areas, it was the 2nd most critical and irreplaceable. I think this gives you global perspective on what we're talking about here.

Anybody, from anywhere on the planet, looking around would say this is absolutely critical biological and environmental real estate.

You would not want to risk it.

From an International, from a global perspective, for lots of different reasons.



Science Daily

2016: Clearing tropical rainforests distorts Earth's wind and water systems, packs climate wallop beyond carbon

Deborah Lawrence, Professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of Virginia, added that climate-change negotiators and other policymakers should take the impacts of deforestation seriously. "What happens on the surface of the earth (in terms of changes in vegetation) is a big factor in climate change. We ignore it at our own peril."

SCIENTIFIC 2012: Cutting Down Rainforests AMERICAN. Also Cuts Down on Rainfall

As the Amazon rainforest disappears, rainfall falters over a much wider area



Only 20-25% of former cassowary habitat remains, and much of it is still under pressure.

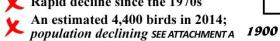


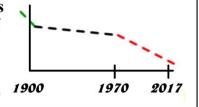
Only 3% of QLD land recognised for rare ecological values.

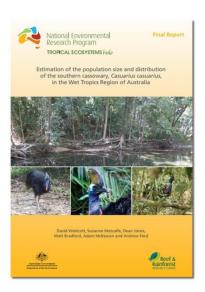
Cassowary population estimates Only found in a few rainforest areas of northeast Oueensland, Australia



K Rapid decline since the 1970s







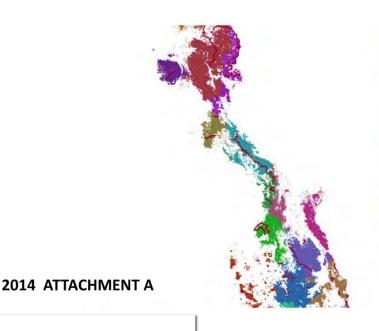


 Table 2. Dung encounter rates, estimated densities and estimated populations for each of the sub-regions

Sub-region	Mean dung encounter rate (dungs/km)	Cassowary density (birds/km²)	Area (ha)	Estimated Population
North	0.13	0.22	35,147	79
Windsor	0.00	0.04	18,470	0
Daintree	0.25	0.39	27,691	109
Daintree River	0.02	0.07	78,750	59
Carbine	0.00	0.04	18,428	8
Black Mountain	0.06	0.12	29,962	37
Kuranda	0.09	0.17	11,939	21
Cairns	0.00	0.04	14,304	6
Mt Edith	0.07	0.14	25,454	36
Goldsbourough	0.06	0.13	33,033	43
Russell	1.07	1.55	39,535	614
Longlands	0.22	0.35	26,769	94
Bramston	0.55	0.81	19,878	162
Palmerston	0.34	0.52	63,526	333
Koombaloomba	0.75	1.11	47,404	527
Etty	0.30	0.47	8,247	39
Mission Beach	0.74	1.09	17,184	187

Implications

Our work suggest that the cassowary population of the Wet Tropics Region is comprised of approximately 4400 birds with a minimum of 5% of these being young of the year. While this is a larger population than is commonly reported in the media, we see in it no cause for complacency about the species' status. A population of just 4400 is not large and places a species is at greater risk from chance events and genetic effects than would otherwise be the case (Frankham et al. 2014; IUCN 2010; Rosenfeld 2014). In addition, the WTR cassowary population is distributed across a complex landscape and, particularly on the western and eastern margins, across highly fragmented landscapes. While cassowaries are capable of crossing the gaps between habitat islands, their ability to do so is being increasingly eroded by anthropogenic changes and activities in the intervening habitat. When movement between areas of habitat is limited there is reduced opportunity for mixing and less chance of 'rescue' effects should these be required. These two characteristics of a species, small population size and fragmented range, are among the factors given high priority in increasing a species' threat status under classification systems such as the IUCN's Red List criteria (IUCN 2010). This should be sufficient cause for concern alone, however, under projections for the distribution of cassowary habitat under future climates (Mokany et al. 2014; Mokany et al, in press) it appears inevitable that essential cassowary habitat will decrease in areal extent and increase in the degree to which it is fragmented. Add to this the predictions of more intense cyclones and the outlook is not encouraging (Hilbert et al. 2014).

The inference to make from this is that we can expect that the already low cassowary population will decrease in size and become increasingly fragmented in coming decades. Add to this the fact that because of the species' low population density and cryptic habits it is very

likely that there would be a long time lag between declines in the wild and detection and the implementation of any form of management response and the status of the species becomes even more tenuous. For these reasons we see no reason to change the species' conservation listing or to consider that we can take our focus off its status and trend.

Based on this assessment we recommend that future investment in cassowary management should focus on four tasks which fall under the categories of habitat protection and monitoring. Ultimately, the size of the cassowary population is a function of the extent of cassowary habitat, thus increasing the availability and quality of that habitat will be fundamental to securing the species' future in the wild. Secondly, improving the connectedness of cassowary habitat will not only increase the availability of habitat but will facilitate the movement of birds, and genes, through the landscape. There are currently a range of private and agency programs operating to facilitate the purchase and rehabilitation of habitat and these programs should be supported.

The third area is the establishment of a regular monitoring program. We can only be confident about the management of cassowaries if we actually know the status and trend of the population. This requires investment in the establishment of an on-going cassowary monitoring program. The current program has demonstrated that an effective monitoring program can be established relatively cheaply at the scale of the species range. With some further refinement such a program can provide regular updates on the species' trends as well as describing key life-history parameters necessary for predictive monitoring of the species' population dynamics. We recommend that i) monitoring at focal sites be continued and expanded in order to describe life history and population parameters to underpin population monitoring and that ii) region-wide monitoring be conducted at regular intervals of not more than five years to ensure up-to-date data on distribution and abundance are available.

2016 ATTACHMENT B



Essential Cassowary habitat

Black Mountain

Bramston Carbine DT river Daintree Etty Goldsbourough Ingham Koombaloomba Kuranda MB Mt Edith North Palmersto Paluma Tully Wallaman



EPBC Status Endangered

Found in Queensland

Main threats Habitat loss, vehicle strikes and dog attacks

About The southern cassowary is a flightless bird and the largest native animal in Australian rainforests.

Adults have a tall helmet on their head (called a 'casque') which may help them to sense low vibrating sounds made by other cassowaries and

'casque') which may help them to sense low vibrating sounds made by other cassowaries and also acts like a bike helmet to protect their head when they are running through the jungle. Cassowaries are very territorial and mostly solitary. Cassowaries eat fleshy fruits of over 200 species of plants, dispersing seeds long distances in the process. This makes them a keystone species in the World Heritage listed rainforests of tropical Queensland.

Action

The Australian Government has secured over \$10 million in initiatives supporting the southern cassowary, including. Eighteen Green Army teams and \$6 million in projects that directly protect and restore its habitat.



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

MEDIA RELEASE

22 January 2016

2020 target set for more threatened species

Sixteen more threatened bird and mammal species will start on the road to recovery after the Australian Government today committed to improving their trajectories by 2020.

The mahogany glider, eastern quoll, western ringtail possum, woylie, black-footed rock-wallaby, Gilbert's potoroo, northern hopping-mouse and Christmas Island flying-fox will join the list of 20 mammal species prioritised for action under Australia's first Threatened Species Strategy.

The <u>cassowary</u>, swift parrot, eastern curlew, Australasian bittern, malleefowl, south-eastern redtailed black cockatoo, white-throated grasswren and golden-shouldered parrot are also in line for special attention, as the latest additions to the list of 20 priority bird species.

I'm delighted to be joined by Threatened Species Commissioner Gregory Andrews to make this exciting announcement today at Werribee Zoo south-west of Melbourne.

The landmark Threatened Species Strategy released last year identified the first tranche of birds and mammals to be targeted for action. Today's announcement of the remaining priority species marks another milestone for wildlife conservation in this country.

For too long, the problem of species decline has been put in the 'too hard' basket. We've taken a new and different approach, and I'm heartened to see it is already proving its worth.

2017 ATTACHMENT C: Distinguished Professor Bill Laurance from TESS – Centre for Tropical Environmental Sustainability Science speaking about World Heritage Wet Tropics

Australia has a history of quite extensive land use.

But particularly when we're talking about the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, this is an area that has been substantially protected, and I think it's important to emphasise just how critical, and how unique this area is.

Firstly, on the Australian continent, we're talking about 1000th of Australia's continental land area.

Yet, a major analysis which looked at the biogeographic, and the biological uniqueness and irreplaceability of different ecosystems on the planet.

This was over 173,000 different protected areas on the planet ranked the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area as the 6th most critical and irreplaceable.

Of World Heritage Areas, it was the 2nd most critical and irreplaceable. I think this gives you global perspective on what we're talking about here.

Anybody, from anywhere on the planet, looking around would say this is absolutely critical biological and environmental real estate.

You would not want to risk it.

From an International, from a global perspective, for lots of different reasons.

It is a tremendously complex web of interactions and really is the highest, most gloriously developed example of co-evolution, and evolutionary complexity, that we see pretty much on the planet.

The forests here are very restricted in area. They're already under a lot of pressure. Naturally small. Naturally fragmented.

We know there's been a legacy of very extensive land use.

For instance, about 70% of the lowland forests have been destroyed. A lot of the upland forests on the Atherton Tablelands and Windsor Tableland have also been cleared and fragmented.

Many kinds of pressures here in terms of edge effects, climate change, exotic pathogens.

One of the interesting things is this KUR-World, and the company will hold it, is privately held.

And one of the things that we've had quite a lot of experience around the world working with Chinese corporations: Public / Private Partnerships, Private Corporations and other types of entities.

When you're dealing with a private corporation. When you don't have stockholders. You don't have boards of directors. Basically you're dealing with the whims of an individual.

I think that was interesting and consistent with some of Steve's comments – about a lack of certainty about what exactly is being planned and this whole situation seems to be pretty soft.

It's very clear that the main base of investment is going to be coming out of Southern China, particularly the Hong Kong area.

This is an area in China is a massive investor right now in different parts of the world. Massive foreign investor. In developing countries, and of course in places like Australia.

It's also clear that some of those projects are then going to be sold off. So there's no plan basically for a single title holder or corporation to hold that. The idea is basically to sell it to maximise the profit.

Ken Lee spends a limited amount of time in Melbourne and lives in Hong Kong.

From my understanding, I think his business entrepreneurial attitude and approach is probably going to be much more typical of the Chinese investor than probably an investor you might see operating perhaps as an Australian. Now, I can't be certain of that – that's based on a certain amount of personal experience.

China has been instrumentally involved in investments, especially around large-scale mining investments, bulk mining investments that would involve massive increases in transportation infrastructure – more than 53,000 km of new roads, highways and also associated energy and transportation water infrastructure with those projects.

Typically what would happen is there would be a so-called an anchoring project which might be a large iron mine, or a coal mine, or copper mine. Then there would be a large corridor – a road or railway or both often times – connecting that then to a port which would then be exporting that to China.



KUR-World... I want to provide some general perspectives on this.

Again, one of the obvious things is being, this is by any measure, one of the most biologically critical areas of the planet. It's renowned for having all these rare, endemic species.

These are things that can occur in a very, very tiny part of the world.

[pictured] These are some of the species that have been documented to be restricted or rare or localised endemics that occur within this general area, within the [KUR-World] project area.

Notably, the Northern Bettong and Tropical Bettong is not there will but this project will be smack in the middle of the two known populations: one in the Lamb Range and one on the Windsor Tableland and this will be in fact putting additional pressures. If there were any gene flow, if there were any movement, if there were any connectivity between those two relic populations of this Critically Endangered Australian native species this development would be almost certainly slamming the door on that kind of demographic and genetic movement.

Landscape context. Bio-geographic context is critical. What we're in right here is really one of the critical bottlenecks. It's really the critical bottleneck – the so called Black Mountain Bio-Geographic Corridor and it's the narrowest choke point for the Wet Tropics.

What you generally don't want in these bottlenecks is you don't want to elevate land use pressures. You don't want to choke these bottlenecks even further by additional kinds of development pressures.

Big development projects, almost as a generality, not always, but almost always as a generality it's the secondary effects, it's the knock on effects of the transportation infrastructure, and the water infrastructure, and the energy infrastructure, and the land use change pressures and everything else going on, the migration is actually more important than the project itself.

Almost everywhere you look in the world, the so called Strategic and Environmental Assessments and Social Assessments almost never capture what's really going to happen. Because these projects drag with them migration, and economic changes, and land speculation, and other land use changes, and a whole suite of things. And they are just not able to be captured within the Terms of Reference of Environmental Impact Assessment. Even when they try. Nobody has really been able to do that. Don't believe it. If they tell you they've done an EIA and it's all going to be ok.

Another general principle, we see this lots of places, for instance in the Asia Pacific Region, what you'll typically see is large corporations and then they will have a whole set of subsidiaries. There might be some kind of land claim where they're allowed to claim up to 2000 ha but what they'll do is branch off into all these subsidiaries and then they'll have Joe and Bob and Joe's uncle, Bob's brother. And then what they'll do is put in all these claims and treat these as though they are all separate entities. It also becomes very, very hard to track the money and track the compliance. So this is a very common phenomenon.

And what's clearly going to be happening with this project, this KUR-World, is that it's going to be designed to sold off to multiple landowners and there will be land speculation happening. But there may also be this subsidiary effect happening as well. So, it's going to be difficult for the people that are trying to manage the environmental impact to handle these types of shared cases. It's more difficult than if you're dealing with a single landowner.



THE CONVERSATION



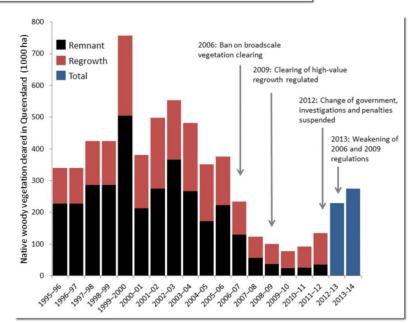
Our statement of concern pointed out that tens of thousands of hectares of Queensland's woodland and forests were being lost every year, even before the vegetation protections were wound back. Just two years later, it appears we must now measure the annual losses in hundreds of thousands of hectares.

Last month, early figures <u>were reported</u> suggesting that 275,000 hectares <u>were cleared</u> from <u>Queensland in the last financial year – a tripling of land clearing rates since 2010.</u>

Land clearing is the main cause of biodiversity loss. It also exacerbates erosion and salinity, reduces water quality, worsens the impacts of drought, and contributes. significantly to achon emissions. Indeed, vegetation protection laws enabled Australia to meet its Kyoto Protocol target for emissions reductions.

Australia already has alarmingly high rates of land clearing. And Queensland is responsible for more land clearing each year than any other state. So, the re-acceleration of land clearing in Queensland puts the state on the world stage – and not in a good way.



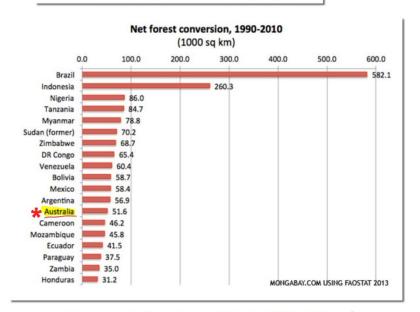


2014 ATTACHMENT D



Deforestation, wetlands loss in Brazil and Indonesia generated 45b tons of CO2 in 20 years

Annual deforestation emissions estimates released by the FAO



At the other end of the scale, was China, where afforestation, reforestation, and recovery of 5.2 million hectares of forest resulted in the net sequestration of 5.7 billion tons of CO2e. The United States (1.9 billion tons) and Vietnam (1.2 billion tons) also experienced substantial recovery of forest carbon stocks, according to the database.