

The State of British Columbia's Forests

Background

This study was requested by Forest Innovation Investment, a government-sponsored organization devoted to maintaining, creating and diversifying markets for British Columbia's forest products.

FII's mandate

- Position B.C. as a global supplier of world-class environmentally friendly forest products
- Actively maintain, create and diversify demand for B.C. forest products in Canada and in key world markets
- Help break down non-tariff trade and market barriers to ensure opportunities for B.C. forest products
- Work with the forest industry to promote B.C.'s forest products and forest management to the global marketplace
- Help ensure that the forest sector, through product development and strong international sales, continues to be a leading contributor to the B.C. economy

Scope of work

- Compare B.C.'s and Canada's forests with selected jurisdictions around the world on key parameters surrounding sustainable forest management
- What social and environmental issues do people feel are important that could be reported on to provide data on the relative performance of BC's and Canada's forests compared to the world's forests?
- What is the state of BC and Canada's forests and how does BC/Canada stack up?

Coverage

- The comparison involved:
 - British Columbia and Canada
 - European Union, USA, Russia, China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand
- These jurisdictions cover the majority of the world's temperate and boreal forests. Their socio-economic conditions are comparable to Canada

Question 1

- Data from environmental non-profit organizations (ENGOS), public participation surveys and electronic media reports
- Expected to cover wildlife habitat, water, urban/wildland interface fires, Indigenous values, intact forest landscapes, natural managed forests, the role of human impacts on forests, climate change, and carbon

Question 2

- Data collected from Montreal process countries
- Canadian data source: National Forest Inventory System and the National Forestry Database. These are used by Canada to submit data to the UN-FAO
- Covers: forest area, forest land-cover change, protected areas, areas for biodiversity conservation, conversion of natural forests into plantations, area of forest covered by management plans, regeneration, forest stocks, involvement of stakeholders in forest management decisions

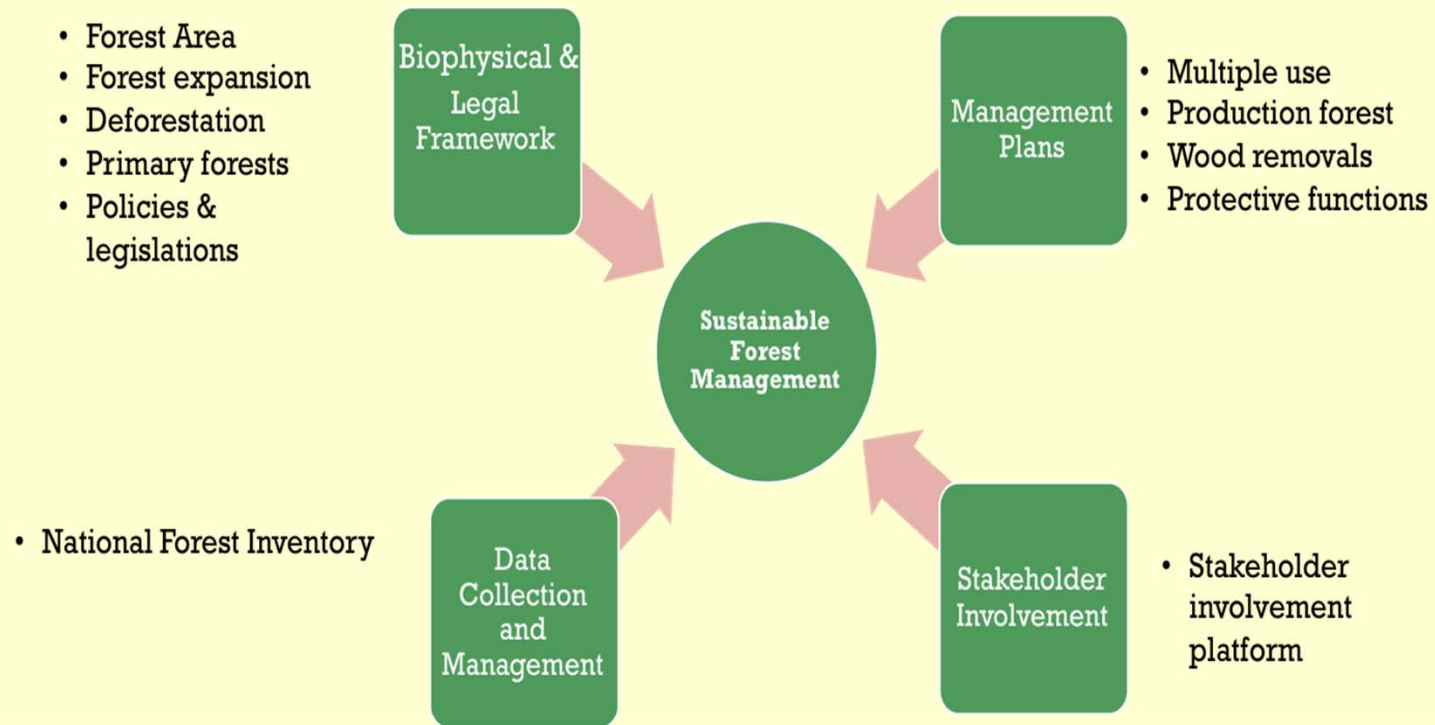
Two comparisons

- How does BC compare to Canada as a whole and to other countries/jurisdictions?
- How does Canada compare to other countries/jurisdictions?

Four key domains examined

- Legal framework
- Management plans
- Data collection and management
- Stakeholder involvement

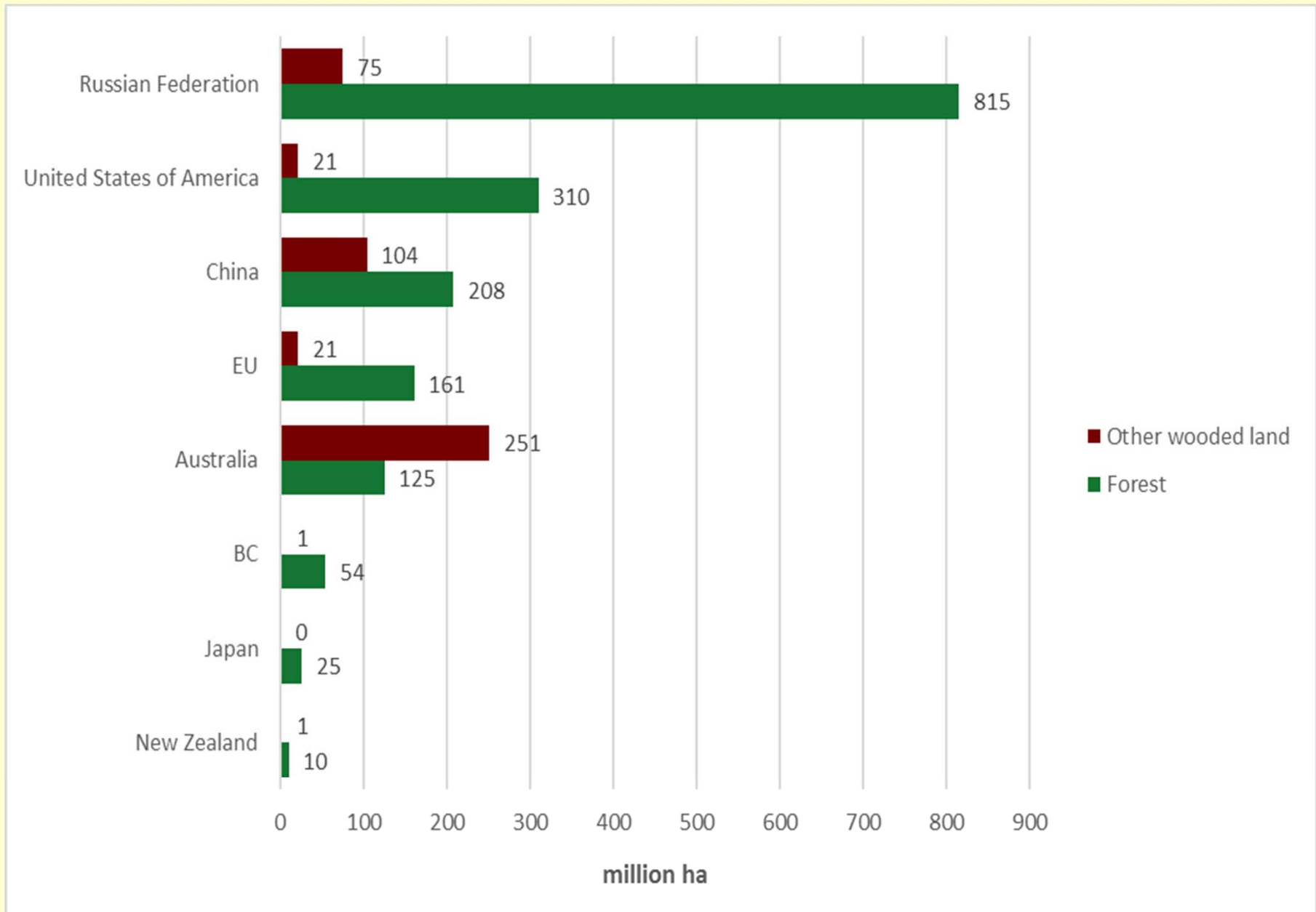
These are important as they provide the information that is needed to support long-term sustainable forest management



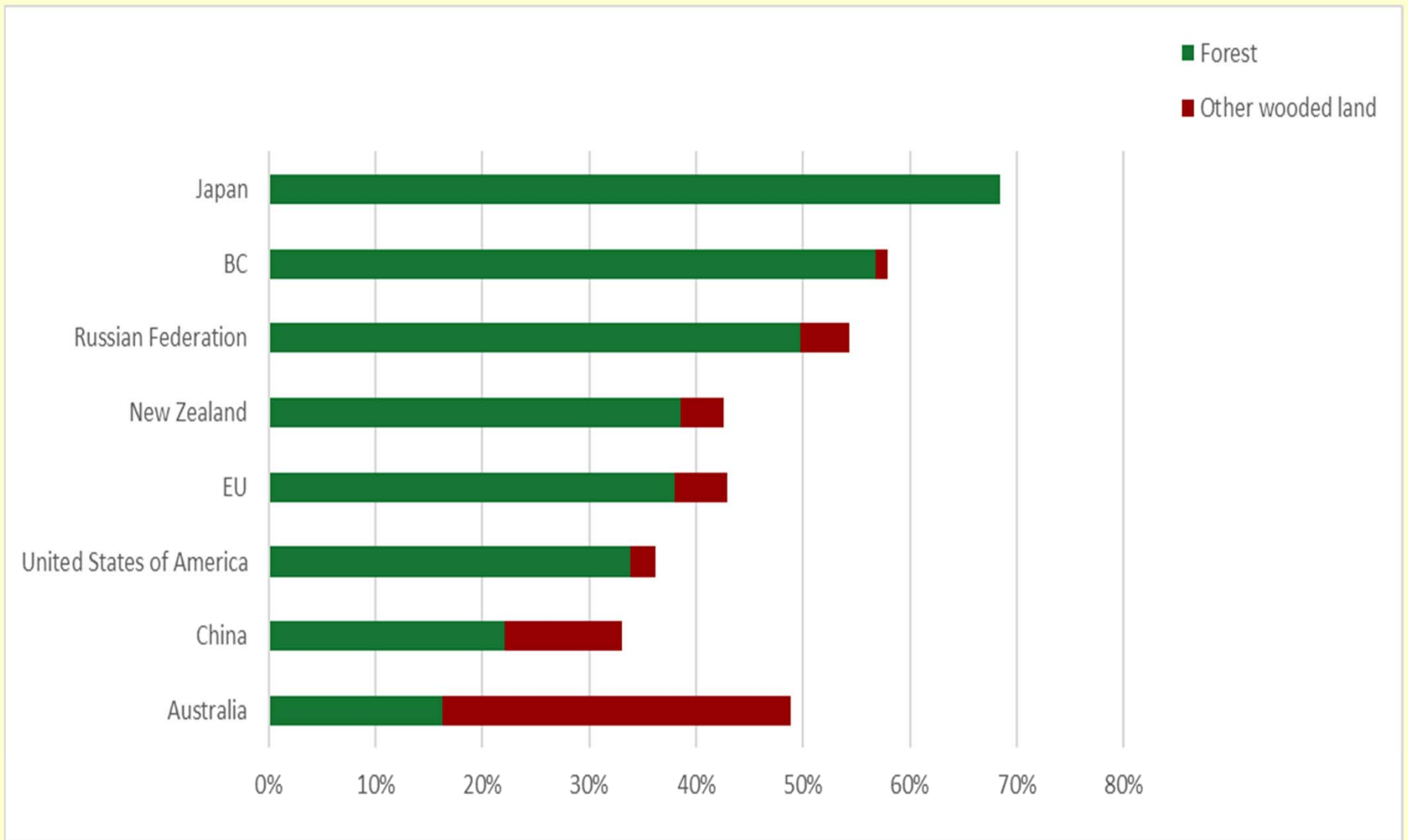
Key domains of sustainable forest management

Stakeholder involvement

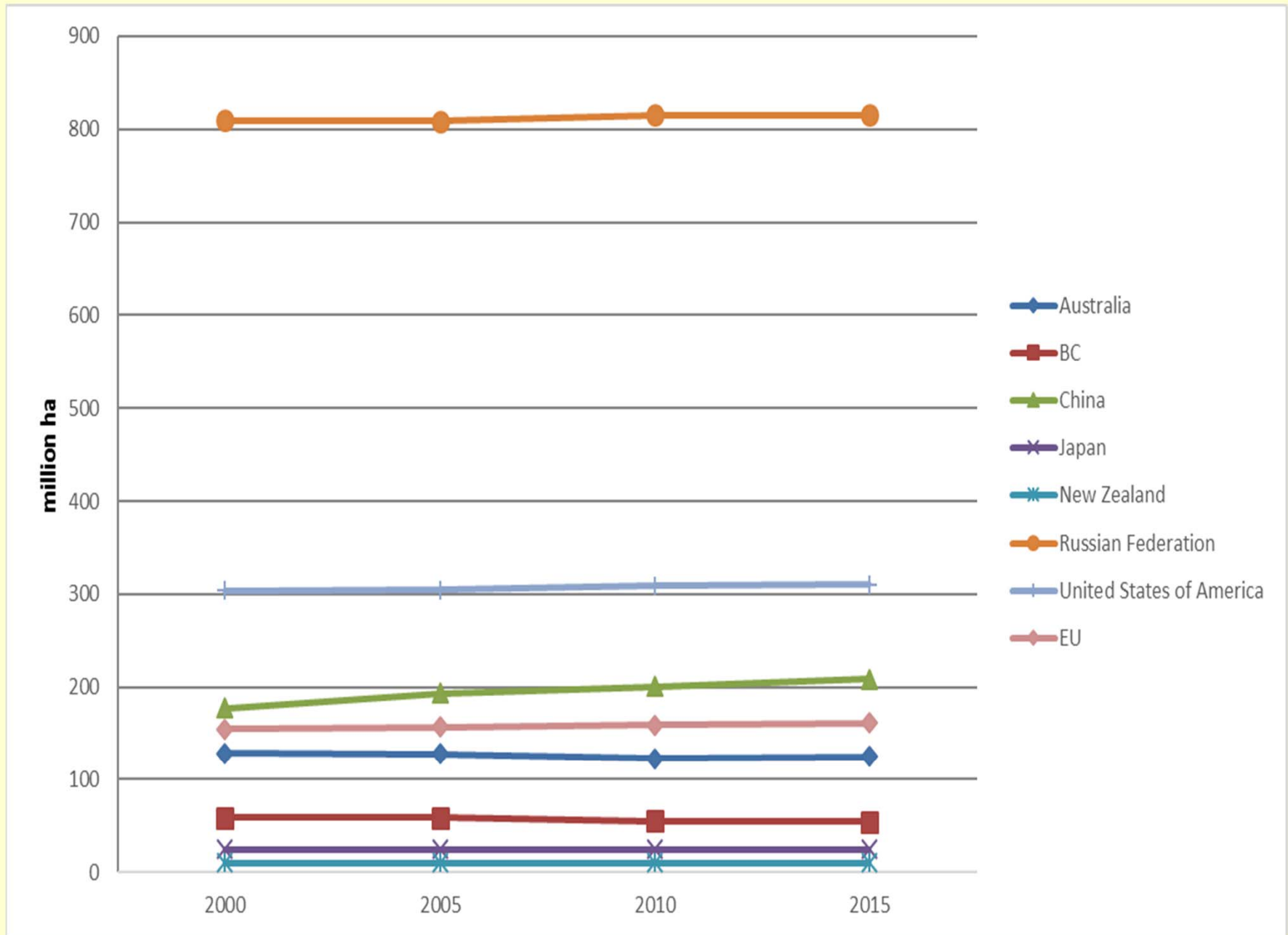
- CSA Z809 SFM Standard – Canada’s official national standard for sustainable forest management
- Standard was developed according to the Montreal Process
- Standard is unique in that it requires and encourages active public participation by local residents
- The result is your participation at a **local level** is supporting Canada’s sustainable forest management leadership at a **global level**.



Forest and other wooded land



Forest area as percentage of land area

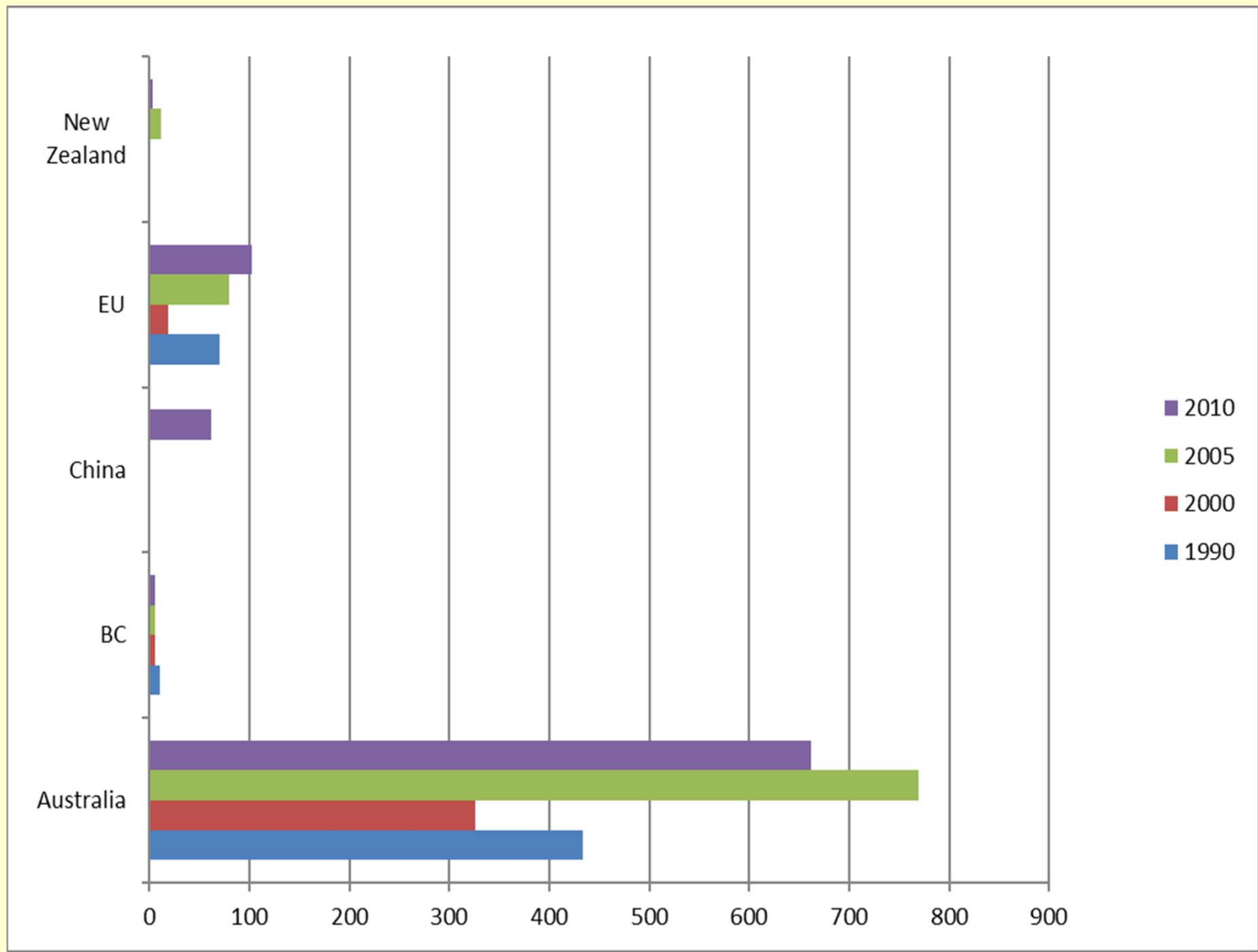


Trends in forest area

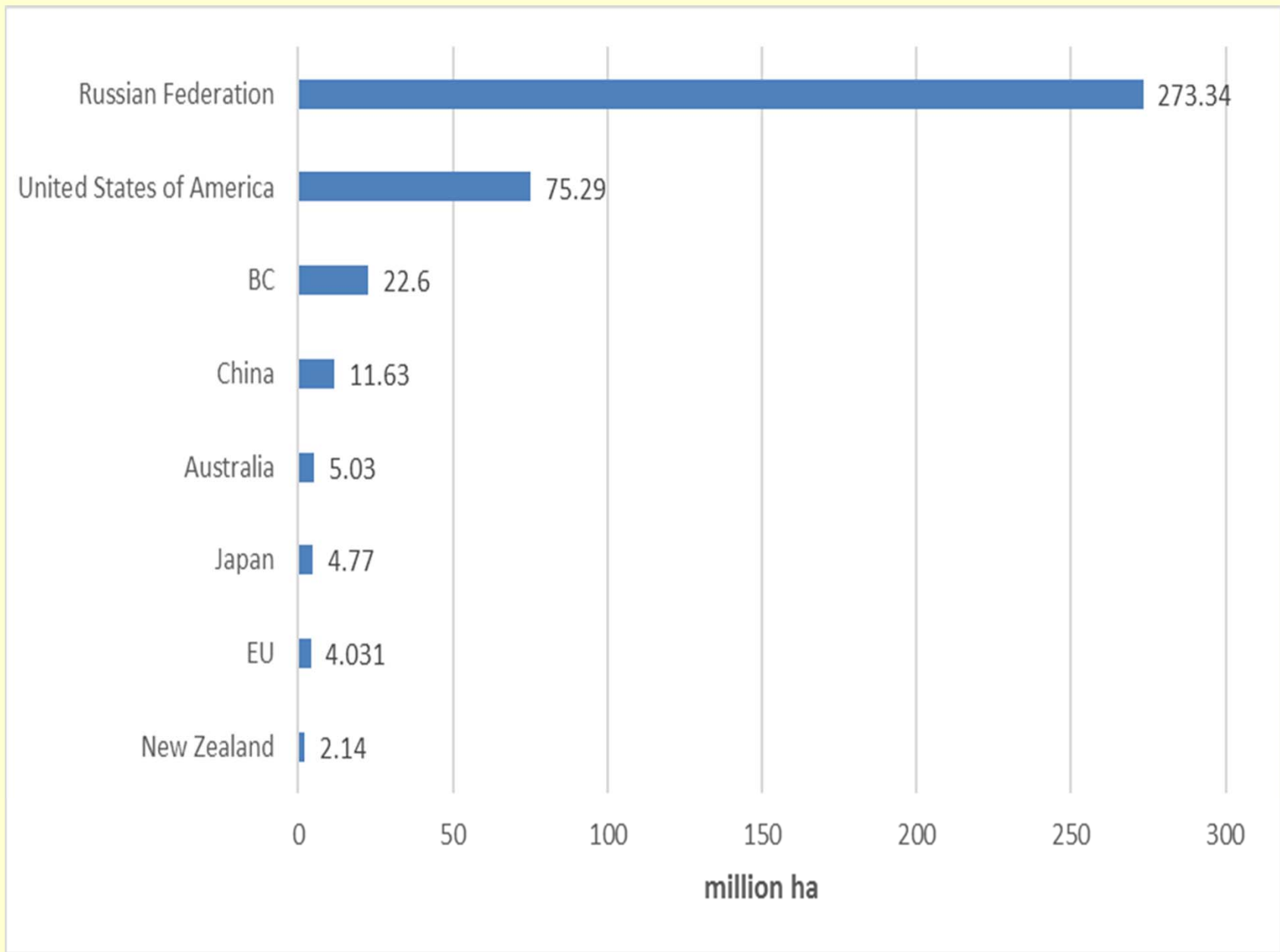
Country/ Jurisdiction	Growing stock in forest	
	Total (million m ³)	Per hectare (m ³)
Australia	-	-
B.C.	14,715	270
China	16,002	77
European Union	26,605	165
Japan	-	-
New Zealand	3,975	397
Russian Federation	81,488	99
U.S.A.	40,699	131

Table 1: Growing stock in forest 2015

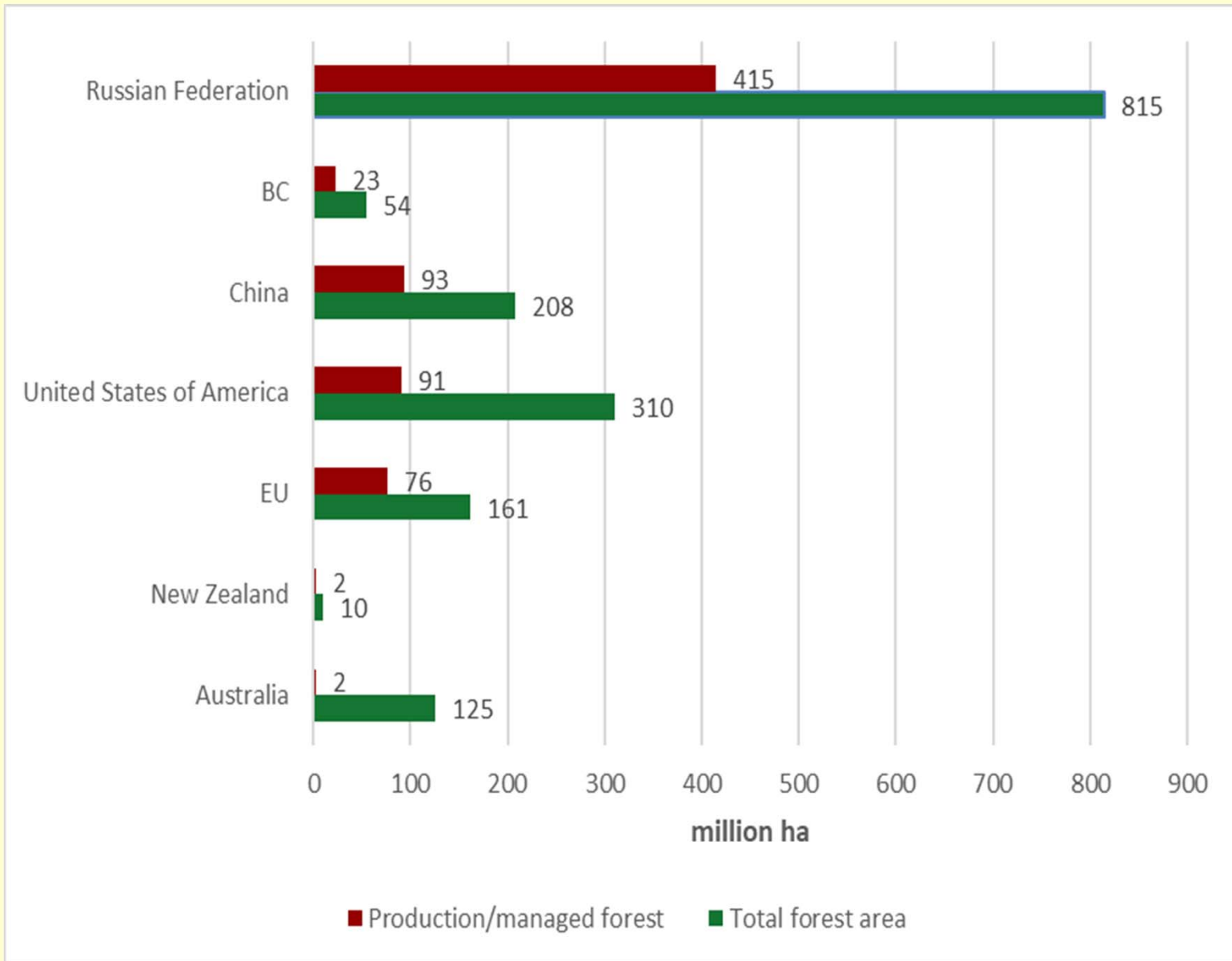
* No data available for Japan or Australia



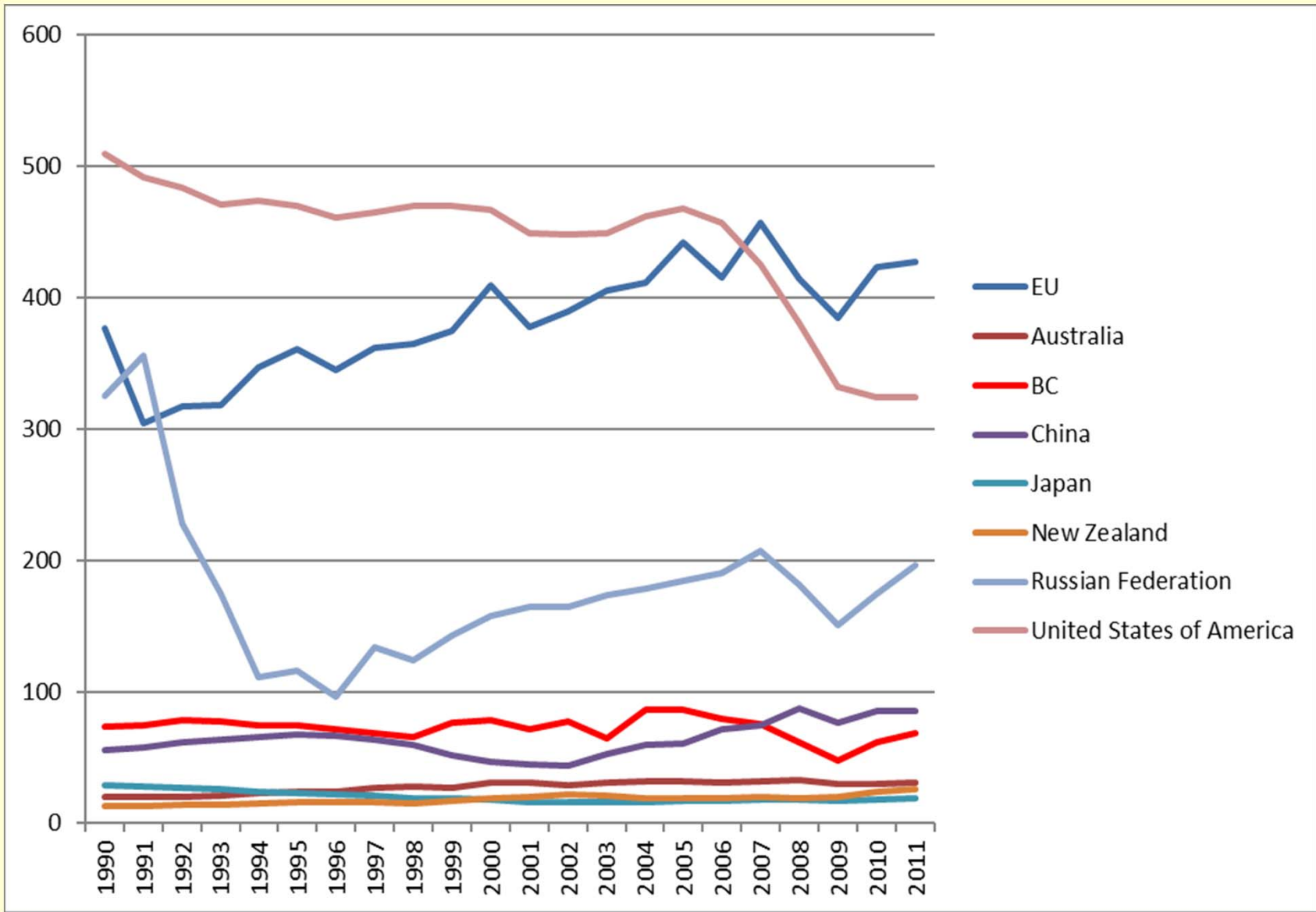
Deforestation (1000 ha/year)



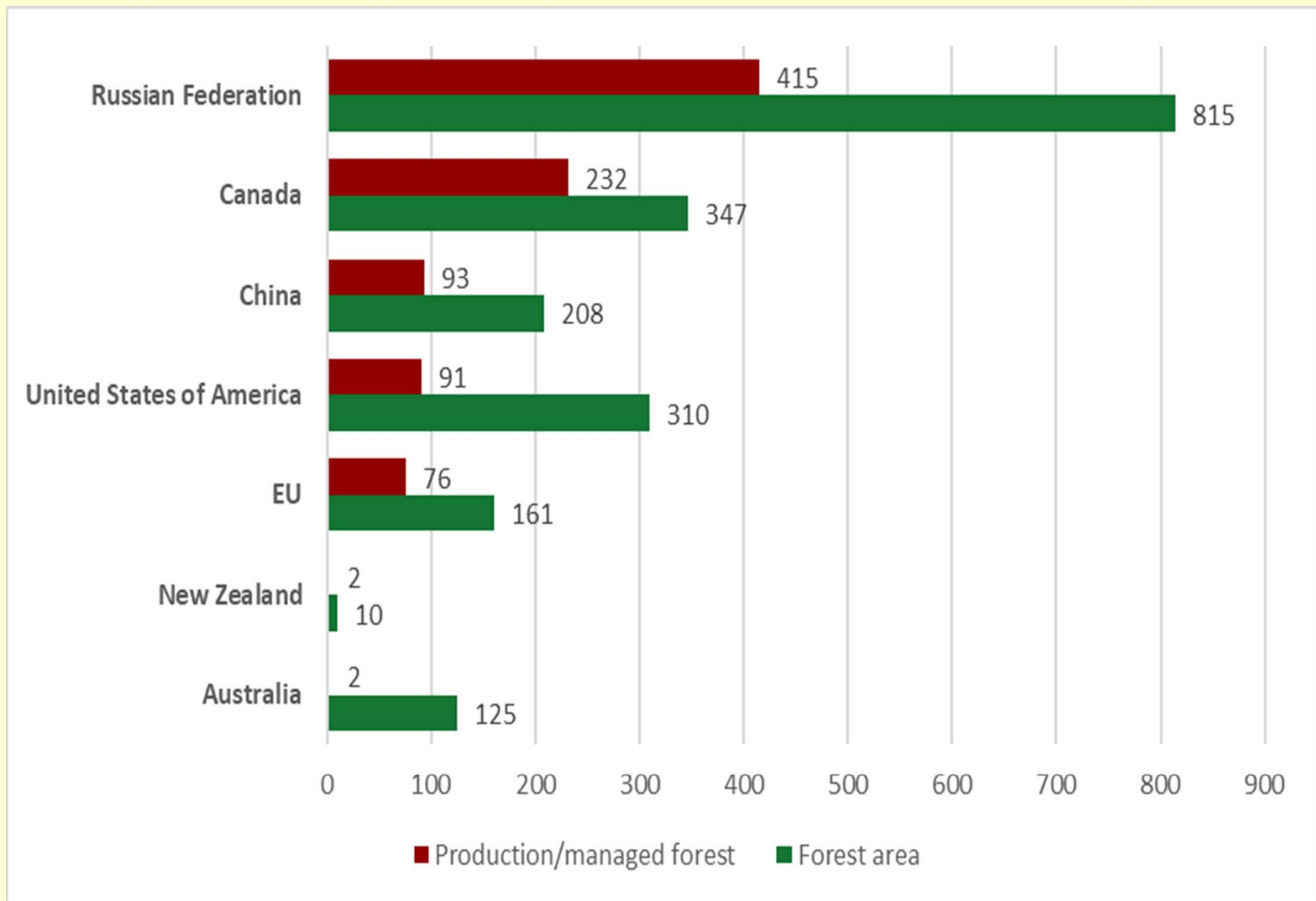
Primary forests (2015)



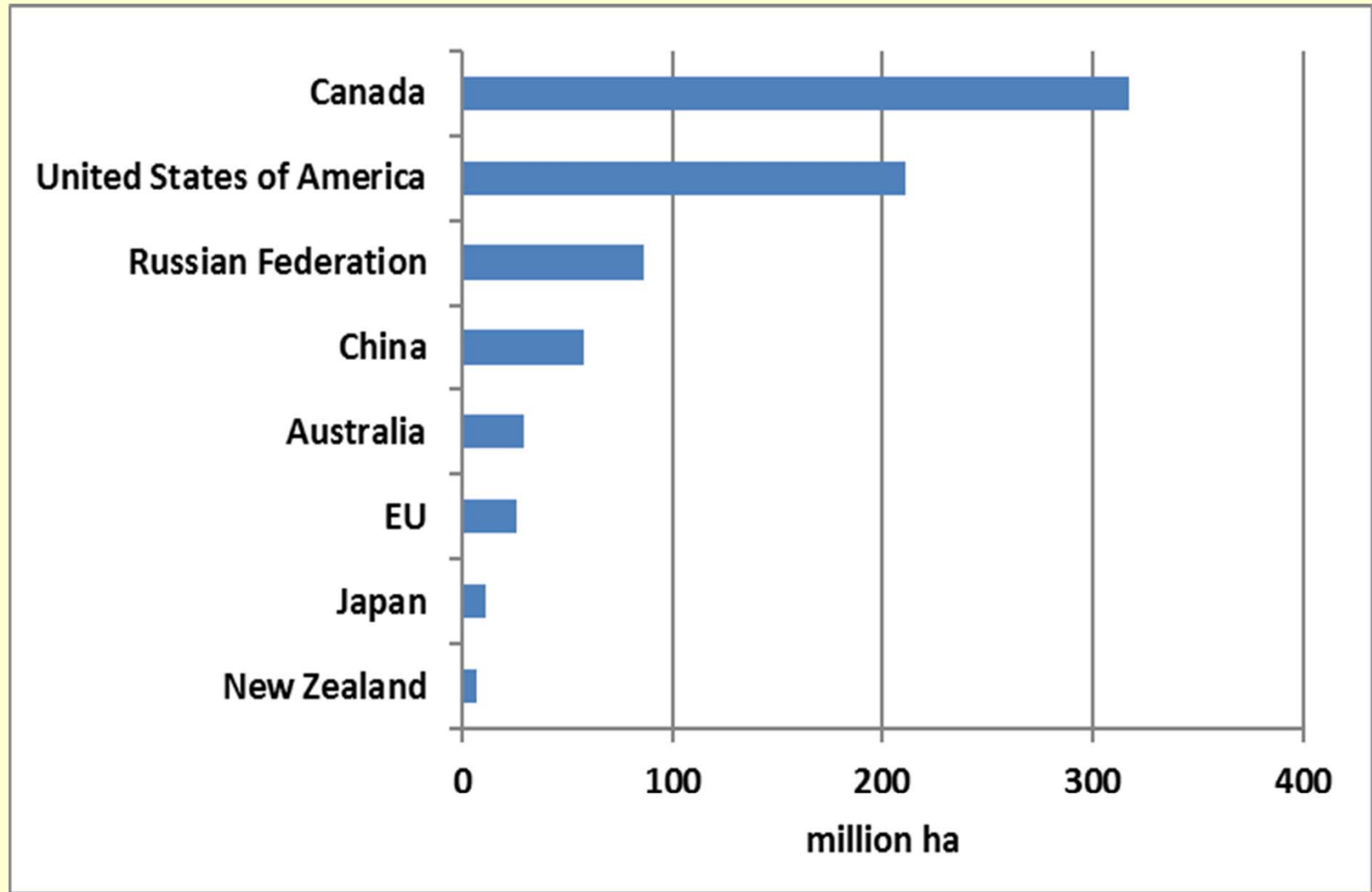
Forest area designated for production/management



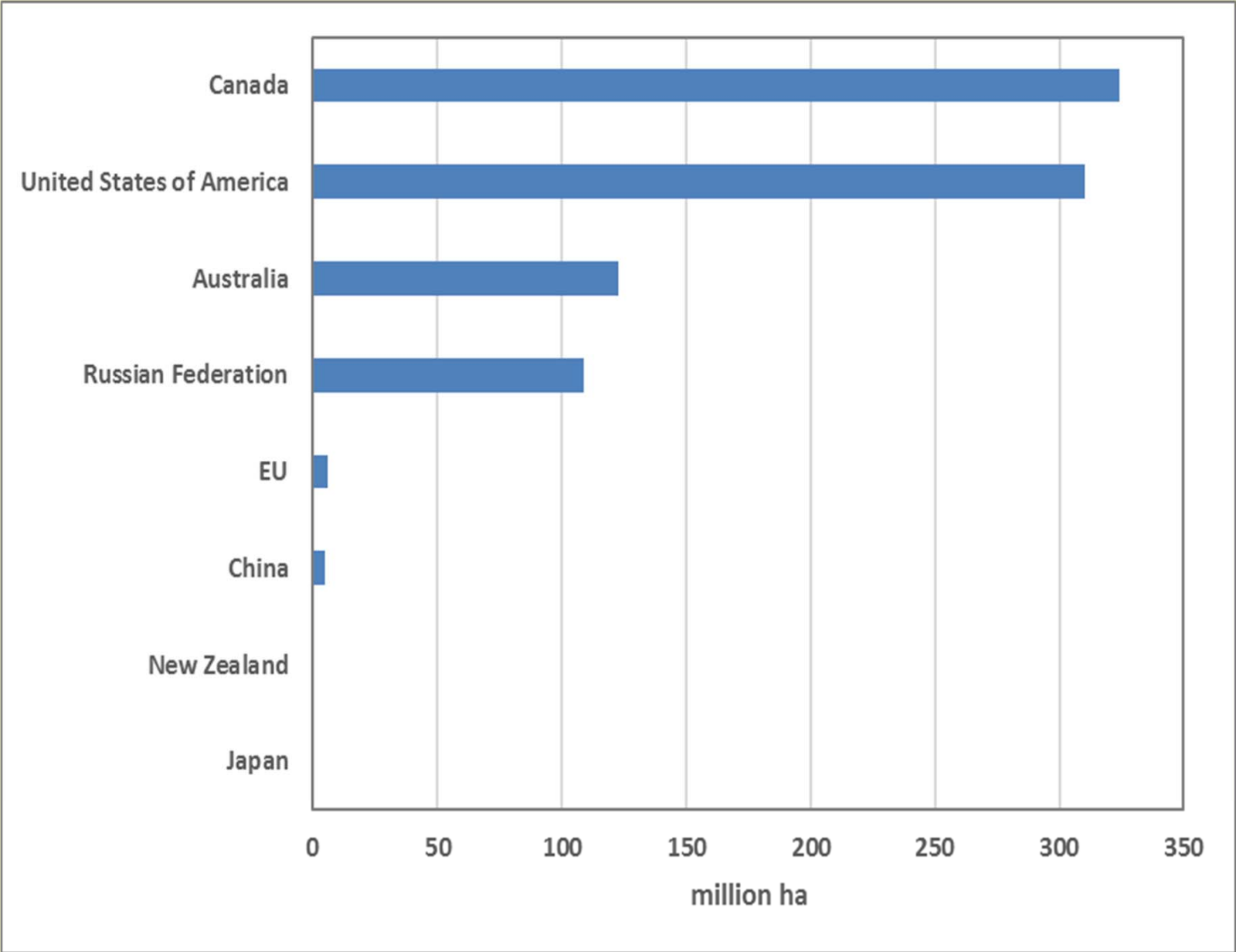
Total wood removals (million m³ under bark (u.b.))



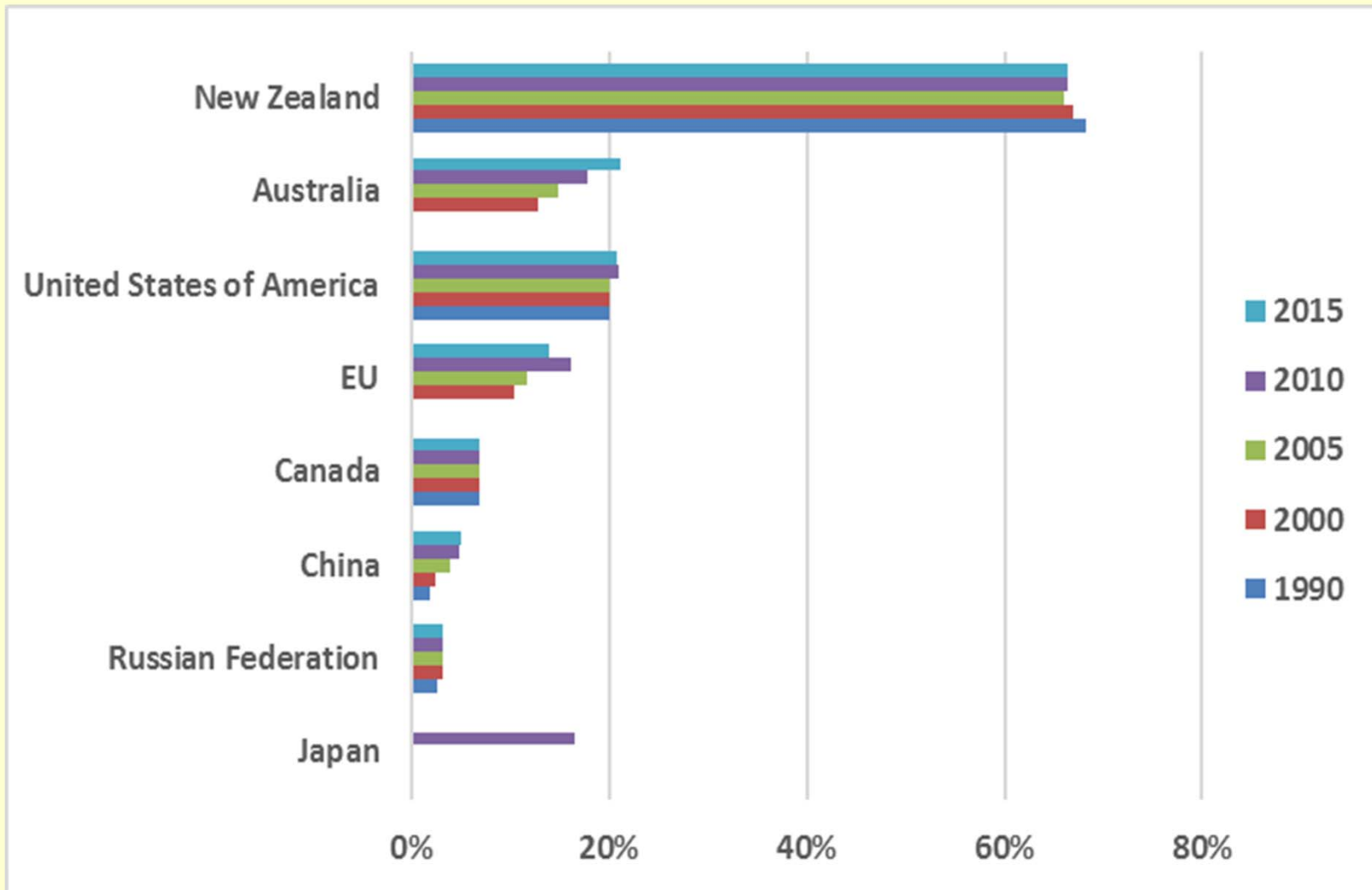
Forest area designated for production/management (2015)



Areas of forest reported as designated for soil and water protection



Forest area designated for ecosystem services (2015)



Percentage of forest area designated for biodiversity conservation

Key Findings

- B.C. has one of the highest proportions of land covered with forests (57%) among all jurisdictions.
- The total forest area in B.C. has remained stable at around 55 million ha.
- The current rate of deforestation (6,200 ha per year) is among the lowest in all jurisdictions.
- Data on the extent of primary forests in B.C. is unavailable. However, 22.6 million ha (41% of B.C.'s forests) have been classified as old growth forests (using a definition unique to B.C.).

Key Findings

- B.C. is the leading provincial forest producer by volume, and produced 67.97 million m³ of roundwood in 2015.
- With approximately 11 billion m³ of standing timber, roundwood production volume has held steady since 1990.

Conclusions

- Using the indicators adopted by Montreal process countries, BC generally does well
- Other indicators might yield a different story
- Some confusion exists over the reporting of the area of primary forest
- The BC Government reports on the state of BC's forests were good. However, they were only published in 2004, 2006 and 2010.
- Some information needs to be handled with care (e.g., the use a forest is designated for).