There are more trees on Earth than anyone thought

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Hau Chu

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New numbers estimate there are about 420 trees on Earth for every human.

There are more trees on Earth than stars in our galaxy.

A new study estimates there are just over three trillion trees on Earth. This means that there are around 420 trees for every human on the planet.

This is more than a previous estimate of 400 billion which this study questioned because recent counts using current methods estimated about 390 billion trees in the Amazon basin in South America alone.

Scientists from 15 countries led by Yale University researchers used satellite imaging and on-the-ground work to reach these numbers, in a study published in the journal Nature.

The study notes that this number is much less than what an estimate would be without human intervention.

"Based on our projected tree densities, we estimate that over 15 billion trees are cut down each year, and the global number of trees has fallen by approximately 46% since the start of human civilization," the authors said.

The study notes the clash between humanity and nature due to factors like deforestation for development.

While the desire to grow agriculture and pastures is taking priority over forests, leading to deforestation,

humanity's relationship with nature is more complicated than that, according to Colin Beier, an associate professor at State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

"Humans have [cut down forests] for a very long time, although the extent and rate of land cover change has certainly accelerated in the modern era," Beier said in an email interview. "At the same time, we have much more attention to deforestation and its negative impacts - for biodiversity as well as human well-being - than at any time in the past."

Trees, for the purpose of this study, were defined as ones that were wider than 10 cm.

This new study has minor effects on research being done at universities, but could have large effects on our understanding of forests, according to Beier.

"In my mind it is a methodological improvement that could be the basis for new conclusions to be drawn about the extent and importance of forests, from local to global scales," Beier said.