



Changes in land cover during the last 300 years due to agricultural expansion. During the last 300 years, there has been a large increase in the amount of land devoted to agriculture (croplands and pastures)—coming at the expense of natural ecosystems. As human population and material consumption continue to increase, the pressure on our finite land base will also continue to increase. (Data from the Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment, University of Wisconsin. Background photographs courtesy USDA ARS Photo Unit.)