

A misty forest scene with tall evergreen trees. A bright light source, possibly the sun or moon, is visible in the upper center, creating a strong glow and illuminating the mist. The trees are dark and silhouetted against the lighter background.

We Are Here  
But Not Forever





## Introduction

Trees are everywhere. They can be found abundantly in parks, cities, beaches, parking lots, deserts, tundras and a variety of other landscapes. In a recent “tree census” led by Yale university, it has been shown that there are over 3 trillion trees on earth, a truly astounding figure. To put this into perspective, a person could have spent one million dollars every day since the year 0 and still would not have spent one trillion dollars, not even close. Three trillion is an unbelievable number of trees. Even so, over the course of human civilization almost half of the amount of trees that once stood have been cut down, and 3 trillion is the remainder. Although the number of trees left on Earth is higher than it was originally thought to be, the count is continually decreasing, more so now than ever. Every year, 15 billion trees are felled globally while only 5 billion are grown to replace them, resulting in a net loss of 10 billion trees per year. At that rate, the earth will run out of trees entirely within 300 years. The implications of this are shocking on their own. If spending one million dollars per day for 2,000 years can’t amount to anything even in the neighborhood of one trillion dollars, how many more trees must be taken down consistently enough to erase 3 trillion of them from existence within 300 years?

The goal of this project is not necessarily to explain why humanity needs trees and why they are significant to the world’s many systems. The fact that they are necessary for life is already clear. It is unlikely that anyone needs to be convinced that trees are a beautiful and healthy staple for most life on earth - humanity already loves trees. But perhaps not everyone understands the impact of human consumption, because it is difficult to imagine the destruction of forests as anything other than an isolated issue that doesn’t truly effect the overall renewable supply of trees globally. This issue must be confronted as a world-wide problem, however, and using images to relate that problem to the trees that people see everywhere on a daily basis may help to do that.

This project is based on the premise that images can serve a purpose in their ability to capture attention and communicate a full and complete message in one instant. The intention behind this photo collection is not to directly attack the majority who benefit from the use of wood - the pictures inside are not dramatic depictions of tragically ruined forests or scattered log piles in a desolate landscape. Instead, its emphasis is directed toward the aesthetic qualities of living trees, relying on the use of images to engage the eye. Despite the immeasurable importance of trees, their constant presence makes them easy to forget, and they have become a part of life’s backdrop. The purpose of this small book is to bring trees out from the background and up to the forefront before it is too late – to amplify a sense of urgency that trees themselves cannot communicate – “we are here, but not forever”.



































































































































