Building the taxonomy

The starting point for the taxonomies was the World Bank’s sector taxonomy. 3ie staff reviewed notable evaluations, systematic reviews and 3ie evidence gap maps, along with a number of already existing classifications used by international organisations working in these sectors. We developed draft taxonomies for each sector, which we shared with sector experts, who provided feedback through roundtable discussions and written comments. We are sincerely grateful to all the 50+ researchers, policymakers, and practitioners who generously donated their time to this effort.

Taxonomy structure: groupings and definitions

For both intervention and outcome taxonomies, there are three levels of categorisation (in addition to the general sector classification):

- Broad group (e.g., “Agricultural policy & infrastructure”)
- Intervention/Outcome group (e.g., “Forestry policy”)
- Intervention/Outcome (e.g., “Forest conservation policy”)

The taxonomy explorer page provides multiple options for finding interventions and outcomes of interest. One is by typing in search terms, with options to search for these terms among the interventions, outcomes, or both. You can also decide whether to search in the text of the definitions of the interventions and outcomes, or just the names of the categories themselves:

For users who might not immediately know which search terms to use, we provide an expandable tree-like structure, which allows them to get a bird’s eye view of the sectors, and then drill down to highly-specific categories:
Definitions for the two lowest levels of categorisation (Intervention/Outcome groups and Interventions/Outcomes) help the user to understand the scope of each category.

Clicking on the lowest level intervention or outcome opens a page with its definition. It also contains a full path explaining under which sectors/groups it can be found. Some codes can only be found in one place in the taxonomy, others cut across sectors/groups and so appear in multiple places in the tree.

**Searching for studies by Intervention/Outcome**

Once you've identified the Interventions/Outcomes of interest in the taxonomy explorer, you can return to the main DEP site to find relevant studies. Studies with particular Interventions or Outcomes of interest can be retrieved on the DEP's search page in two ways:

1. First, you can use the left-hand filters for 'Interventions' and 'Outcomes'.
The left-hand filters have the limitation of only displaying the most common 100 interventions and outcomes within the current set of studies (i.e., those matching the basic search terms or the filters already applied).

2. Another, more powerful option is to use the Advanced search by choosing the ‘Interventions’ or ‘Outcomes’ option from the dropdown (this can be used in combination with the left-hand filters).
Whether using filters, advanced search or a combination of both, the examples above show that there are currently 59 studies that examine effectiveness of forest conservation policies, out of which 26 measure their effects on forest coverage.