Studying National Forest Policies in a comparative context through the lens of the social-ecological systems meta-analysis database.

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Abstract

International attention has recently focused on finding ways to increase carbon storage in tropical forests under the aegis of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation & Forest Degradation (i.e. REDD+). Implicit in many of these discussions has been an assumption that national level payments for ecosystem services will be the most effective policy. Although there have been extensive studies of the causes of deforestation and reforestation in the tropics, none of these studies have focused on the effect of national-level policies on forest cover change. In order to evaluate the impact of these policies, members of the Social Ecological Systems Meta-analysis Database team are developing a systematic study of national level forest policies. In this paper we present initial findings, including the development of a systematic sampling frame which will allow us to produce generalizable results, as well as reports from an initial sample of 4 country case studies selected from Central America. This presentation will be part of the session entitled "The Social-ecological systems meta-analysis database (SESMAD) project."

Keywords: REDD+, meta, analysis, social, ecological systems, Central America, forest policy, deforestation

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