



Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation

ATBC Resolution on Secondary Forests

WHEREAS, Dynamic working landscapes -formed by large-scale conversion of forest to agriculture, harvesting activities, and secondary forest patches undergoing natural regeneration following abandonment from diverse land uses– have replaced continuous landscapes dominated by primary forests throughout most of the world's tropical regions.

WHEREAS, Secondary forests are embedded in these working landscapes that may include severely modified habitats such as low-diversity agriculture, monoculture plantations, and highly degraded forests, all of which support rural livelihoods and some of the biodiversity conservation and environmental services we derive from primary forests.

WHEREAS, It is critical that we adopt a landscape, multi-use perspective in managing these forests for biodiversity conservation, environmental services, and rural livelihoods through appropriate spatial and land use planning.

WHEREAS, To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of current and future public policy efforts aimed at conserving tropical forests and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation specific definitions of the different categories of forested landscapes (e.g., primary, secondary in different stages, and degraded) should be made explicit by interested parties.

WHEREAS, We recognize that tropical countries face tensions when attempting to make compatible both conservation and development/poverty alleviation goals, which in turn affects decisions related to the fate of forested landscapes.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation, the world's largest scientific organization devoted to the study, protection, and wise use of tropical ecosystems:

1. RECOGNIZES the conservation value of lightly and moderately disturbed forests and secondary forests in different stages of succession; and

2. URGES relevant parties to consider the ecosystem, social, and economic services provided by such forests when formulating land zoning and land and resource use policies; and

3. STRONGLY RECOMMENDS that any bilateral or multilateral agreements on forest conservation, such as REDD+ initiatives designed to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, include explicit land zoning and resource use considerations for existing primary forests as well as for secondary forests in different degrees of succession.