

SDG 1: No Poverty

Impacts of Social Protection, Tenure Security and Building Resilience on Forests

KATHLEEN LAWLOR, ERIN SILLS, STIBNIATI ATMADJA, LIWEI LIN AND KARNJANA SONGWATHANA

How does reducing poverty affect forests?

(1) Estimated correlations between national poverty rate and forest cover

- In Latin America, percent poverty positively correlated with percent forest cover
- No consistent relationship across continents and decades

(2) Examined Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers produced by governments of high forest cover and low income countries (2001 – 2012)

- Transportation infrastructure and agricultural development (known drivers of deforestation) are consistently identified as important means of poverty reduction
- Forests typically considered to have a supporting role (except in Congo Basin)

(3) Searched literature for evidence on how the strategies specified in SDG targets affect forests

	Targets
1.1	Eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day
1.2	Reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable
1.4	Ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance
1.5	Build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters
1.A	Ensure significant <u>mobilisation</u> of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation
1.B	Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies

How are forests affected by . . . ?

1. Cash transfer programs
2. Increased land tenure security
3. Prioritization of building resilience/ reducing vulnerability of the poor

Target 1.3 Social protection systems

Cash transfers

Protect human capital (increase *consumption* of food, health services, education)

But also affect *production* decisions, especially of cash constrained family farmers

Deplete forests

Enable expansion of agriculture into forests ✓

Increase demand for production that replaces forests ✓

Conserve forests

Enable intensification of agriculture ✓

Enable reforestation

Enable out-migration to cities

Enable non-farm activities ✓

Reduce reliance on forests as safety net ✓

Social protection systems



Cash transfers

May in turn affect other households in the same communities

Increased deforestation in Mexico (Alix-Garcia et al. 2013)

- 15 – 33%
- Biggest impacts in isolated communities

Decreased deforestation in Indonesia (Ferraro and Simorangkir 2018)

- 20%
- Biggest impacts on communal forests

Market access and forestland tenure are key contextual factors

Transfers can be made conditional on conservation (PES)

Target 1.4 Ownership and control over land



Land tenure security

Supports SDG1 by encouraging investment and facilitating access to credit

- Including plantations for commodities such as oil palm

Removes the need to demonstrate ownership by changing land cover (clearing or planting trees)

Removes the incentive to harvest resources quickly before lose the opportunity

Helps owners exclude and prevent exploitation by external agents

Previous reviews and recent literature

- No evidence that increasing security results in worse outcomes for forest
- Mixed evidence on whether increasing security results in better outcomes for forests
- Increased security may be bundled with requirements for sustainable management (Ecuador, Peru)

Target 1.5 Resilience

Ecosystem-based adaptation

For example

- Reforestation of slopes to prevent landslides (in NAPA of Haiti)
- Restoration of mangroves to protect coast against storms (in NAPA of Bangladesh)
- Afforestation to forestall desertification (in NAPAs of Burkina Faso and Mali)

May be particularly effective for poor, who are more likely to

- live in remote and environmentally fragile areas
- rely on natural resources and ecosystem services to support their livelihoods

May be more likely after a disaster (e.g. SLCP was motivated by catastrophic floods)

Summary

Potential for synergies between SDG1 and forests

(1) Social protection through cash transfers for the poor can protect forest if they are conditioned on that (as in PES) and are implemented in context of communal land tenure and good market access

(2) Increased land tenure security for the poor can protect forest if conditioned on sustainable forest management

(3) Policy focus on reducing vulnerability of the poor can lead to ecosystem-based adaptation measures such as reforestation and forest restoration, especially following natural disasters

Caveat

These synergies are not the focus of most poverty-reduction plans, which instead propose rural development measures likely to endanger forests

Email: sills@ncsu.edu

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS WELCOME

