
Rough guide to impact evaluation: from correlation to causation

Subhrendu K. Pattanayak

with ***Daniela Miteva***

Duke University

EfD-World Bank Workshop, April 2011

Preview two main claims

- I. Allocate more of our research efforts to good impact evaluations
- II. Collaborate with climate & health scientists to consider fuel wood as part of the bigger picture

Readings & Key Resources

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PLOS BIOLOGY

Essay

Money for Nothing? A Call for Empirical Evaluation of Biodiversity Conservation Investments

Paul J. Ferraro*, Subhrendu K. Pattanayak*

For far too long, conservation scientists and practitioners have depended on intuition and anecdote to guide the design of conservation investments. If we want to ensure that our limited resources make a difference, we must accept that testing hypotheses about what policies protect biological diversity requires the same scientific rigor and state-of-the-art methods that we invest in testing ecological hypotheses. Our understanding of the ecological aspects of ecosystem conservation rests, in part, on well-designed empirical studies. In contrast, our understanding of the way in which policies can prevent species loss and ecosystem degradation rests primarily on case-study narratives from field initiatives that are not designed

We are not advocating that every conservation intervention be evaluated with the methods we describe below. We are merely advocating that *some* of the hundreds of biodiversity conservation initiatives initiated each year are evaluated with these methods. While there are challenges to field implementation of the methods, their use is no more expensive or complicated than biological assessments. Their promise lies in complementing case study narratives and testing intuition.

Why Do We Need Evaluations?

Budgets for biodiversity conservation are thinly stretched [2], and thus judging the effectiveness of conservation interventions in

Box 1. Example from the Development and Education Policy Literature

Does reducing the cost of schooling increase student attendance? [30]

Initiated in the 1990s, the Mexican PROGRESA program provides cash grants to families if their children attend school regularly and receive preventative health care. The program was phased in randomly across villages. Analysts observed an average increase in enrollment of 3.4% for all students in grades 1 through 8, and 14.8% among girls who had completed grade 6. Using these same data, more sophisticated analyses were also done ("What would happen if the payments increased?"). In part, these clear and credible estimates

of PROGRESA's effect led the Mexican

Evaluating Anti-Poverty Programs

Martin Ravallion¹

Development Research Group, World Bank

Abstract: The paper critically reviews the methods available for the *ex-post* counterfactual analysis of programs that are assigned exclusively to individuals, households or locations. The discussion covers both experimental and non-experimental methods (including propensity-score matching, discontinuity designs, double and triple differences and instrumental variables). Two main lessons emerge: Firstly, despite the claims of advocates, no single method dominates; rigorous, policy-relevant evaluations should be open-minded about methodology. Secondly, future efforts to draw more useful lessons from evaluations will call for more policy-relevant measures and deeper explanations of measured impacts than are possible from the classic ("black box") assessment of mean impact.

Contents

Chapter 22



Learning while doing Evaluating impacts of REDD+ projects

Pamela Jagger, Stibniati Atmadja, Subhrendu K. Pattanayak, Erin Sills and William D. Sunderlin

- REDD+ projects require an impact assessment approach to estimate emissions and removals; for REDD+ to succeed we need information on this and the associated 3E+ outcomes.
- There are few examples of rigorous impact assessment in the conservation, avoided deforestation and payments for environmental services (PES) literature. REDD+ impact assessment could contribute tremendously to our understanding of successful environment and development policy initiatives.
- We will learn more rapidly and effectively by sharing evaluation designs and findings across REDD+ projects.

How will learning from projects improve REDD+?

We have a narrow, but critical, window of opportunity to evaluate and learn from the experience of first generation REDD+ projects. By gathering evidence on processes and outcomes, we will learn what causes REDD+ projects to succeed or fail. REDD+ is a unique opportunity to share the lessons we learn, because of the global distribution and relatively coordinated timing of

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Impact Evaluation



An **impact evaluation** assesses the changes in the well-being of individuals that can be attributed to a particular project, program or policy. This website aims at disseminating information and providing resources for people and organizations working to assess and improve the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing poverty.

- [What is an impact evaluation?](#)
- [Why is it important?](#)
- [When should it be done?](#)
- [How to do it?](#)
- [What is the role of impact evaluation in monitoring & evaluation?](#)
- [What is the Development Impact Evaluation \(DIME\) initiative?](#)

Conference: Making Smart Policy: Using Impact Evaluation for Policy Making
January 15-16, 2008 — This one-and-a-half-day conference will bring together policy makers and staff from development agencies to explore how to design and use impact evaluation for increased policy impact and how to generate greater demand for impact evaluations.

IMPACT EVALUATION DATABASE	TRAINING EVENTS AND MATERIALS
A database of ongoing and completed evaluations. <input type="checkbox"/> Search for an impact evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Impact Evaluation Clinics — Informal sessions that support Task Team Leaders in the of impact evaluations for their projects.

KEY PRODUCTS

- ☐ [Doing Impact Evaluation Series](#)
- ☐ [Impact Evaluation Paper series](#)
- ☐ [Database of impact evaluation experts](#)
- ☐ [Spanish-World Bank Fund for Impact Evaluation \(SIEF\)](#)
- ☐ PREM Week 2007 materials: [The Ins and Outs of Impact Evaluation and PSIA](#)
- ☐ HD Week 2006 materials: [Measuring Results](#) [Evaluating Impact](#)



A guide to learning about livelihood impacts of REDD+ projects

Pamela Jagger
Erin O. Sills
Kathleen Lawlor
William D. Sunderlin





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Cooking stoves, indoor air pollution, and respiratory health in Rural Orrisa.	Esther Duflo, Michael Greenstone and Rema Hanna	View
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1

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“Good” impact evaluation

... will allow you to confidently describe ...

- Is intended intervention “working” – i.e., effective in delivering intended outcomes (forest incomes, reduced deforestation, fuelwood extraction)?
- *Conditional on design, sample and analysis*
 - what types of incentives and activities are most effective?
 - who benefits (loses) and or delivers most?
 - where (sites) and when (point in project cycle) will we see best results?

Nuts & bolts:
framework, data, sample, design, analysis

Types of Evaluations

- Monitoring (M&E) – tracking a select set of project / program indicators across time and space
- Process Evaluations – assessing program operation and adherence of implementation to design
- Economic Evaluations – analyzing costs, benefits, impacts, and efficiency (CBA, CEA, CMA)
- Sober Evaluations – overarching review of sector strategy and implementation
- Impact Evaluations – estimating causal impacts of specific programs, projects and policies by establishing a counterfactual

What is ...?

- Traditional M&E**
 - M&E measure trends in indicators and implementation
 - Are the benefits getting to the intended beneficiaries?
 - Is the program being implemented as planned?
 - Not focused on causality
- Impact Evaluation (IE)**
 - Measure impacts on beneficiaries that are caused by the intervention (programs and policies)
 - What are the effects of the intervention?
 - How would the effects change if the program changed?
 - Focused on causality

Causation

To establish that X causes Y:

- X precedes Y
- X is related to Y
- Rule out other variables that could explain relationship between X and Y
- Must understand the process (theory) that generates the data; otherwise can only establish correlation between X and Y

Describe the Intervention: Logic Model

- Examples of R2D2 interventions – these are the interventions:
 - Programs (interventions) (e.g., R2D)
 - Other causes – income generation or environmental education (e.g., ICTP)
 - Outcomes – better informed and/or doing (e.g., around 140)
- Designing community management and local institutions (e.g., 2004)
- Outputs of R2D2 initiatives:
 - Hardware: buildings, equipment & technology
 - Software (activities): training, education

Describe the Intervention: Logic Model

Inputs → Process → Outputs → Outcomes → Impacts

Logic Model: Payments for Environmental Services

Resources (Land, Labor, Capital, etc.) → Process (Payments for Environmental Services) → Outputs (Improved Land Use, etc.) → Outcomes (Reduced Deforestation, etc.) → Impacts (Improved Ecosystems, etc.)

Describe the Intervention: Logic Model

Inputs → Process → Outputs → Outcomes → Impacts

BACI for Evaluation

Question: Is R2D2 effective in delivering forest carbon without worsening poverty?

General robust design: e.g., randomized or quasi-experimental

	Before Baseline	R2D2	After Follow-up
Treatment group	T ₀	X	T ₁
Control group	C ₀		C ₁

Problems with 'typical evaluations'

- No baseline, no control – how measure change? what to compare with (i.e., counterfactual)?
- Baseline, no control – what to compare with (i.e., counterfactual)? Did capture trends and history? sufficiently account for selection bias?
- No baseline, control – how to avoid confounding differences (between, rate, trend)? sufficiently account for selection bias?
- All the above, but no replicates – are you sure nothing else matters? No other factors affect program selection and/or modify or mediate treatment?
- Baseline, controls, and replicates

Confounders: challenge for causality

- Counterfactual: what would have happened if there had been no policy?
- In addition to confounders (among, policy evaluation must deal with human behavior, individual traits and a source of confounding)
 - human-behavior (program) and macro impacts
 - program-induced confounders
 - unbalanced selection treatment and control groups
 - Program-induced confounders: analysis to isolate analysis
 - Individual factors – e.g., other policies, donors, NGOs, local institutions
 - So, psychosocial characteristics – e.g., age, education, alternative use
 - Psychosocial characteristics – e.g., volunteering or targeting
 - Selection bias – e.g., losing rate of deforestation

Quantitative Impact Evaluation Tools

- Econometric estimation
 - Policy experiments (randomized, quasi-experimental)
 - Observational studies
 - difference-in-difference (DID using panel data)
 - structural regression (reaction modeling)
 - Quasi-experiments – longitudinal or cross-sectional
 - natural experiments (instrumental variables, RDD)
 - matching (propensity score, coarsened exact matching)
 - Structural simulation of stylized economies
 - Formal equilibrium analysis: elasticity parameters
 - Multiplier (linear) analysis: I/O and S&I
 - Applied CGE

Good Econometric Study Designs

- controls (comparisons) – counterfactual situation
- baseline – "pretreat" conditions, rates and events
- covariates – correlated with outcome or intervention
- indicators – unambiguous, variable, and sensitive
- sample – detect size and significant differences

Sample size: Power (1-β) analysis

- How much precision (little error) do you want?
 - Type I (α) error – reject true null hypothesis
 - Type II (β) error – fail to reject false null hypothesis
- Depends on
 - Level of outcome in baseline (α)
 - Expected impact of policy (α)
 - Relevant and measurable covariates (α ...)
- Adjust for
 - Adoption & non-compliance (α)
 - Intervener correlation – evaluation (α)

Indicators

- Measure progress toward program goals
- Indicators should be SMART
 - Specific: focus on what is intended to be measured
 - Measurable: clear and unambiguous
 - Attributable to the project
 - Realistic: reasonable cost and frequency of data collection
 - Targeted: about target population or site
 - And not easily diverted or manipulated

Data

- Retrospective vs. prospective study?
- What sources have relevant data?
 - Secondary data
 - Administrative data: censuses, operational records, academic research, NGOs
 - Primary data
 - Project-specific
 - Emergent with otherwise
- Time periods: does data bracket (adequacy) intervention?
- Is quality adequate? Are definitions consistent? If not, can they be adapted to ensure comparability?

Analysis

- Difference-in-Mean: between treatment and control/comparison. Does not account for pre-existing differences
- Multivariate Regression: only if all differences cause controls for
- Difference-in-difference (DID): compare initial values between control and treatment groups first (difference), before and after the intervention (second difference)
- Used with all types of designs
- Implemented via regression

Experimental example

- Design: treatment (policy) assigned randomly (not purposive, strategic or selective) so that confounders (alternative causes) are balanced across treatment and control group
- Example: Pooled wood conservation in the US (Caldwell et al., 2004)
- Assessment: Home change behavior
 - Gives strong negative incentive message to a random sub-sample of 7000 visitors ("should not steal wood")
 - Reinforces descriptive message ("many people steal wood")
- Results: Visitors receiving incentive message 4 times (4.5% less likely to steal pooled wood)

Experiments: Pros & Cons

- Advantages:
 - Confounders (alternative causes) are balanced across treatment and control group
 - At higher, subjects have equal chance of participating
- Disadvantages:
 - Difficult to manage
 - Randomization and substitution bias
 - Ethical concerns, political issues
 - Limited external validity – visitors aren't criminals
 - Change the "treatment" level? (Baker, 2003)
 - http://www.baker.com/press/6-2-03-land.html

Natural Experiment example:

- Design – unselected or natural event (e.g., flood, result in land-use/land-cover change) – no treatment, no selection, no randomization with outcome, but precise treatment
- Example: Trenches and management in Para, Brazil (Wood & Vetter, 2004)
- Advantages:
 - Randomized: Trenches influenced management
 - Control: management by 100 farmers differentially exposed to trenching
 - Randomized: Trenches influenced management
 - Control: management by 100 farmers differentially exposed to trenching
- Disadvantages:
 - "Natural" experiments are rare or inconvenient
 - Where does one find instruments?
 - Need theory (e.g., political economy), common sense, and deep knowledge of policy

Natural Experiment: Pros & Cons

- Advantages:
 - Avoid problems with experiments – difficult to control, ethical concerns, political issues
 - Can do evaluation retrospectively (ex post)
- Disadvantages:
 - "Natural" experiments are rare or inconvenient
 - Where does one find instruments?
 - Need theory (e.g., political economy), common sense, and deep knowledge of policy

Matching Example

- Design: match treatment (policy) group to control group based on all of phylogenetic, economic and socio-economic factors to eliminate all known differences
- Example: Community management of Kiriwina forests (Sommerstein et al., 2005)
- Assessment: Community management improves forest quality
- Results: Forest cover in community managed forests no more than unselected control forests (same level of forest change)

Matching: Pros & Cons

- Advantages:
 - Avoid problems with experiments – difficult to control, ethical concerns, political issues
 - Can do evaluation retrospectively (ex post)
- Disadvantages:
 - Need large amounts of data (both confounders & interventions)
 - More sure that we can find confounders (alternative causes) in matching

Study	Location	Design	Intervention	Sample	Method	Outcome
Edmonds (2002)	Nepal	Cross-sectional	Decentralization	1200 households	Matching, IV	Fuelwood extraction
Heltberg (2001)	India	Cross-sectional	Local institutions	180 households, 32 forests	IV	Forest degradation, household dependence on nat. resources
Burgess et al (2011)	Indonesia	Multi-period	Decentralization (# political jurisdictions)	Large # pixels	Poisson quasi-likelihood count model	Deforestation
Somanathan et al (2009)	India	Cross-sectional	State vs. council managed forests	271 villages, 582 observations for broad-leaved crown cover, 504 observations for pine forest	IV, Matching	Forest conservation, cost of conservation
Baland et al (2010)	India	Cross-sectional	Decentralization	83 villages, 399 forest observations	OLS, conditional logit w/ FE	Forest degradation

Study	Location	Design	Intervention	Sample	Method	Outcome
Jagger (2008)	Uganda	2 period, pooled cross-sectional	Decentralization	751 households	DID, tobit	Livelihoods
Jumbe & Angelsen (2007)	Malawi	Cross-sectional	Decentralization	404 households	Matching	Livelihoods
Coleman et al (2010)	Uganda, Kenya, Mexico, Bolivia	2 periods (before and after), not panel	Decentralization	303 user groups for the 4 countries	Probit, Matching	Forest condition, Investment decisions, rule-making, wealth inequality (all binary)
Anderson & Gibson (2006)	Bolivia	Cross-sectional	National vs. local institutions	30 observations, 2 period GIS data	IV	Deforestation measures
Andam et al (2008)	Costa Rica	Multi-period data (forest cover data for 3 years)	Protected areas	>2000 pixels	Matching	Deforestation

FOREST INCOME AFTER UGANDA'S FOREST SECTOR REFORM: ARE THE RURAL POOR GAINING?

■ Context

- ❑ Uganda leading decentralization reforms in sub-Saharan Africa
- ❑ Forest sector reform focused on poverty reduction
- ❑ Decentralization theory is mixed regarding whether poverty reduction is an expected outcome
- ❑ Very limited empirical evidence on quantitative outcomes of decentralization reforms

■ Research question: Does forest sector decentralization increase forest income for the rural poor?



Data and approach

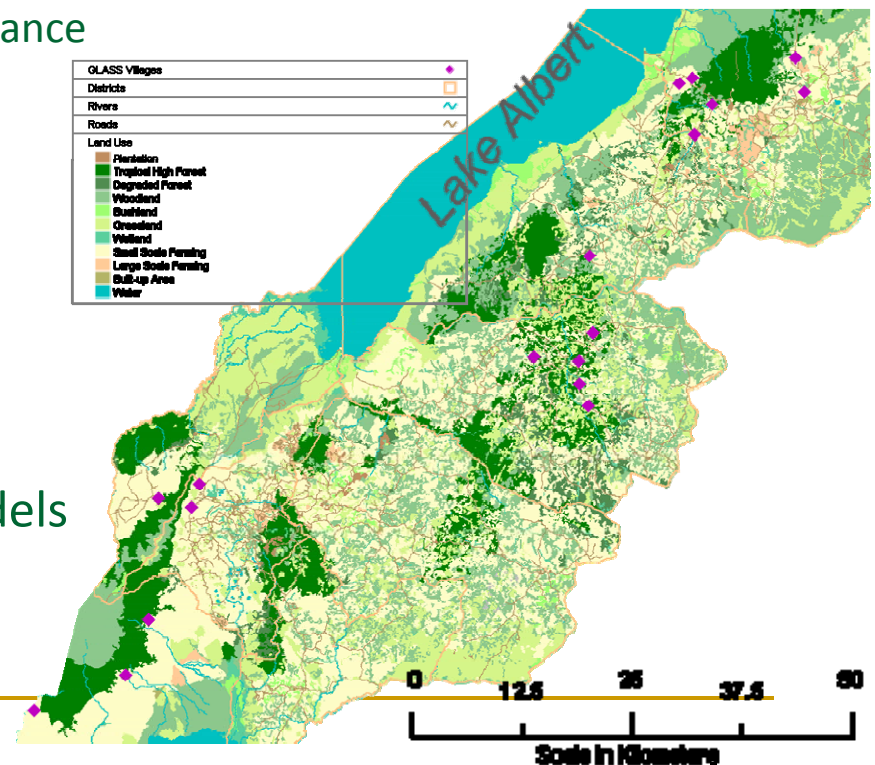
■ Quasi-experimental design

- ❑ Post-reform household income portfolio data (2007, N=521) compared with pre-reform data (2003, N=256)
- ❑ Two treatment groups
 - Democratic decentralization (private forest)
 - For-profit parastatal (gazetted forest)
- ❑ Control group
 - National Park under centralized governance

■ Treatment groups modeled in comparison to control group using the **difference-in-difference estimator**

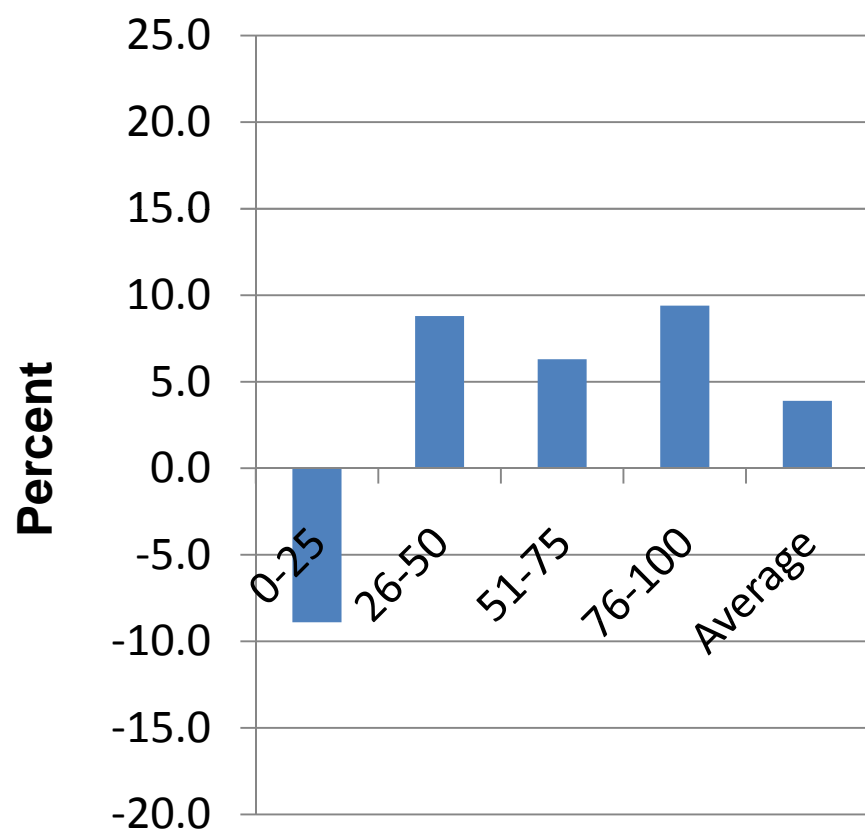
- ❑ Double-difference means (DID)
- ❑ Conditional difference-in-difference estimates using Tobit regression models

Study area in western Uganda

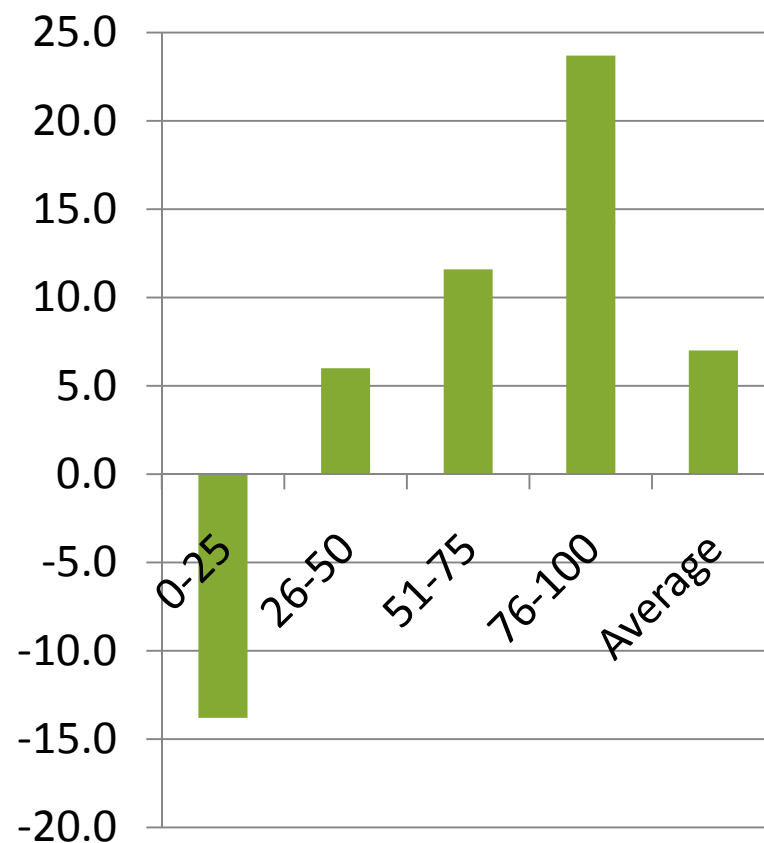


Average change in share of hhd income from forests (DID)

**Democratic Decentralization
Bugoma Forest Site**



**For Profit Parastatal
Budongo Forest Site**



Income Quartiles

Conditional difference-in-difference estimates

Democratic Decentralization to District Forestry Service

- **Increase of \$5** annual household income from forests
- **Increase of 3.1%** in share of annual household income from forests
- **Highest income quartile households:**
 - Increases in forest income **(+\$30)**
 - Increase in share of total income from forests **(+11.6%)**
- **Lowest income quartile households:**
 - Decline in income from forests **(-\$10)**
 - Significant declines in share of income from forests **(-10.7%)**

Devolution to National Forestry Authority (for-profit parastatal)

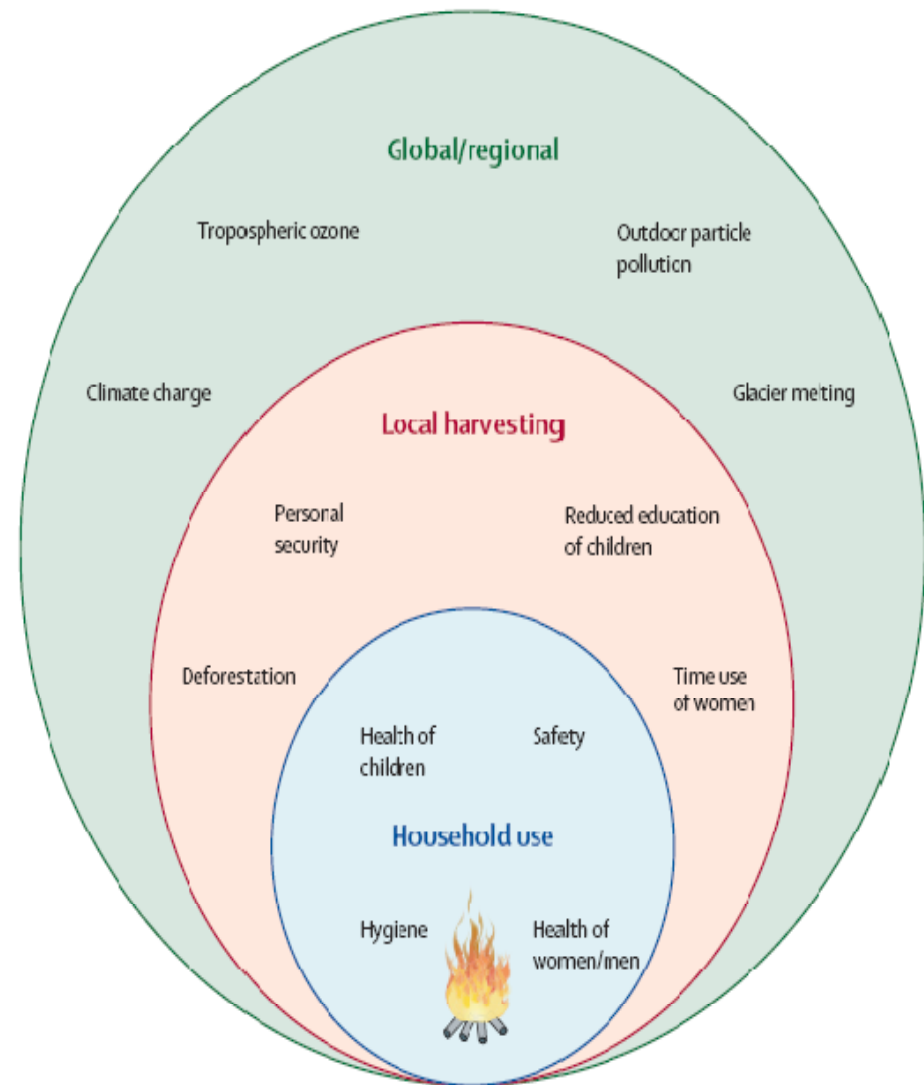
- **Increase of \$53** annual household income from forests
- **Increase of 6.4%** in share of annual household income from forests
- **Highest income quartile households:**
 - Significant increases in forest income **(+\$162)**
 - Significant increases in share of total income from forests **(+25%)**
- **Lowest income quartile households:**
 - Significant declines in income from forests **(-\$15)**
 - Significant declines in share of income from forests **(-15%)**

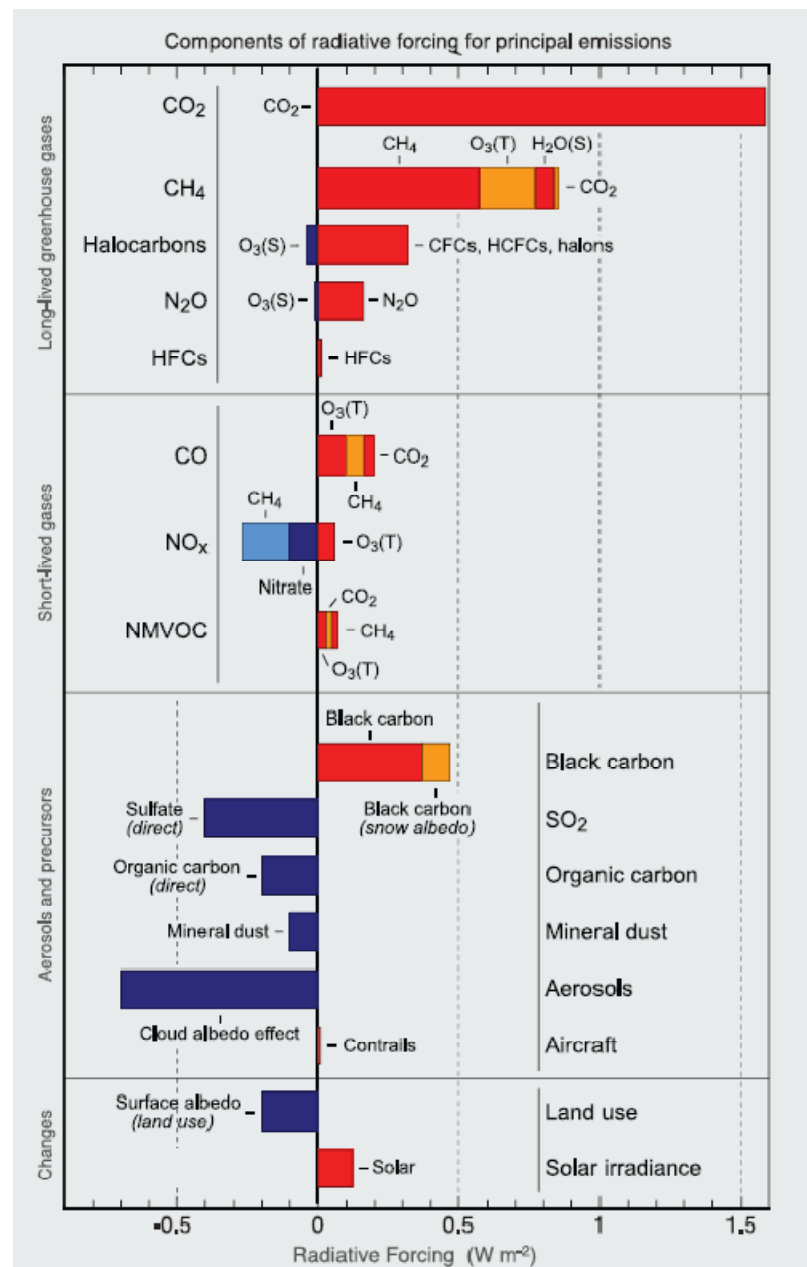
II. Collaborate with climate & health scientists to consider fuel wood as part of the bigger picture

(drawn from *Household Health & Energy* Initiative at Duke University)

Triple Dividends of Fuelwood

- I. Black Carbon
- II. Household Health
- III. Local Forests





Role of Black Carbon in Global and Regional Climate Changes

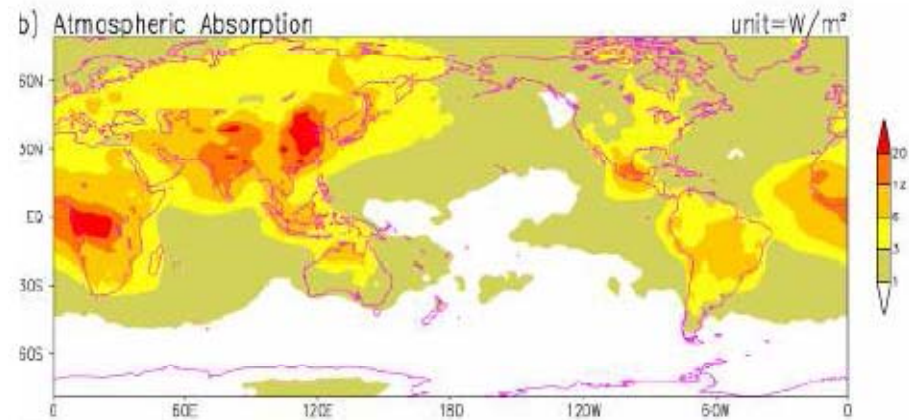
V. Ramanathan
Scripps Institution of Oceanography
University of California at San Diego

Testimonial to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Chair: The Honorable Henry A Waxman

Hearing on the role of black carbon as a factor in climate change

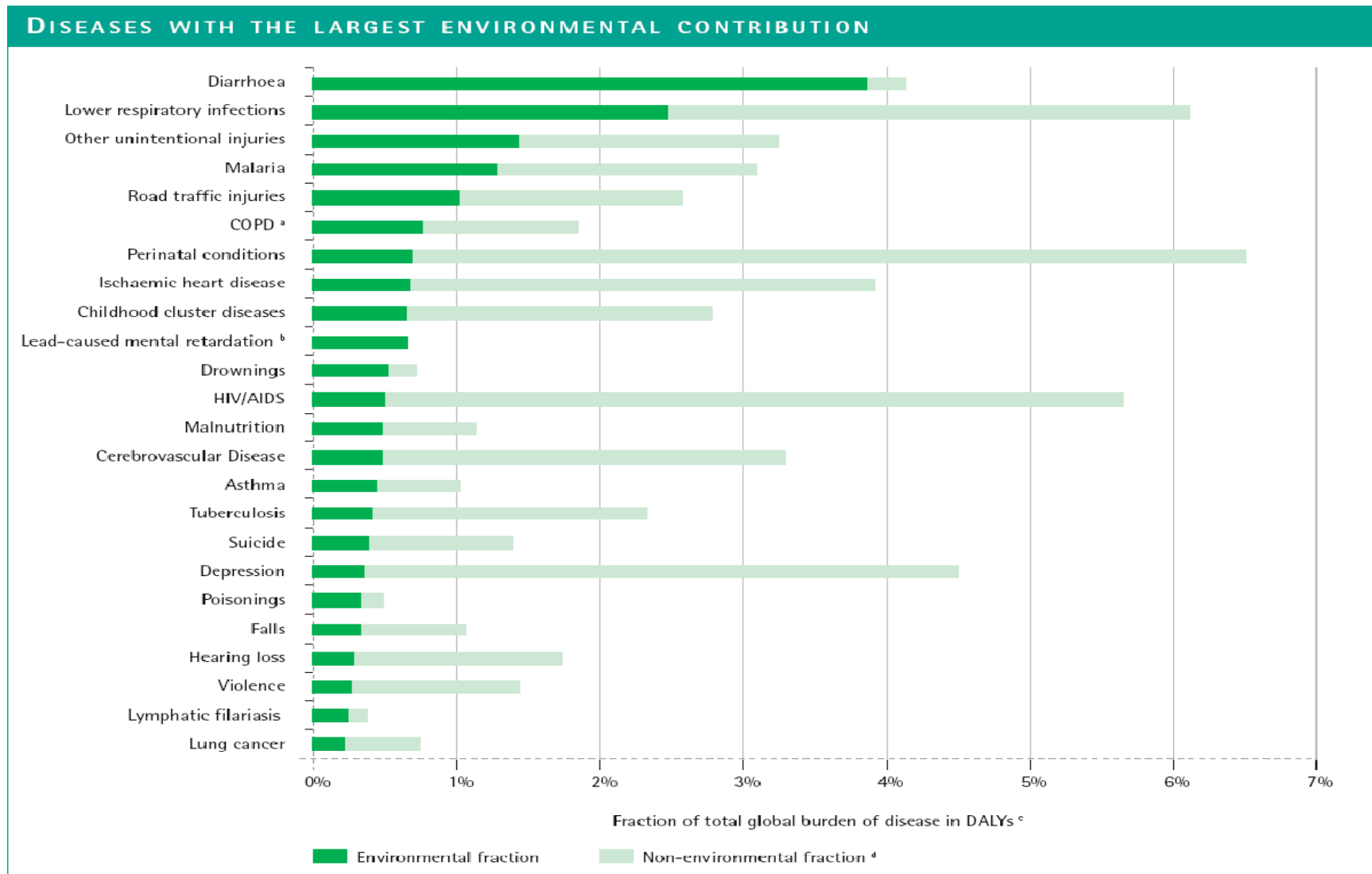
Thursday, October 18, 2007 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC

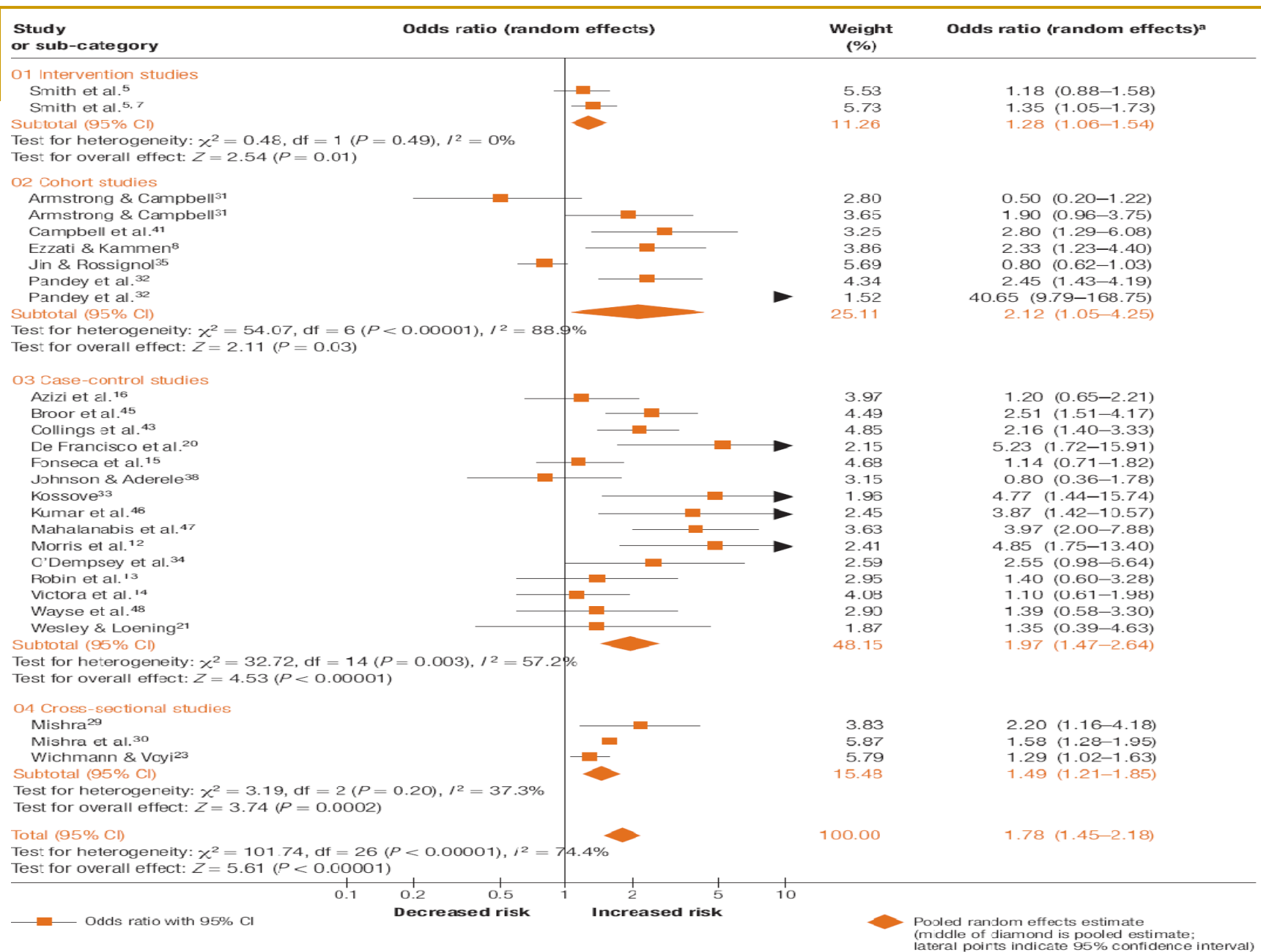
Some of the material in this paper is extracted from lectures given at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Vatican, (2006), the Bjerknes lecture given at the AGU fall symposium in San Francisco (2006) and a keynote talk at the 17th International Conference on Nuclear and Atmospheric Aerosols, Galway, Ireland (2007)



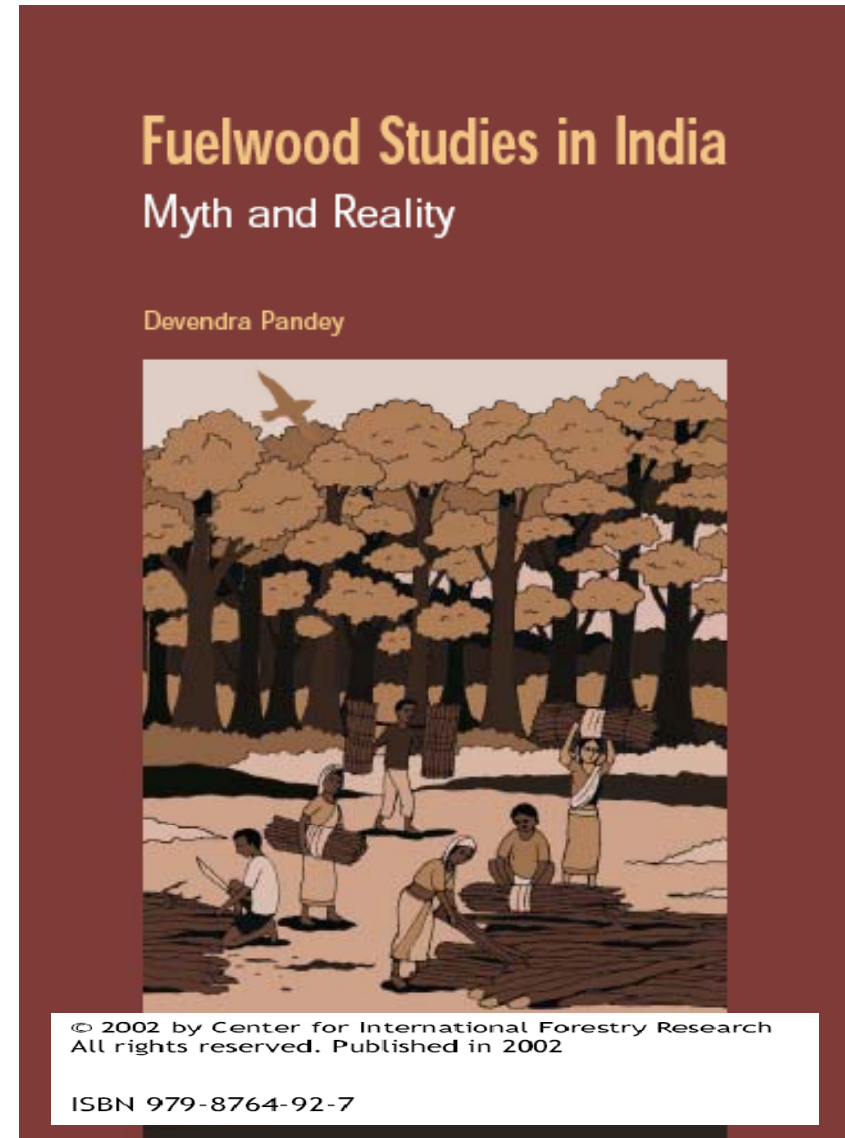
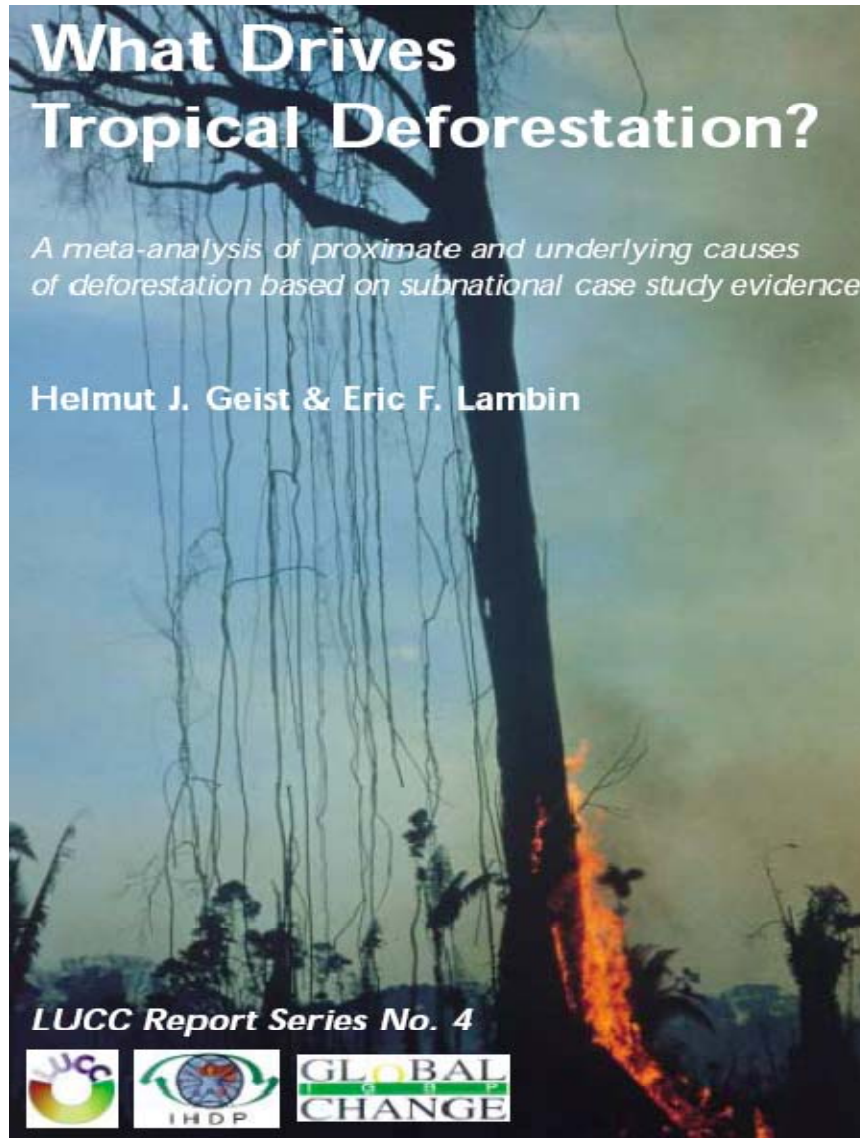
Atmospheric Solar Heating (Wm⁻²) by Black Carbon for the period 2000-2003.

Environmental Burden: WHO 2006





Meta-Analyses of Deforestation



Chapter 19



How can emissions from woodfuel be reduced?

Ole Hofstad, Gunnar Köhlin and Justine Namaalwa

Policy Intervention	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Equity	Co-benefits
Cooking efficiency	Moderate	High	Hurts the poorest consumers if not subsidised	Better health, less local air pollution
Fuel substitution	High for clean energy, low for fossil fuels	Costly for clean energy, cheaper for fossil fuels	Hurts the poorest consumers if prices not differentiated	Better health, less local air pollution
Production efficiency	Moderate, must be combined with harvest control	High, if combined with harvest control	Hurts producers without capital	Less local air pollution
Controlling harvest	Low if centralised, higher if devolved	Low if centralised, higher if devolved	May benefit the rural poor, but elite capture possible	May benefit biodiversity in some areas
Plantations	High	Low, if harvest in indigenous forests is not controlled	Benefits land owners and producers with capital	Sequester carbon if planted on land with low biomass density

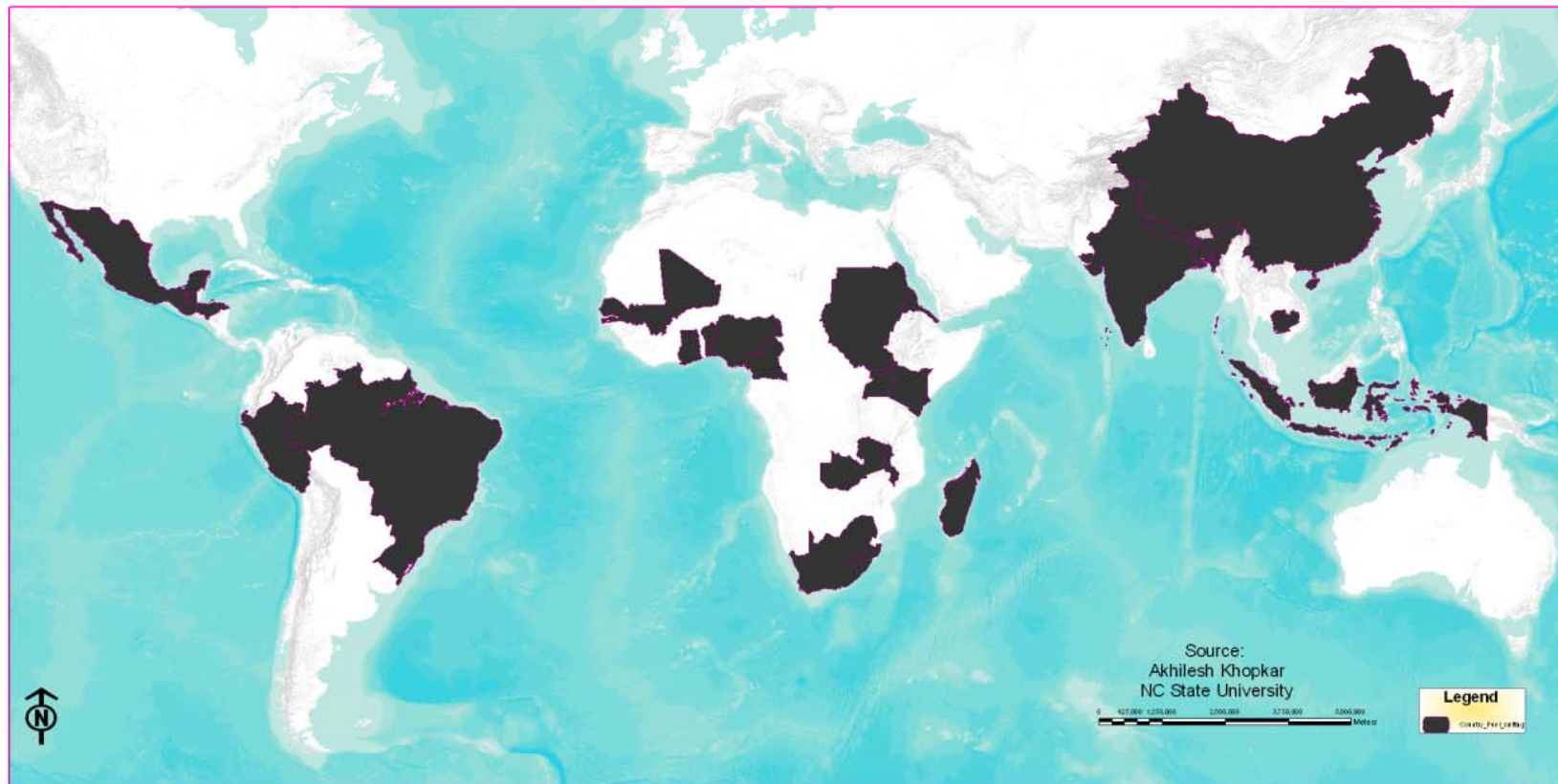
- 33/152 case studies suggest that fuelwood extraction is a proximate cause of deforestation
- 75% of the global fuel wood consumption (*mostly* in Asia and Africa) led to localized deforestation
- Initial stove promotion prompted by deforestation concerns (Barnes et al., 1993) over-reaching – no global shortage of fuelwood availability
- Mix of demand (e.g., cookstoves) & supply (e.g., CBNRM) policies
- Lacking systematic rigorous evidence that rural energy use causes deforestation or degradation

Do ICS reduce fuelwood collection?

STUDY	LOCATION	IMPACT	MODEL
Chen et al. 2006 (ECOLECON)	Jiangxi, China	0 & +	tobit with few controls (N = 190 hh)
Heltberg et al., 2000 (LAND)	Rajasthan, India	0	maximum entropy, few controls (N = 174 hh)
Edmonds, 2002 (JDE)	Arun valley, Nepal	—	OLS with many controls (N = 1200 hh)
Pattanayak et al., 2004 (EDE)	Flores, Indonesia	—	probit with linear controls (N ~ 500 hh)
Mekonnen & Kohlin 2010	Tigray, Ethiopia	— [§]	RE with many controls (N = 1400 hh)
Heltberg, 2004 (ENERGYECON)	Ghana, rural	— [§]	MNlogit with few controls (N = 3760 hh)
Heltberg, 2004 (ENERGYECON)	Brazil, rural	— [§]	MNlogit with few controls (N = 1080 hh)
Edwards-Langpap, 2005 (LAND)	Guatemala	—	tobit with few controls (N > 6000 hh)


Carbon Finance & Climate Change is Coming!

**Countries with CDM, VCS, and Gold Standard VER Projects
that Aim to Reduce Forest Degradation by Switching Fuel Source
or Introducing More Efficient Stoves**



Carbon finance, fuels & households

- 100+ fuel switching projects **involving wood**
- **3** major markets – VCS, Gold Standard, CDM, including fuel-switching
 - into sustainable wood use – plantations
 - away from unsustainable – e.g., over extraction of fw
 - more efficient use of fuel wood
- Household and small-industry projects



The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves is a public-private initiative to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and combat climate change by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions.

English Español 中文

An Initiative Led by The UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION


OVERVIEW

THE ALLIANCE


RESOURCES

ABOUT US

WORKING GROUPS




LEARN MORE




Time to Tackle One...
United Nations Foundation President Tim Wirth speaks on one of the world's deadliest killers.

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The Martha Stewart Show
The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves was featured on The Martha Stewart Show.

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Impact and Solution
3 billion people use dirty, inefficient cookstoves and open fires to cook their food.

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Find Out More
Clean cookstoves save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and combat climate change.

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Support the Alliance
Support life-saving clean cookstoves for the nearly 3 billion people who lack healthy and efficient cooking solutions.

[Get Involved »](#)

DONATE



Make a Donation
Click the link below to make a financial contribution to support the Alliance.

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US (Clinton) commits \$50M seed money