

Yale Tropical Resources Institute: Envisioning Synthesis and Synergy

Mission

The Mission of the Tropical Resources Institute is the application of interdisciplinary, problem-oriented, applied research to the creation of practical solutions to the most complex challenges confronting the management of tropical resources worldwide. Lasting solutions will be achieved through the integration of social and economic needs with ecological realities, the strengthening of local institutions in collaborative relationships with international networks, the transfer of knowledge and skills between local, national, and international actors, and the training and education of a cadre of future environmental leaders.

Vision

The problems surrounding the management of tropical resources are rapidly increasing in complexity, while demands on those resources are expanding exponentially. Emerging structures of global environmental governance and local conflicts over land use and environmental conservation require new strategies and leaders who are able to function across a diversity of disciplines and sectors and at local and global scales. The Tropical Resources Institute aims to build linkages across the natural and social sciences and among government agencies, academia and practitioners, enabling the formation of successful partnerships and collaborations among researchers, activists and governments. The Tropical Resources Institute seeks to train students to be leaders in this new era, leveraging resources, knowledge, and expertise among governments, scientists, NGOs, and communities to provide the information and tools this new generation will require to equitably address the challenges ahead.

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present the 2005-2006 TRI Bulletin. The themes in this volume reflect various emergent topics within the environmental field: planning, subsistence livelihoods, agriculture, public infrastructure, mining, and industry. Addressing issues through differing perspectives, these works aim to understand and mitigate the interactions between people and their natural environment, producing results designed to better our efforts as conservation practitioners.

Several writers focus specifically on environmental planning efforts and their influence on the human and natural landscapes in the hopes of creating better management plans. Radhika Dave's paper informs current conservation initiatives on the impact of anthropogenic change on mangrove forest ecosystems. Similarly, Krupa Patel explores the establishment of transboundary conservation areas and their potential to disrupt social, economic, and livelihood networks across country borders. Alvaro Renondo-Brenes and Kristen Welsh conduct a case study, addressing the advantages and disadvantages of a working payments for environmental services program.

Other articles explore specific human-environment interactions. Catherine Schloegel and Tendro Ramaharitra offer varying perspectives on the environmental impact of subsistence livelihoods on the landscape. Catherine's introspective account of the economic and ecological trade-off that occurs when a village association harvests trees against their public doctrine provides a foil to Tendro's statistical analysis on the effect of tree removal by villagers on adjacent forest areas.

An additional human-environment thread focuses on the impacts of agricultural practices. Wendy Francesconi and Gonzalo Griebenow offer a dichotomous account of the impact of agricultural practices on animals. Wendy explores the influence of live fences on bird diversity and abundance in areas near forests, while Gonzalo studies the effect farm establishment on the edge of a forest reserve has on the movement of elephants in the region. Richard Chávez's piece provides an alternative approach to studying agriculture, which aims to reduce the impact of farm establishment on the environment.

Another prevalent theme in this issue is the development of public infrastructure and its impact on social and environmental systems. Caroline Simmonds, Kristen Welsh, and Ikuko Matsumoto offer insight on the societal responses to public infrastructure. Caroline analyzes the effect of roads on rural village livelihoods. Kristen Welsh assesses the extent of reliable and potable water infrastructure in Costa Rica. Ikuko Matsumoto takes a critical look at infrastructural mitigation projects through the analysis of large dam development.

We end this year's bulletin with a call to action through the exploration of societal responses to industrial development. Linda Kramme reviews how NGO activities can influence sustainable forest management projects. Oscar Franco takes a more local approach, illustrating the potential impact community uprising may have on mining development and future land stewardship.

The quality of this volume serves as a reminder of the long hours, both in tropical field sites and Yale computer labs, that many people have invested—not only student researchers, but also, and especially, Amity Doolittle, TRI coordinator and guide; Lisa Curran, indomitable Institute director for the better part of the year, and our spirited acting director (during Lisa's leave of absence), Mark Ashton. We hope you enjoy the read!

**Laura Kiernan, MEM 2006; Colleen Morgan, MEM 2007;
and Monisha Gangopadhyay, MEM 2007**

Yale Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative

We are pleased to announce a new joint initiative with Tropical Resources Institute at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and the Center for Tropical Forest Science at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute.

An environmental leadership and training program to promote biodiversity conservation in tropical forests in Asia and Central and South America has been established at Yale University with a \$4.8 million gift from the Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund.

“The worldwide environmental crisis reflects deep disparities in the capacities of nations, institutions, communities, and individuals to develop and implement solutions that sustain both human societies and the biosphere,” said Mark Ashton, the program’s principal investigator and professor of silviculture and forest ecology at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies (F&ES). “The future success of conservation efforts requires a major enhancement of social capital in the developing world.”

The Tropical Resources Institute at F&ES, in partnership with the Center for Tropical Forest Science of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, will coordinate the program in building the environmental conservation and management capacity of individuals, communities and institutions in regions of high biological diversity in tropical forests.

The program will focus on the training of field workers in conservation, park managers, officials concerned with energy, infrastructure services and natural resources, and environmental policy makers and community leaders.

Short courses, workshops, and field trips will take place at the program’s principal sites in Panama City and Singapore, where Yale and the Smithsonian already work together, as well as at field sites in South and Southeast Asian and Central and South American regions.

“With the support of the Rausing Charitable Gift Fund, we will be able, for the first time, to develop and offer a systematic, integrated program of training and education in the tropics, building on our existing relations with the Smithsonian Institution and forging new relationships within each region,” said Gus Speth, Dean of Yale School of Forestry Environmental Studies.

The Yale Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative (YELTI) expands TRI’s existing research programs and offers tremendous opportunities for students at F&ES. For over two decades TRI has provided students with the chance to experience the rewards and challenges of conducting independent research in the tropics. Now we can broaden their learning experiences by offering students the possibility to join YELTI as teaching interns.

News from the IUCN Internship Program

Thanks to the generous support from Jim Leitner, YC 1975, Madeleine Meek, MEM 2006, and Saima Baig, MEM 2006 were able to work as IUCN interns in Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

“Keeahla vahdaknay” is my favorite Sinhalese expression, and it perfectly captures my experience in Sri Lanka this summer for I have “no words to express” the intensity, the beauty, the pain, and the hardship that I saw and felt throughout the ten weeks I spent there. While working with the IUCN on tsunami rehabilitation, I saw the struggles and heard the stories from hundreds of devastation and havoc, I struggled with Sri Lankan issues of political turmoil and on-going ethnic conflict...I had so many adventures, made so many acquaintances, and questioned myself, my career, and my life innumerable times in those ten weeks.

-Madeleine Meek, MEM 2006

Remembrance Margaret (Peggy) Rasmussen King 1957-2005

It is with sadness that we mention that one of our dedicated supporters to the Tropical Resources Institute, Peggy King (MFS 1985), died on December 16th 2005 with Larry (MESC 1985), her husband, by her side. I remember Peggy well as a classmate, a close friend, and a colleague. She was a quiet and unassuming person, with a drive and determination to conserve and protect the environment.



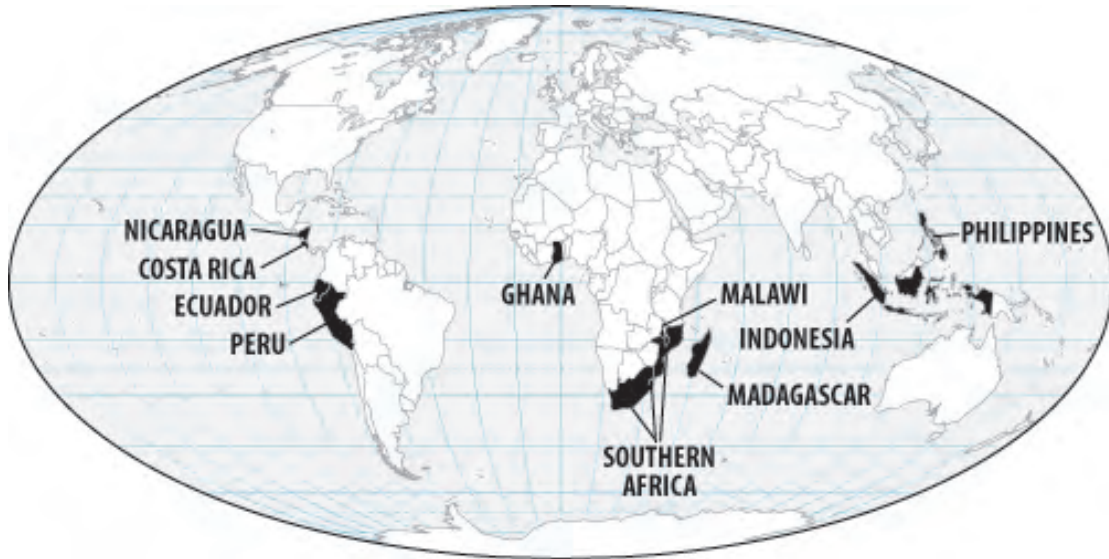
Peggy was one of the first students in the TRI internship program who went to Puerto Rico in the summer of 1984. After graduation she continued to work directly for TRI as a program assistant for Bill Burch. Then when Peggy and Larry left for Minneapolis she served as an advisor to TRI as it developed from an idea into reality, from small to large, and from an island-based program to a global network. Peggy and Larry have been generous and thoughtful supporters to TRI and its internship program. We will miss her dearly and her contribution to TRI will be lasting.

-Mark Ashton, MF 1985, PhD 1990

*An internship fund in support of TRI's research activities
is being established in honor of Peggy*

Contributions may be sent to:
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2005 TRI Fellows



Costa Rica:	Alvaro Redondo-Brenes Wendy Francesconi Kristen Welsh
Ecuador:	Catherine Schloegel
Ghana:	Gonzalo Griebenow
Indonesia:	Linda Kramme
Madagascar:	Radhika Dave Tendro Ramaharitra
Malawi:	Caroline Simmonds
Nicaragua:	Richard Chávez
Peru:	Oscar Franco
Philippines:	Ikuko Matsumoto
Southern Africa:	Krupa Patel