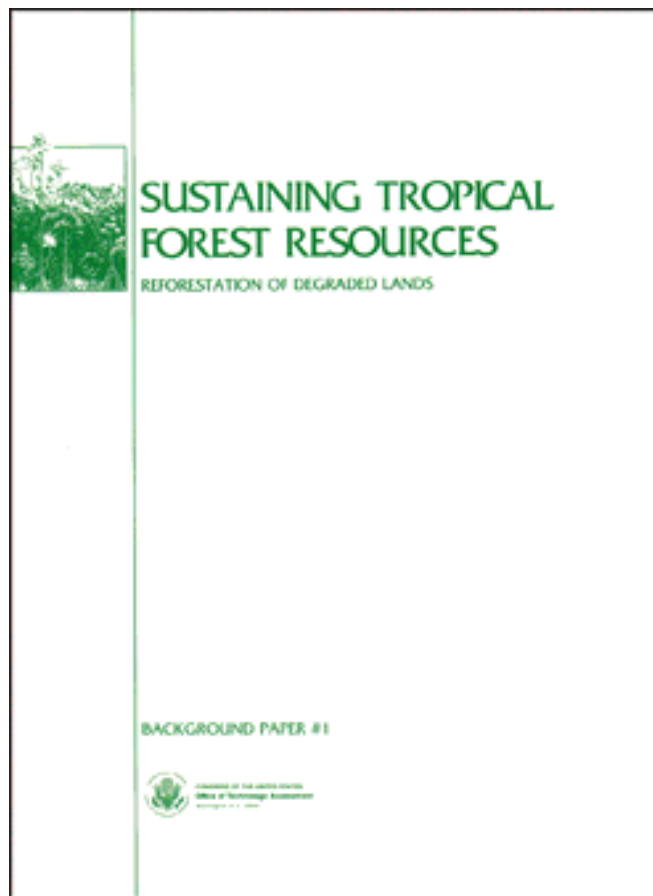


*Sustaining Tropical Forest Resources:
Reforestation of Degraded Lands*

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Preface

Deforestation has claimed half of the world's original tropical forest lands. The result has been a decline in the land's inherent productivity, with serious repercussions on human welfare. One solution to this vast problem is reforestation. More specifically, tree planting on degraded lands can help restore land productivity as well as provide wood for building materials, fuel for cooking, and fodder for livestock.

This background paper is designed to provide the U.S. Congress with an overview of some reforestation technologies and their possible beneficial and adverse impacts. It also discusses the constraints and opportunities for the introduction of these technologies in such activities as timber and fuel production, watershed protection, and agroforestry.

This paper is part of OTA's forthcoming assessment *Technologies To Sustain Tropical Forest Resources*. A concurrent background paper, *Sustaining Tropical Forest Resources: U.S. and International Institutions*, will focus on the role of various institutions in developing and implementing technologies to sustain tropical forest resources. These analyses form the main part of OTA's response to the general request of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and supported by the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and the Subcommittee on Environmental Pollution of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

This paper was authored by OTA analysts Susan Shen and Alison Hess. OTA also wishes to acknowledge the tropical forest resources advisory panel and executive agency liaisons who reviewed this document and contributed technical information to the OTA staff.

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