Sustaining Tropical Forest Resources: U.S. and International Institutions

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SUSTAINING TROPICAL FOREST RESOURCES

U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

BACKGROUND PAPER #2



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Preface

This background paper explores the roles of national, regional, and international institutions and the private sector in developing and implementing technologies to sustain tropical forests. It is part of the Office of Technology Assessment's forthcoming report Technologies To *Sustain Tropical Forest Resources*, A concurrent background paper, *Reforestation of Degraded Lands*, focuses on the actual reforestation technologies available. These analyses were requested by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and supported by the House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, and the Senate Subcommittee on Environmental Pollution of the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

This paper: 1) explains how U.S. and international institutions affect the development and implementation of technologies to sustain tropical forest resources; 2) reviews the capabilities of a range of selected US. institutions, developed and developing world institutions, funding foundations, and private sector organizations; and 3) discusses the constraints and opportunities faced by these institutions. This is not an exhaustive study; rather it reports on a broad sampling of important institutions and highlights the most troubling constraints and most promising opportunities.

Congress has both legislative and oversight responsibilities related to U.S. and international institutions, and this paper provides information designed to help Congress in those deliberations. Congress has direct responsibility for the Agency for International Development and has given the agency explicit direction to be concerned with tropical deforestation. Congress also affects the actions of the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Park Service, and other U.S. agencies that could play an expanded role in tropical forest efforts. Congress indirectly influences various international institutions through allotment of funds and policy direction. Thus, OTA hopes this compilation will be a useful review of many of the various institutions of concern to Congress.

This paper was prepared by OTA analyst Chris Elfring. OTA also wishes to acknowledge the tropical forest resources advisory panel and executive agency liaisons who reviewed this document and contributed helpful information to the OTA staff.

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