Combined Summaries: Technologies To Sustain Tropical Forest Resources and Biological Diversity

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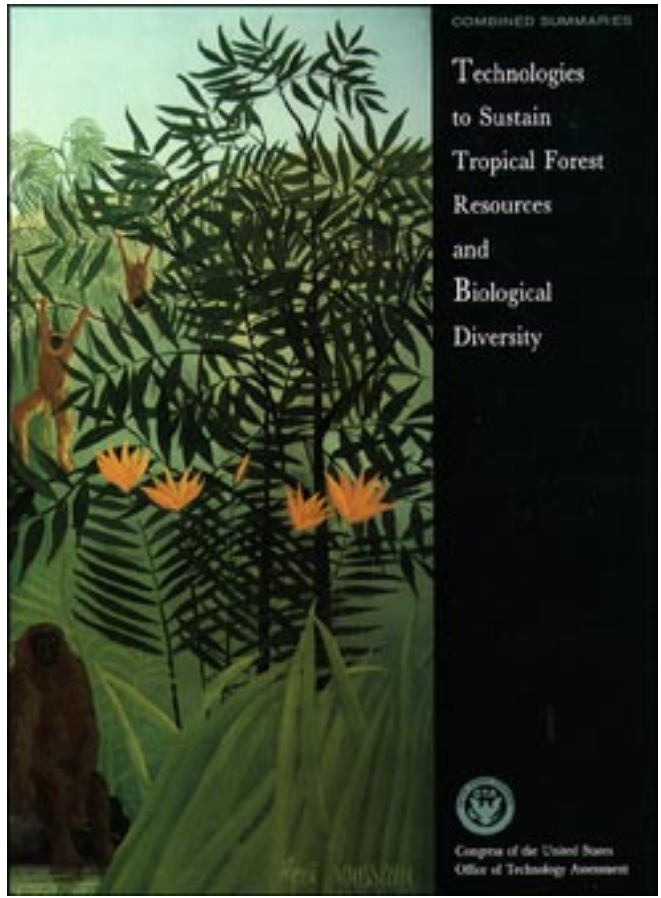

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Foreword

Loss of tropical forests and reduction in the Earth's biological diversity have grown from development assistance concerns to themes of global debate during the last decade. At the same time that the value of biological resources to local communities and individual nations has become more fully appreciated, the connections between these resources and global environmental stability and economic development potential have been uncovered.

Loss of tropical forests still is associated with poverty in tropical developing nations, but it now is juxtaposed with potential disruption of global weather patterns. Reduction in biological diversity still impedes communities from diversifying their development options, but it also may preclude development of some new products and processes that could support global advances in agriculture, medicine, and industry. And, because of the biological richness of tropical forests and our incomplete knowledge of their resources, tropical forest conservation and protection of biological diversity have become inextricably linked.

In the years since the Office of Technology Assessment published *Technologies to Sustain Tropical Forest Resources (1984)* and *Technologies to Maintain Biological Diversity (1987),* new issues have arisen, new approaches have been devised, and new policies have been adopted. Yet the technologies underlying efforts to manage the resources sustainably have changed little. Thus, in continuing service to Congress, OTA is reprinting the summaries of the two earlier assessments and is providing an introduction to the changes that have occurred since their publication.

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