



CIFOR Poverty and Environment Network (PEN)

Key elements of PEN

- A comprehensive regional and global analysis of tropical forests and poverty
- A global data set of more than 7000 households from 25 countries across the tropics
- Careful recording of all environmental income in four quarterly household surveys
- Partnership-based research involving more than 50 PEN research partners
- Refining research methods and providing capacity building
- Enhancing policies for reduced poverty and better forest management

The questions

Forests and other natural resources are crucial to the livelihoods of millions of poor people worldwide. But just how important are forests for poverty alleviation? To what extent do forests help lift people out of poverty, or are they mainly useful as gap-fillers and safety nets preventing extreme hardship? Which types of forests and products are most useful for the poor? How do different management regimes and policies affect the benefits poor people derive from forests? How can we design effective forest-based strategies to alleviate poverty? Answers to these questions are essential for designing effective policies and meaningful projects based on natural resources. Yet, we have surprisingly little solid knowledge to answer the questions adequately.

What will PEN achieve?

PEN aims to fill this gap in knowledge through the systematic collection of socio-economic data in a variety of tropical ecosystems. The global and country level analyses of the role of forests in poverty alleviation will build a knowledge base to help formulate national and global policy, build capacity among researchers in developing countries, and assist conservation and development agencies better achieve pro-poor outcomes. The project will play a major role in putting forestry issues onto the poverty agenda. PEN will provide pathways to disseminate research results, exchange information and experience, including hosting workshops to facilitate collaboration during the analysis and synthesis work.

Who is in the network?

PEN is a collaborative effort of CIFOR, universities, and regional and international institutes from various countries. The 30+ PEN partners, mainly PhD students, are responsible for the data collection. Five CIFOR researchers are involved as supervisors and in the project management, while about ten external professors and senior researchers at universities or other research institutes serve as resource persons.

Data collection and the global data set

The core of PEN is the tropics-wide collection of uniform and high-quality socio-economic and environmental data at household and village levels by more than 30 PEN partners. It will generate a



comprehensive global dataset with more than 7000 households and 300 villages from 25 countries. The data collection involves a careful recording of all forest and environmental uses. All income data are collected through four quarterly surveys to shorten recall periods and increase accuracy. The study sites have been chosen to obtain a widely representative coverage of different geographical regions, forest types, forest tenure regimes, levels of poverty, infrastructure and market access, and population density.

Capacity building and improved research methods

PEN seeks to improve the overall quality of policy analysis related to forest-poverty links through capacity building and developing and testing new research methods. Fieldwork and data collection guidelines have been developed, along with a prototype questionnaire for data collection. Annual workshops are held to provide training, refine methods, and discuss and synthesize results. More than 2/3 of the PEN partners are from the South.

Time line

PEN is a six year research project, launched in September 2004, and is divided into three time periods:

2004-2005: Preparatory work to develop research methods

2005-2008: Fieldwork and data collection by PEN partners

2007-2010: Data analysis and writing: case studies, thematic groups and global syntheses

For further information contact the PEN coordinator *Arild.Angelsen@umb.no*, or consult CIFOR's PEN web page at www.cifor.cgiar.org/pen

The 25 countries with PEN fieldwork (* indicates more than one PEN study)

Latin America	Asia	Africa
Belize, Bolivia*, Brazil*, Ecuador*, Guatemala, Peru*	Bangladesh*, Cambodia, China, India*, Nepal, Pakistan, Indonesia*, Vietnam*	Burkina Faso*, Cameroon, DRC, Ethiopia*, Ghana*, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique*, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia

DFID Department for International Development



IFS

CIFOR gratefully acknowledges funding from DFID (UK) and Danida (Denmark). PEN partners have received funding for their fieldwork from a variety of sources, including the International Foundation for Science (IFS).



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