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SERNews

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RAINFORESTATION: Scaling Up Native Species Reforestation in the Philippines

By J. David Neidel and Hazel T. Consunji,
 Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative

The Philippines has suffered the most extensive deforestation in Southeast Asia, with the exception of Singapore. Figures from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) indicate that the level of forest cover is currently 26%, having recovered from a low of about 22% a couple decades earlier. Of the total land area, less than 3% constitutes primary forest. This extent of forest loss and the country's high level of endemism have made the Philippines one of the hottest of the hot spots in terms of biodiversity conservation. Combined with the country's mountainous topography and position within the typhoon belt, this forest loss has also contributed to the intensity of "natural disasters," like flooding and landslides, which frequently befall the country.



Rainforestation training group learning how to conduct a site assessment in Southern Leyte

In order to reverse this situation and rehabilitate some of the country's 9 million hectares of degraded land, the Philippine government and other public and private institutions have launched an array of reforestation programs over the

years. While these programs have varied in terms of scale, objectives, and implementation strategies, most have relied on the planting of a small number of exotic timber trees, including *Acacia spp.*, *Swietenia macrophylla*, *Gmelina arborea*, *Pinus caribaea*, *Falcataria moluccana*, and *Eucalyptus spp.* The prevalent usage of exotics relates to the fact that they are generalists, which grow well along a wide range of environmental conditions, and have well-studied silvicultural techniques. Unfortunately, most exotics have little value in terms of biodiversity, tend to be less resilient to pest outbreaks, disease, and typhoons, and provide lower wood quality compared to the native Dipterocarp species, thus doing little to reduce the pressure on the remaining primary forests.

In recent years, an alternative approach known as "Rainforestation" has been developed to begin restoring forest cover in the Philippines using native tree species. This approach has proven effective in re-establishing the full range of ecosystem

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Restoration Institute 2011

University of Victoria | British Columbia, Canada

May 27-28, 2011

Travel to Victoria, British Columbia on May 27-28, 2011 and take part in this year's Restoration Institute, a joint initiative of the University of Victoria's School of Environmental Studies and Restoration of Natural Systems Program. This year's Institute, held in partnership with the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), will bring together ecosystem experts and policy-makers from around the world to discuss the practical and policy issues arising from novel or no-analogue ecosystems.

<http://www.restorationinstitute.ca/>

Rainforestation *continued from page 1*

services associated with natural forests, while providing more sustainable livelihood options for rural communities. Although Rainforestation initially started off as a small-scale applied research project, the approach is making an increasingly large impact on the country's reforestation efforts. This article briefly describes the history of Rainforestation and ongoing efforts to scale it up from the perspective of the Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative (ELTI), which is contributing to this collective effort.

History of Rainforestation

In the early 1990s, the Visayas State University (VSU; formerly known as the Visayas State College of Agriculture) and the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) started to develop Rainforestation as part of an applied tropical ecology project. With conventional wisdom holding that the propagation of native Dipterocarp species was difficult, if not impossible, their experimentation aimed at collecting a wide variety of seeds and seedlings from remnant forest patches and planting them out in a research area on campus was a pioneering step in forest restoration. Recognizing the economic needs of communities liv-

ing in rural areas targeted for reforestation, VSU and GTZ also developed "Rainforestation Farming," an agroforestry variant of the approach, which integrated annuals, commercial fruit trees, and native timber trees as a way to provide multiple income streams to local communities, while restoring biodiversity and enhancing other ecosystem services. To test this farming approach, 38 hectares of Rainforestation model farms were set up as pilot sites by cooperating farmers and landowners between 1995 and 1998.

With the termination of the GTZ funding in 1999, the project was institutionalized through the creation of the Visayas State University Institute of Tropical Ecology (VSU-ITE). While ties with Hohenheim University and other institutions in Germany continued, VSU-ITE developed collaborations with a significant number of Filipino institutions, including local government units (LGUs), peoples' organizations and non-government organizations (NGOs), which started to promote and implement Rainforestation on their own. In 2006, through intensive lobbying by the Haribon Foundation, Rainforestation was formally adopted by the Department of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR) as an official forest restoration approach. The adoption of Rainforestation at the national level,

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News from SER's Global Office

A Note from SER Executive Director Amanda Jorgenson

Greetings from Washington, D.C.—where spring flowers are blooming everywhere and the cherry blossoms are as spectacular as ever!

The last three months have been rather busy and productive at the executive office. I am pleased to share with you that SER has a new logo and brand which we will unveil to the general membership very soon. For the immediate future, we will continue to work with Pyramid Communications to develop our branding guidelines and to begin building our new website. Stay tuned for the launching of SER's new look and feel!

The SER2011 World Conference on Ecological Restoration is promising to be a very interesting and well-attended event. Visit the [conference website](#) and learn about the excellent team of invited key-note and plenary speakers. Also check out the many exciting field trips and training sessions, as well as the numerous special sessions and symposia. Early registration is now open, so make sure to register soon and take advantage of the discounted rates. While registering, please make a financial contribution and help sponsor a student. Let's make sure that we engage the new generation of ecological restora-



tion practitioners by inviting them to this event. Our conferences offer students a great opportunity to become involved with the Society and to develop their knowledge and skills in the field.

We have recently made some staffing changes to improve our organizational capacity. Development Director Marion Smith has moved on to pursue other endeavors, and Christine Chau, who started last year as a part-time intern, is now working full-time as our Outreach Coordinator. She will be assisting us with developing new institutional relationships with US Government agencies and other non-profit organizations. A new Administrative Assistant will join us later in April. With these new additions to our staff, we hope to be able to focus our efforts and be more effective in membership development and fundraising—areas of much needed growth for the Society.

Last but not least, keep an eye out for the SER 2010 Annual Report, which we hope will provide you with a brief account of what we achieved last year, as well as a summary of the financial status of the Society. As always, we welcome your comments and ideas on how to improve the Society and make our actions more effective. Thank you!

Join Us in Welcoming SER's New Outreach Coordinator



Prior to joining SER, Christine Chau worked in outreach and advocacy, communications, and development for a number of environmental organizations, including National Parks Conservation Association and Oceana. As SER Outreach Coordinator, she will focus on developing partnerships with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and foundations. She will also assist with communications, namely website development and social media.

Family trips to National Parks throughout the United States nurtured Christine's passion for nature and the environment. She is excited to join SER as it continues to promote ecological restoration around the world. Christine recently graduated from the Monterey Institute of International Studies with an M.A. in International Environmental Policy and an M.B.A. in International Management. She also holds a B.A. in Environmental Systems and Policy from the University of California, San Diego.

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Rainforestation training program participants preparing wildlings for a recovery chamber

however, failed to make much headway in terms of changing forestry practices on the sub-national level. Determined to promote this approach further, Haribon also launched the “Rainforestation Organizations and Advocates” movement, or “ROAD to 2020,” which called for the reforestation of 1 million hectares by year 2020. Though progress towards that goal has been slow, one key outcome of the ROAD to 2020 was the development of a typology of Rainforestation approaches—ranging from forest restoration for biodiversity to timber production to urban forestry—aimed at using native species to address a variety of management objectives.

Scaling Up

By 2008, Rainforestation had already proven its applicability, sustainability, and appeal to a large number of Filipino organizations, but was nevertheless plodding along at a relatively low rate of implementation due to limited technical capacity, financial backing, and administrative support. Viewing this as a great opportunity to scale up a promising approach, ELTI established formal relations with VSU-ITE and started working with the other Rainforestation advocates.

Our approach to scaling up Rainforestation has been multipronged. First, to address the limited technical capacity to implement Rainforestation, ELTI and VSU-ITE developed a Trainers’ Training Program

which, to date, has prepared a cadre of 100 trainers from NGOs, academia, and the DENR. Through that training program, participants receive the knowledge and skills needed to work with other stakeholders to establish native species nurseries and Rainforestation plots. Action plans are then developed by each participant, laying out how they are going to implement Rainforestation upon returning to their home region. As a follow-up to the training, action plans are monitored and additional technical support for more effective implementation is facilitated through ELTI’s Leadership Program. One common challenge faced by participants, for instance, is identifying mother trees in their areas, so we have offered supplementary taxonomy trainings and field visits by expert botanists. ELTI has also assisted alumni in conducting their own Rainforestation trainings, securing funds from donor agencies for project implementation, and participating in related courses and events that will further their technical expertise.

Second, in July 2009, ELTI organized a meeting of representatives from several key NGOs, foundations, and academic institutions working on native species reforestation in the Philippines, with the goal of increasing cooperation and better coordinating activities. One outcome of this meeting was the revitalization of the Rain Forest Restoration Initiative (RFRI), a network of Rainforestation advocates that had been established during the launch of the ROAD to 2020 but which had become largely defunct. As part of the new, better-integrated network, each of the RFRI members has continued working on their own Rainforestation-related activities, but also helps establish and contribute to the implementation of a mutually agreed upon RFRI action plan. This ensures the better harmonization of research, advocacy, capacity building, outreach, and funding initiatives, and allows for a more systematic approach to recognizing and taking advantage of emerging opportunities.

Third, we have also been working to raise general awareness about native species reforestation. In July 2010, ELTI, together with other members of RFRI and the University of the Philippines (UP), organized

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a two-day, international conference on “Mainstreaming Native Species-Based Forest Restoration.” Held at UP-Diliman in Quezon City, with remote simulcasts at UP-Mindanao and UP-Visayas-Cebu campuses, the conference attracted 350 participants and stimulated interest in native species reforestation from LGUs and other sectors. The conference also hosted the official launch of the Rainforestation Information Portal (www.rainforestation.ph), an online clearinghouse providing a comprehensive list of Rainforestation trainers, implementation sites, native species nurseries, research publications, and other relevant information.



Forest restoration site on the VSU campus

Finally, as with any applied land use management scheme, we recognize that Rainforestation is and needs to remain an evolving approach. Towards that end, ELTI organized a regional training with the Chiang Mai University Forest Restoration Research Unit (FORRU) in Thailand, which brought together native species reforestation practitioners from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines to share technical knowledge and skills. Based on that experience, we have integrated some of the lessons learned from other approaches, including FORRU’s Framework Species Method and FAO’s Assisted Natural Regeneration, into the Rainforestation training program. Other plans for a shared research and monitoring protocol, which will allow for the fine tuning of Rainforestation in different regions of the Philippines, are also under way.

The Challenge to Moving Forward

The threat of climate change, to which the Philippines is particularly vulnerable, has fueled a large interest in tree planting at all levels of society, and the message about planting natives is clearly beginning

to resonate. Many LGUs, in cooperation with other public and private institutions, are working to restore their heavily degraded mountainsides and watersheds. The Province of Bukidnon, for example, recently initiated a program to restore 50% forest cover to the province, while the Province of Cam Sur launched a program to plant 12 million trees by 2012. Rainforestation plays a large role in both initia-

tives. The DENR is also coming around with the incoming DENR Secretary—an active participant in RFRI-sponsored events—recently alluding to the need for a “massive greening” with Rainforestation. While this new found enthusiasm for native species reforestation is heartening, it means that we, the proponents of Rainforestation, must work ever harder to help turn these big visions into a reality that is good for both the environment and the people living in the regions being targeted.

We would like to thank Joy Natividad, Javier Mateo-Vega, and Alicia Calle for their comments on this article. The Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative is a joint program of the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, whose mission is to enhance the capacity of decision makers and practitioners to conserve and restore tropical forests. The ELTI- Asia office is based at the National University of Singapore, Department of Biological Sciences. For more information about ELTI, visit www.environment.yale.edu/elti/ or contact David Neidel at david.neidel@yale.edu. For more information about Rainforestation or the Rain Forest Restoration Initiative, visit www.rainforestation.ph or contact rfri.sec@rainforestation.ph.

Members-in-the-News

REDD+ The Latest Threat for Indigenous Peoples

On January 10, 2011, **Dennis Martinez**, SER member and Chair of SER's Indigenous People's Restoration Network, wrote an op-ed column for the *Boston Globe* decrying not only the failure of delegates at last year's UN climate talks in Cancún to reach an agreement that would reduce global carbon emissions, but also their failure to fully recognize the potential destructiveness of REDD+ schemes for the world's indigenous peoples. Martinez argues that by paying to offset carbon emissions rather than make a commitment to significantly reduce them, developed nations are ushering in a system of "fortress conservation" in which indigenous communities will be denied traditional land use rights and will be prohibited from exploiting the ecosystem services upon which their traditional livelihoods depend in the interest of maintaining "pristine" stands of forest to serve as carbon sinks for the developed countries. Visit http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2011/01/10/slow_death_by_carbon_credits/ to read the full article.

A Forest Economy Reimagined

In a report by the Wilderness Society on January 26, 2011, the contentious debate surrounding timber extraction in southeast Alaska's Tongass National Forest, the largest intact temperate rainforest in the world, is presented in light of a new study by Wilderness Society economist and SER member **Evan Hjerpe**. Hjerpe proposes a new forest management strategy that would shift the region's economic focus



Indigenous rights groups warn that REDD+ will place limits on indigenous peoples' traditional forest use, and in some cases may even result in their forced eviction from traditional lands

and employment base from timber production to forest restoration. Although many are opposed to such a shift and argue that a restoration-based economy is insufficient to ensure the economic vitality of surrounding communities, Hjerpe counters that the financial benefits associated with restoration would ultimately provide a more stable and enduring foundation for local development and would represent a better investment of federal subsidies currently being directed at a timber industry in decline. Read the full report at <http://wilderness.org/content/alaska-ancient-rainforest>. You can also listen to a report on local NPR station KCAW by visiting http://kcaw.org/modules/local_news/index.php?op=sideBlock&syndicated=true&ID=1632.

Restore Mangroves, Will Travel

SER member and mangrove restoration expert **Robin Lewis** has been busy putting his knowledge and experience to work. The *Marco Eagle* reported on January 20, 2011 that Lewis is teaming up with the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Conservancy of Southwest Florida to restore a dying

mangrove forest on Marco Island, Florida, USA. The project will focus largely on facilitating the regeneration of the damaged mangroves by improving the area's hydrologic function. In addition to the project on Marco Island, the *Indian Express* reported on February 27, 2011 that Lewis is also consulting on a project in Navi Mumbai, India to restore mangroves that will be affected by construction of the new Navi Mumbai International Airport. To offset the loss of an estimated 98 acres of mangroves, Lewis is working with the City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra to develop a 245-hectare mangrove park. Read both articles by visiting <http://www.marconews.com/news/2011/jan/20/dying-mangrove-forest-marco-island-goodland-sr92/?partner=popular> and <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/specialist-us-firm-to-help-restore-navi-mumbai-mangroves/755380/>.

Joining Forces

Business Wire reported on February 16, 2011 that Biohabitats, a leading ecological restoration and conservation planning firm based in Baltimore, USA, has recently acquired Santa Fe-based Natural Systems International (NSI). According to Biohabitats president and SER Board member **Keith Bowers**, NSI's focus on the conservation and restoration of aquatic resources adds an important dimension to Biohabitats' organizational expertise and improves its capacity to respond to diverse environmental challenges in communities throughout the world. To read the announcement, visit <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20110216005203/en/Good-News-Earth-Biohabitats-Acquires-Natural-Systems>.

Members-in-the-News

Teaming Up for Big Bend

On December 30, 2010, the *Alpine Avalanche* announced the formation of a new, multi-agency Conservation Cooperative in the Big Bend region of Texas, USA that will unite the efforts of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey, National Park Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as they work to conserve and restore natural resources across this vast, arid landscape. Not only will the agreement provide a mechanism through which these federal and state agencies can collaborate with one another, but it has also provided a strong foundation for reaching out to sister agencies working to restore Chihuahuan Desert ecosystems across the border in Mexico. SER member **Gary Garrett** with TPWD is just one of the practitioners whose work will benefit from the new Conservation Cooperative. Garrett is a fisheries scientist who is helping to lead the Rio Grande silvery minnow restoration. Read the full article by visiting http://www.alpineavalanche.com/news/article_99d62e4e-1427-11e0-9384-001cc4c03286.html.

Measuring the Impact of Urbanization

The *Science Daily* reported on March 18, 2011 that SER member **Rebecca Dolan** has recently published the results of a 10-year study in which she led a team of ecologists in documenting the effects of urbanization on biodiversity in greater Indianapolis, USA. Dolan, the Director of the Friesner Herbarium at Butler University, led the team in comparing the species composition at 16 field sites with



Desert landscape of the Big Bend region near the US-Mexico border in southwest Texas, USA

dried plant specimens collected around the city more than 70 years ago. The team found that while Indianapolis supports a similar number of plant species today as when the dried specimens were originally collected, there has been a decrease in native species and a coincident increase in the number of nonnative species. The authors go on to discuss the implications of this study for biodiversity conservation in other urban areas. Read the entire article at http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/03/110318091012.htm?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+sciencedaily+%28ScienceDaily%3A+Latest+Science+News%29.

A Vision for Renewal

On November 5, 2010, **Storm Cunningham** was a featured speaker at the TEDxMidAtlantic conference in Washington, D.C. Storm is a self-described revitalization facilitator whose unique approach integrates all aspects of resource renewal, from natural and cultural resources to urban and rural community development in both industrialized and developing countries.

The author of two books exploring what he refers to as the “restoration economy,” Storm’s perspective on restoration and revitalization is at once innovative and visionary and grounded in practical strategies that communities can readily assimilate into short- and long-term planning activities. To see a video of his presentation on YouTube, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpokEthuW2U>.

A Milestone in New Zealand

The *Southland Times* of New Zealand reported on March 22, 2011 that SER member **Stephane Boyer** will soon become the country’s first university lecturer in restoration ecology. Boyer’s appointment to the lectureship at Lincoln University’s Agriculture and Life Sciences Faculty is being funded by New Zealand-based coal mining company Solid Energy, in a move that reflects the mining industry’s growing recognition of the importance of restoring environmental degradation associated with energy extraction and striving to reduce the impact of its activities. Read the article at <http://www.stuff.co.nz/southland-times/business/4794629/Miner-backs-lecturer>.

Keep Us Posted!

Been working on an interesting project? Been in the news lately? Written a book, article, paper? We’ll be happy to highlight it on our Members in the News feature or Restoration Showcase on the SER homepage. Just send your materials to Levi Wickwire (levi@ser.org) and help keep your fellow members in the loop!

New Books & Articles

The Role of Botanic Gardens in the Science and Practice of Ecological Restoration

Kate A. Hardwick et al.

Many of the skills and resources associated with botanic gardens and arboreta, including plant taxonomy, horticulture, and seed bank management, are fundamental to ecological restoration efforts, yet few of the world's botanic gardens are involved in the science or practice of restoration. This article examines the potential role of botanic gardens in these emerging fields and considers how a reorientation of certain existing institutional strengths, such as plant-based research and knowledge transfer, would enable many more botanic gardens worldwide to provide effective science-based support to restoration efforts. This support could come in the form of widening research to include ecosystems as well as species, becoming increasingly involved in practical restoration projects, helping to train practitioners, and serving as information hubs for data archiving and exchange. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1523-1739.2010.01632.x/abstract>

Regreening the Bare Hills: Tropical Forest Restoration in the Asia-Pacific Region

David Lamb

Regreening the Bare Hills explores how reforestation in the Asia-Pacific region can be carried out both to conserve biological diversity and improve the livelihoods of the rural poor. While both issues have attracted considerable attention in recent years, this book takes a significant step, by integrating ecological and silvicultural knowledge

within the context of the social and economic issues that ultimately determine the success or failure of tropical forest landscape restoration. It describes approaches to forest restoration at both a site and landscape scale, paying particular attention to those approaches which incorporate native species – including in multi-species plantations. Several case studies from across the Asia-Pacific region illustrate the silvicultural methods that will be needed to manage these

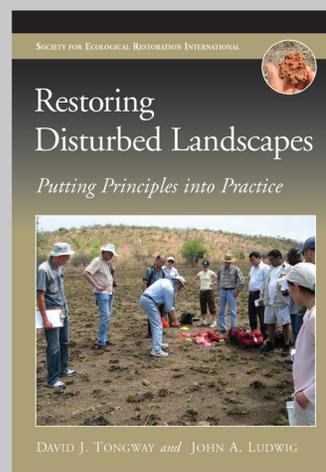
Restoring Disturbed Landscapes: Putting Principles into Practice

David J. Tongway and John A. Ludwig

Restoring Disturbed Landscapes offers a clear five-step program to improve the functional capacity of a variety of landscapes, including deserts, grasslands, shrublands, savannas, woodlands, forests and rainforests. Written by two experts who have spent their careers perfecting the process of soil and land restoration, the book is designed for all restoration practitioners who have responsibility for bringing damaged lands back to productive life. The book provides the ecological concepts and principles behind an adaptive landscape restoration program and presents case studies and examples that demonstrate how to put the concepts and principles into action. The authors offer ex-

amples of how the process has been successfully implemented in a wide variety of disturbed landscapes, including former mine sites, former rangelands now covered with shrubs, former farmlands near urban developments, and former pasturelands. *Restoring Disturbed Landscapes* does not propose a one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, it outlines a process that can be used for any distressed land. Read more at http://islandpress.org/bookstore/detailsd633.html?prod_id=2017

To view all of the titles in the SER-Island Press book series *The Science and Practice of Ecological Restoration*, visit <http://islandpress.org/ser/>



New Books & Articles

Invasive Species Reconsidered: Finding a Value in Non-Natives

Carl Zimmer

This article, drawn in large part from a paper recently published in the journal *Conservation Biology*, explores the other side of nonnative species. Whereas conventional ecosystem management strategies most often favor the removal of alien species in the interest of returning the native ecosystem to some historical reference condition, in many cases these nonnatives actually provide important ecological benefits and help improve the ecosystem's overall health, functionality and resilience. The article presents several such examples and in so doing, makes a case for more holistic thinking about the goals and objectives of ecosystem management and the premises on which it is based.

<http://e360.yale.edu/feature/invasive-species-reconsidered-finding-a-value-in-non-natives/2373/>

Manual para la Restauración Ecológica de los Ecosistemas Disturbados del Distrito Capital

José Ignacio Barrera Cataño et al.

This new manual co-authored by representatives of the academic sector and local government provides a range of tools and perspectives to guide the design, management and implementation of ecological restoration projects in disturbed ecosystems of Colombia's Capital District. The rapidly growing city of Bogota and its surrounding landscapes face a number of growing environmental concerns ranging from badly degraded pasturelands and depleted agricultural soils to abandoned open-air mine sites and



Invasive tamarisk, seen here along the Colorado River in Utah, USA, has been the focus of aggressive eradication efforts. However, despite its adverse impact on the hydrology of watercourses throughout the Western US, it also provides vital nesting habitat for the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher

exotic tree plantations with a high risk of fire during the dry season. This manual presents ecological restoration as a strategy for responding to these challenges and offers insights throughout to help guide future research and policy decisions in order to improve the quality of life in Bogota and make the city more sustainable and resilient in the face of myriad anthropogenic pressures.

http://erecolombia.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20&Itemid=19

Agroforestry As a Tool for Landscape Restoration

Florencia Montagnini, Wendy Francesconi and Esteban Rossi

This book compiles a set of articles from a technical session entitled "Agroforestry as a Tool for Landscape Restoration," held in August 2009 as part of the 2nd World Agroforestry Congress: *The future of global land use*. It provides an overview of recent efforts to apply agroforestry technologies to landscape restoration in tropical and temperate regions worldwide. Top-

ics discussed vary according to the specific circumstances of ecosystem or landscape degradation, and range from extreme conditions and solutions such as sand embankments and vegetative barriers in arid regions of Sudan, to degraded agricultural or pasture lands and the implementation of successional analogue ecosystems in the Brazilian Amazon, 'agrotropic-rainforestry' systems in Cameroon, traditional shifting agricultural technologies without burning in Madagascar, agrosilvopastoral systems in Costa Rica, or reforestation with taungya systems in Venezuela.

https://www.novapublishers.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=16423

Along Scar from Iron Curtain, A Green Belt Rises in Germany

Christian Schwägerl

One unintended and unforeseen consequence of the border zone that once divided East and West Germany is the de facto ecological corridor that the zone has become in the years since reunification. Whereas the surrounding countryside has been heavily impacted by agriculture and other anthropogenic pressures, this abandoned border zone has been left largely untouched and as a result, has undergone a process of natural regeneration that is gradually restoring ecological functions to the area and providing vital habitat for a number of rare and endangered species. Scientists and conservation groups are now working to get the corridor formally designated as a nature reserve and envision it serving as the main artery for a nationwide system of ecological corridors.

<http://e360.yale.edu/feature/along-scar-from-iron-curtain-a-green-belt-rises-in-germany/2390/>

SER Chapter News

By Christine Chau, Outreach Coordinator

SER Midwest – Great Lakes Hosts its Third Annual Chapter Meeting

Spring is upon us and the Midwest-Great Lakes Chapter has been keeping itself busy. The chapter convened its Third Annual Chapter Meeting themed, “Linkages between Ecological Restoration and Ecosystem Sustainability,” at the University of Illinois Springfield on April 1 - 3, 2011. Dr. Roger Anderson gave the keynote presentation, which centered on the origins, historic changes, and futuristic trends of Midwest oak woodlands and savannahs. Some highlights of the three-day event included a special plenary session on floodplain restoration for sustaining large river ecosystems, a guided tour of one of the largest floodplain restoration projects (Emiquon Restoration Project) in the United States, a workshop on climate change adaptation, a workshop on prescribed fire, over forty contributed presentations encompassing a diversity of ecological restoration topics, a field trip to The Nature Conservancy’s restoration project at Kankakee Sands, and a field trip to the Lincoln Memorial Garden. In conjunction with meeting, the chapter announced election results for the 11 open positions on its Board of Directors during its Chapter Business Meeting on April 2, 2010.

SER New England’s March Event

SER New England co-hosted the 17th Annual Ecological Landscaping Association’s Conference and Eco-Marketplace in Springfield Massachusetts on March 3, 2011. Tom Touchet (Massachusetts Director) and Mike Toohill (Chap-



Photo courtesy Katherine Martin, The Ohio State University

The 3rd Annual Midwest-Great Lakes Chapter Meeting examined how current restoration efforts contribute to regaining, preserving and sustaining the structure and function of Midwestern and Great Lakes ecosystems

ter Chair) presented a session on “Ecological Restoration: Reference Systems, Trajectories, and Measures of Success,” while a third Board Member, Julie Meyer (Student Director), served as a volunteer at the conference. For more information on the conference, including session descriptions and speaker biographies, visit www.ecolandscaping.org.

SER British Columbia Posts Huckleberry Presentations Online

SER British Columbia’s huckleberry forum was a success. Presentations were given from a variety of perspectives (e.g. First Nations, wildlife biology, huckleberry productivity), but highlighted a number of recurring themes. Perhaps the most important theme was that in order to help guarantee a reliable supply of huckleberries across the landscape we must manage for the species across a variety of site types, elevations, and aspects to account for variations in climatic conditions. Due to widespread re-

quests by participants, the chapter will make presentations available on its website.

SER Northwest Co-Sponsors Columbia Basin Workshop

SER Northwest is a co-sponsor of the Columbia Basin Landscapes Workshop titled, “Linking Science and Management to Improve Restoration Success in the Shrub Steppe,” which will be held at the Red Lion Columbia Center in Kennewick Washington on April 26-28, 2011. The South Central Washington Shrub Steppe/Rangeland Partnership is coordinating this 1.5 day workshop. It will consist of invited presentations and a poster session. For more information, please contact Richard Romanelli at roman@urx.com.

SER Europe Hard at Work

SER Europe is involved with two exciting events in May 2011. In our last issue of *SERNews* we featured the SALVERE project: Semi-natural Grassland as a Source of Biodiversity Improvement and Field Days of the European Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration, which are taking place in Bernburg, Germany on May 18-20, 2011. In addition to this event, SER Europe is also co-sponsoring “Restoring the North- Challenges and Opportunities,” an international conference on restoration of damaged ecosystem in the northern regions of Iceland to be held on May 23-26, 2011. Restoring the North, also known as ReNo, is a Nordic multidisciplinary network of scientists, practitioners, policy-makers and entrepreneurs working with ecological restoration.

SER Chapter News

The network connects available experiences and knowledge on restoration projects and research in the Nordic countries. SER Europe is also hard at work planning for its 8th European Conference on Ecological Restoration. The theme of this conference, which will be held in the Czech Republic on September 9-14, 2012, is “near-natural restoration.” You can learn more about the 8th European Conference online at <http://www.ecer2012.eu/>.

SER Mid-Atlantic Monitors Plots

SER Mid-Atlantic launched its chapter e-newsletter, which includes calendar postings for conferences and other events, links to key news or reports, and other items of interest. The chapter hopes that its members will take advantage of this new communication tool by making connections with other members across its vast region. The chapter also convened an ad hoc group of ecological restoration practitioners and researchers to create restoration monitoring plots in an effort to better understand how various restoration methods affect ecological processes and function. The



*České Budějovice, Czech Republic, site of the 2012 SER Europe conference
“Near-Natural Restoration”*

initial plots will be created at the 800-acre Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. If successful, the group hopes to create plots at other sites in the region. This will allow them to diversify the results and provide more opportunities for restoration field trips.

Furthermore, SER Mid-Atlantic recently convened its 6th Annual Conference entitled, “Brave New World: Working with Emerging Ecosystems and Other New Challenges,” which was held at the University of Maryland, College Park

Campus on April 1-2, 2011. The conference addressed the question of what restoration practitioners must do differently in response to the swift and unexpected changes occurring in ecosystems throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Over 70 members attended the dynamic conference.

SER Ontario Develops Native Plant Resource Guide

The 6th edition of the chapter’s Native Plant Resource Guide is currently under development. The guide includes an updated growers list and several new articles relevant to the field of restoration ecology. The articles provide lessons learned with important information for practitioners and academics. For the first time, the chapter will offer both an e-Guide and a hard copy publication. Additionally, the chapter is working to develop a list of restoration practitioners in Ontario that will be made available to those seeking restorationists for hire or consultation. SER Ontario would also like to extend a warm welcome to its new Board Chair, Sal Spitale, who assumed the position in November 2010.

Support SER: Become a Member Today

The Society for Ecological Restoration’s efforts to advance the field of ecological restoration around the world depend in large part on the support of its members.

When you join SER, you are welcomed into a global community of restoration scientists, practitioners, and advocates committed to the repair and management of the world’s ecosystems.

SER members receive benefits that include our weekly e-bulletin, opportunities to network and learn about worldwide restoration projects, discounts on scientific journals, international conferences, the SER-Island Press book series, and much more. Most importantly, you’ll make a difference in promoting ecological restoration efforts around the globe.

Visit https://www.ser.org/member_registration.asp to join and see how a membership with SER can benefit you. If you are already a member of the Society, encourage a friend or colleague to join.



SER2011 WORLD CONFERENCE ON
ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

Society for Ecological Restoration



4th World Conference on Ecological Restoration

20th Annual Meeting of the Society

2nd Meeting of the Ibero-American & Caribbean Ecological Restoration Network

August 21-25, 2011 • Mérida, Mexico

“Re-establishing the Link between Nature and Culture”

Early Registration Now Open

Early registration for the SER2011 World Conference is now open. [Click here](#) to register online and take advantage of discounted registration fees.

Pre- and Post-Conference Activities

Conference attendees will have the option of participating in one of several pre-conference training courses, including a 3-day course on mangrove forest ecology and restoration taught by mangrove expert Robin Lewis, or traveling to the nearby state of Chiapas for a 3-day pre-conference field trip to explore traditional Lacandon Maya techniques for managing and restoring their native forest resources. In addition to these pre-conference activities, attendees will also have the opportunity to participate in a 1-day post-conference field trip to one of several interesting sites near Merida, including a number of destinations along the coast that afford a glimpse of the peninsula's abundant resident and migratory bird species as well as its rich mosaic of coastal habitats.

Call for Abstracts Now Open

The SER2011 Scientific Program Committee is now accepting abstracts for oral and poster presentations in a number of thematic areas related to the social, economic and functional aspects of ecological restoration. If you are interested in presenting your work at the conference, please [click here](#) for more details. The deadline for abstracts is **May 15, 2011**.

Exhibitors & Advertisers

The SER2011 World Conference offers your company or organization a unique opportunity to share your products, services or activities with a diverse global community of ecological restoration practitioners and environmental professionals from a variety of backgrounds. If you would like more information about available exhibit space or advertising in the conference program, please visit <http://www.ser2011.org/en/exhibitors-advertisers/> or contact us directly at info@ser2011.org.

2nd Meeting of the Ibero-American and Caribbean Ecological Restoration Network (RIACRE)



The steadily growing RIACRE network, comprised of members from around Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal, will hold its second meeting in conjunction with SER2011. This exciting new initiative is a vital first step toward unifying the region's burgeoning community of restoration practitioners. <http://www.riacre.org/site/>



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SER2011 Scientific Program

The scientific program of the SER2011 World Conference is organized around three fundamental aspects of ecological restoration: the social dimension, economic dimension and biodiversity or functional dimension. The three days of the scientific program will explore each of these thematic areas in turn, and will feature a morning plenary session followed by concurrent scientific sessions throughout the afternoon. In addition to a diverse and exciting slate of regular sessions, special

sessions, symposia and workshops in both English and Spanish (*see list*), the conference will feature several prominent keynote and panel speakers. Pavan Sukhdev, Head of the UNEP’s Green Economy Initiative and Study Leader for The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), will lead things off on the first day with a keynote address examining the economic implications of ecological restoration.

Important Dates

Open Early Registration; Open Call for Exhibitors and Travel Grants	March 15, 2011
Close Call for Travel Grants	April 15, 2011
Close Call for Abstracts	May 15, 2011
Close Early Registration; Open Regular Registration	June 15, 2011
Close Regular Registration	August 19, 2011
Pre-conference Field Trips, Training Courses and Workshops	August 19-21, 2011
On-site Registration	August 21-24, 2011
Scientific Program	August 22-24, 2011
Post-conference Field Trips	August 25, 2011

Sponsors and Partners



www.ser2011.org