

*Community forestry can help reduce deforestation and poverty in tropical countries, but not always both*

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Indonesia is at the forefront of global efforts to place the responsibility for forest management with local communities. Such 'community forestry' approaches aim to achieve sustainable forest management while also reducing poverty in rural areas. Community forestry should therefore be good for forests, wildlife and people. Surprisingly, it is still not clear whether this is the case in many tropical countries because evaluations have tended to focus on only one outcome – forest conservation or poverty alleviation.

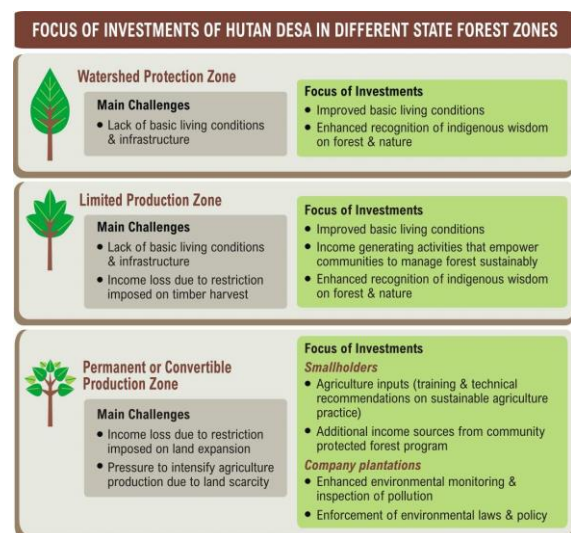
This study focuses on both outcomes. We assessed the extent to which deforestation has decreased and poverty levels improved as a result of Indonesia's leading community forestry scheme, Hutan Desa ('village forests'). Our spatial analyses tracked changes in forest cover and poverty over time in villages across Kalimantan, Borneo, and were able to separate patterns associated with Hutan Desa from those without.

Unlike most previous studies we monitored societal change according to multiple measures of well-being, which included, among other measures, basic living conditions, indicators of social security, and the village's potential to prevent environmental hazards.

We found that in the six years community forestry had been operating, the programme in Kalimantan was associated with both reduced deforestation and poverty in just over half of cases. In other cases there were positive outcomes for forest conservation or poverty alleviation, but not both. Importantly, benefits to forests and people varied substantially depending on where the community forestry was established (in particular the land-use zone designation), and also on underlying community livelihood characteristics.

Our results highlight important trade-offs between conservation and development

objectives in tropical countries, but demonstrate that 'win-win' outcomes for both forests and people are possible in some contexts. Crucially, our study provides vital objective information for future policy development in Indonesia and other tropical countries implementing community forestry schemes.



*Preliminary guidelines (based on this study) for future Hutan Desa policy and focus of investments in different land-use zones in Indonesia: Watershed Protection Zone, Limited Production Zone, and Permanent or Convertible Production Zone.*

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