



Alternatives to Slash-and-Burn

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Fostering "A-Ha" Moments: South-South Exchange

At a Glance...

The Alternatives to Slash-and-Burn (ASB) consortium tackles two of the most pressing issues of our time – the related problems of deforestation and human poverty at the margins of tropical forests. ASB experience shows that South-South exchange is among the most effective means to achieve breakthroughs in understanding ('ah-ha' moments) for researchers, policymakers, community leaders. ASB is seeking funding to create opportunities for partners in the tropics – farmers, community members, policy-makers, NGOs, and scientists – to visit forest-agriculture sites where environmentally sustainable and economically viable land use actually works. These are real world field experiences; not meetings in fancy hotels.

Seeing is Believing

Local and national partners want more opportunities to share the lessons they've learned and to see - first-hand - effective solutions from other sites.

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South-south exchanges can accelerate and facilitate effective learning across places and among people - more so than reading an article or hearing an idea on the news. They often inspire perceptual breakthroughs and are proven to spark much-needed

discussion on natural resource management, effective land and tenure policies, and other innovations to balance conservation and development.

So the ultimate destination of participants in the south-south exchanges is not just to the 'field' for hands-on experience, but to a place of mutual understanding about the complex problems ASB tackles - and their solutions.

ASB is seeking funding for a series of such south-south exchanges. Through this initiative, sites working to reconcile conservation and poverty reduction will be paired based on their potential to learn from each other. For example, Sumatra and Madagascar are

both large islands with similar geography and a reliance on agriculture – the potential for cross-learning is significant.

Funding for Site-Site Exchange

Visits will be designed by the countries themselves to involve a relevant mix of policy-makers, community leaders, national researchers who will visit first one site and then the other. These exchanges will enable partners to:

- **Assess progress** in balancing the needs of people and nature at each of two landscapes, focusing on key beneficiaries and actors (*who?*), leverage points (*what?*), and opportunities for influence (*how, what works, what doesn't?*).
- Talk together to identify lessons from one site which could enhance outcomes at another - the core of the **cross-site learning** process.

Each tailored process of partnership development, information exchange and self-designed interactions among sets of partners from the two countries is estimated at **\$175,000**.

From Two to Many: A Learning Network of Sites

These cost-effective pairs of meetings will be the launching pad for further exchanges and interactions within a global learning network (the **Rainforest Challenge Partnership**) that catalyses decisions to benefit people and nature on a large scale. As the network grows from two places to many, opportunities for lessons from one setting to positively influence outcomes at another will multiply dramatically.

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