



Tropical Rain Forest Ecology, Diversity, and Conservation

By Jaboury Ghazoul, Douglas Sheil

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Rain forests represent the world's richest repository of terrestrial biodiversity, and play a major role in regulating the global climate. They support the livelihoods of a substantial proportion of the world's population and are the source of many internationally traded commodities. They remain (despite decades of conservation attention) increasingly vulnerable to degradation and clearance, with profound though often uncertain future costs to global society. Understanding the ecology of these diverse biomes, and peoples' dependencies on them, is fundamental to their future management and conservation.

Tropical Rain Forest Ecology, Diversity, and Conservation introduces and explores what rain forests are, how they arose, what they contain, how they function, and how humans use and impact them. The book starts by introducing the variety of rain forest plants, fungi, microorganisms, and animals, emphasising the spectacular diversity that is the motivation for their conservation. The central chapters describe the origins of rain forest communities, the variety of rain forest formations, and their ecology and dynamics. The challenge of explaining the species richness of rain forest communities lies at the heart of ecological theory, and forms a common theme throughout. The book's final section considers historical and current interactions of humans and rain forests. It explores biodiversity conservation as well as livelihood security for the many communities that are dependent on rain forests - inextricable issues that represent urgent priorities for scientists, conservationists, and policy makers.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is the finest book on tropical rain forest I have come across - a worthy successor to Whitmore's excellent *Introduction to Tropical Rain Forest*. Both the authors and the publishers are to be congratulated." - Julian Evans for *Chartered Forest*

"What is particularly important about this new book is that it integrates the recent advances in the field of genetics that address rainforest ecology, evolution and biogeography. [This] comprehensive and definitive university level text replaces existing books that provides a general background, but tend to focus on the specific expertise of their authors." -- *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*

"Overall, the chapters are very well illustrated by lots of photos, figures and tables that are often referring to examples of recent scientific articles. I enjoyed the diversity of citation at the beginning of each chapter as well as the extensive list of references which encourages further readings. I am sure the book will be a must for students, scientist and conservationist of tropical ecology." -- Nina Farwig, Marburg, Germany, Basic and Applied Ecology

About the Author

Jaboury Ghazoul's first encounter with tropical rain forests in 1993 was a prolonged one, spending one year living rough in the forests of Vietnam where his scientific subjects were disturbingly close. It was during this year that he learnt to distinguish the sound of a chainsaw from the call of a cicada. Imbued with such knowledge and confidence, he began to study the reproductive ecology of plants in the context of land use change, working in Thailand and Costa Rica, employed by the Center for International Forestry Research and the Natural History Museum, London. Since joining Imperial College London in 1998, and ETH Zurich from 2005, he has expanded his research interests to encompass a variety of issues relating to tropical plant ecology, genetics and conservation. He generally selects nice places to work, and is thus currently engaged in research in India, Malaysia and the Seychelles.

Douglas Sheil spent the first three years of his life in Nigeria. He returned to the tropics several times as a Natural Sciences student in Cambridge, before gaining a Masters Degree in Forestry and its relation to Land use from Oxford in 1989. He worked in East Africa for two years before returning to Oxford to complete his doctorate examining long-term dynamics of Ugandan rainforests in 1996. From 1998 to 2008 he worked for the Center for International Forest Research in Indonesia - where he was for a time the only staff ecologist. His work has taken him to all the main rain forest regions of the World. He is now director of the Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation (ITFC), a field station under the Mbarara University of Science and Technology, located in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, in South West Uganda - a site famed for its mountain gorillas. His publications have covered a wide range of tropical forest topics. Current research

includes ecology, conservation and human needs.

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