



PROJECT TITLE : **ASB – PARTNERSHIP FOR THE TROPICAL FOREST MARGINS**

PROJECT CONTACT : **BRENT SWALLOW**

LOCATION & PARTNERS : ASB PARTNERS HAVE ESTABLISHED 12 BENCHMARK SITES IN THE AMAZON, THE CONGO BASIN, THE ISLANDS OF SUMATRA AND MINDANAO, AND THE HIGHLANDS OF NORTHERN THAILAND

ASB is the only global partnership devoted entirely to research on the tropical forest margins. ASB's goal is to raise productivity and income of rural households in the humid tropics without increasing deforestation or undermining essential environmental services.

Our vision is prosperous people and flourishing forests across the tropics.

Our mission is to bring together local knowledge, policy perspectives, and science; we work to understand the tradeoffs among conservation and development goals, and to identify and develop innovative policies and practices that work for both people and nature.

ASB is a global partnership of research institutes, non-governmental organizations, universities, community organizations, farmers' groups, and other local, national, and international organizations. Since 1994, ASB has operated as a systemwide programme of the Consultative Group for International Research in Agriculture (CGIAR).

ASB works at the nexus of two important problems: tropical deforestation and human poverty. Through collaborative efforts, we deliver attractive livelihood options for rural people while bringing hope the world's remaining tropical forests can be conserved for future generations.

ASB applies an integrated natural resource management (iNRM) approach to analysis and action through long-term engagement with local communities and policymakers at various levels:

- ASB's multi-site network helps to ensure that analyses of local and national perspectives and the search for alternatives are grounded in reality.
- ASB partners work with households to understand their problems and opportunities.
- Consultations with local and national policymakers bring in their distinctive insights.
- Participatory research and policy consultations guide the iterative process necessary to identify, develop, and implement combinations of policy, institutional, and technological options that are workable and relevant

Tropical rainforests are falling fast. They also are home to over one billion rural people, the vast majority of whom are poor and depend directly on forest resources and agriculture for their livelihoods. Until we address the tradeoffs between conservation and local livelihoods, tropical rainforests will continue to disappear. No single group or organization has the means or expertise to tackle these complex, interlinked problems by itself.



Intensification in parts of the landscape can be mutually supportive with forest protection



Most farmers hope the next generation will not depend on agriculture as source of income



The 'Draga' dredging for gold on the Rio Branco near Rondonia, Brazil



ASB global team members - Brent Swallow, Joyce Kasyoki, Vanessa Meadu, Catherine Kimengu and Peter Akong Minang

Southeast Asia

High population densities combined with a declining natural resource base make Southeast Asia a critical region of study for the ASB programme. Southeast Asia has the highest rate of tropical deforestation rate in the world, and the conversion of forests by smallholders, large-scale operators and government-sponsored projects continues to threaten the region's remaining tropical forest areas.

ASB research in the region is conducted in lowland insular Southeast Asia (on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia; and on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines) and montane mainland Southeast Asia (Northern Thailand). ASB's National Consortia in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand aim to identify alternatives to slash-and-burn agriculture by providing viable policy, institutional, and technological land-use options that can improve local livelihoods and preserve the region's remaining forests.

RUPES (Rewarding the Upland Poor for Environmental Services) was developed out of ASB work on conservation-development tradeoffs and seeks to develop practical ways to address these tradeoffs through targeted participatory research.

ASB's Future

Rather than simply adding new benchmark sites, the ASB partnership presently is exploring alternative means (sites, regions, broader communication strategies) to leverage impact from its long-term engagement at benchmark sites spanning the humid tropical broadleaf forest biome.

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