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Séminaire recherche

Do Forest Management Plans and FSC certification decrease deforestation in the Congo Basin?

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RÉSUMÉ

To produce timber while preserving conservation values, forestry regulations in the Congo Basin have made the implementation of Forest Management Plans (FMP) mandatory in logging concessions. This paper used original high resolution maps of forest cover changes and official records on the activities of logging concessions to study the impact of FMP on deforestation across the region. To do so, we used quasi-experimental and difference-in-difference approaches to measure how deforestation has changed in concessions that implemented a FMP. We found that deforestation decreased by 74% between 2000 and 2010 in concessions with a FMP. Building on a theory of change, further analyses revealed that the reduction of deforestation takes at least five years to manifest, is highest around communities located in and next to logging concessions and in areas close to previous deforestation. These findings suggest that the adoption of FMP reduces deforestation by allowing concessions to rotate cycles of timber extraction, thereby avoiding (over) exploitation of areas previously logged, and through a better regulation of access into concessions by closing former logging roads to limit illegal activities such as slash and burn agriculture, hunting and illegal harvest of timber or fuelwood.

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Chargé d'études

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