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The United States Agency for International Development and forest loss: A cross-national analysis of environmental aid

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Abstract

Among scholars of international development, there is a debate regarding the effectiveness of bilateral aid to improve the natural environment. Here we focus on evaluating whether United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) aid in the environmental sector reduces forest loss. Little empirical evidence exists on this

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agricultural land area, and tropical climate are related to increased forest loss.

Notes

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1 We analyze forest loss in low and middle income nations as classified by [World Bank \(2016\)](#) because high income nations are not eligible for aid from USAID. They include: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

2 We tried the circular distance from Washington D.C. to each nation's capital as an instrument. It violated the valid instrument assumption. The diagnostic statistics also indicated it was a weak instrument.

3 We replicate the models using a limited information maximum likelihood estimator, which often performs better with small samples ([Baum, 2006](#)). The results are similar to the findings presented

4 We test internal regional disc... they include and other diagnostics

5 Follow interaction corruption. The coefficients for the interaction term do not reach a level of significance.

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- 6 We included percentage of protected forest area in the models. The coefficients do not reach a level of statistical significance.
- 7 We include dummy variables for the region of the world in the forest loss models. The results are similar.
- 8 We included the total amount of forest area within a nation as a control in the models. The coefficients do not reach a level of statistical significance.
- 9 We included the non-dependent population growth rate with the total population growth rate. The coefficients for both variables fail to reach a level of statistical significance. This is most likely the case because of the high bivariate correlation between the variables. We repeat this for the rural and urban population growth models. The results are similar to the findings reported.
- 10 We included the percentage of forest area owned by the government. It may well be that higher amounts of public forest area may correspond with increased forest loss because it can be obtained cheaply via lease or theft for extractive activities. The data come from the [United Nations Global Forest Resources Assessment \(2010\)](#). The coefficients do not reach a level of statistical significance. It important to note that including this variable reduces our sample size to 58 nations.
- 11 We replicated the models including a square of gross domestic product per capita to test for the presence of an inverted, u-shaped relationship with forest loss. The coefficients for the squared term do not reach a level of statistical significance.

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