Fall 2019 Faculty Highlights
Geography and Environmental Systems (GES)
University of Maryland Baltimore County

Presentations


David Lansing and Ph.D. student Jaime Barrett gave an invited presentation at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine entitled “Contrasting Perspective on Prudent Use of Antibiotics in Agriculture.” Dec 6, 2019.

Alan Yeakley gave an invited seminar at Oregon State University entitled “Plant community responses to hydrologic changes in Pacific Northwest urban and coastal ecosystems.” Nov 13, 2019.


Grants and Awards

Dawn Biehler, Maggie Holland: Hrabowski Innovation Fund Seed Award entitled “Climate Change and Society: Global Change in the Context of Maryland.”

Erle Ellis: Chinese Academy of Sciences President’s International Fellowship Initiative (PIFI) Visiting Scientist for 2020 with the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research (IGSNRR).


Invitations

Erle Ellis was invited as a keynote speaker in the workshop “Implementing Bold Global Conservation Targets” at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, Marseille, France, Jun 14, 2020.

Ashante’ Reese was invited to join as a panelist at A Seat at the Table, a social justice-oriented participatory program at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Mar 19, 2020.
Publications
(student advisees shown in italics)


How feasible are global forest restoration commitments?

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Abstract
Numerous countries have made voluntary commitments to conduct forest landscape restoration over millions of hectares of degraded land in the coming decade. We consider the relative likelihood these countries will achieve their restoration commitments. Across countries, the area committed to restoration increased with existing forest and plantation area, but was inversely related to development status, with less developed countries pledging more area. Restoration commitments are generally large (median: 2 million hectares) and will be challenging to meet without the wholesale transformation of food production systems. Indeed, one third of countries committed >10% of their land area to restoration (maximum: 81%). Furthermore, high rates of land cover change may reverse gains: a quarter of countries experienced recent deforestation and agricultural expansion that exceeded their restoration commitment area. The limited progress reported by countries, and the sheer scale of commitments, raises serious questions about long-term success, especially absent necessary monitoring and management plans.

Keywords
biodiversity conservation, Bonn Challenge, carbon storage, deforestation, forest landscape restoration, longevity, persistence, REDD+, reforestation, sustainable development

Note: this newsletter presents just a sample of the work of GES faculty during Fall 2019; please see https://ges.umbc.edu/ for more!