

“HOW DO WE IMPROVE FOREST HABITAT CONSERVATION AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION IN MADAGASCAR?”

Organizers:

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Abstract

In Madagascar, high rates of forest clearing and high levels of endemism converge to place hundreds of species of plants and animals at risk of extinction. Across the country, forest clearing and burning put essential ecosystem processes and services into decline. This workshop aims to identify key causal factors and quantify what can be done to slow (or stop) the decline and successfully restore forest habitats. At local scales establishing baselines for conservation and restoration includes defining the diversity of undisturbed forests (surveys and alpha taxonomy) and the contribution of natural systems and ecological processes to economic and human well-being. At larger scales, remote sensing (satellite imagery) shows local impacts in landscape context and provides the means to estimate and model forest cover by habitat and community type through time. There is no doubt we have substantially improved our capacity to monitor forest decline, but the question is: have we similarly improved our capacity to protect and restore the forest? We ask: How can we effectively link science, natural history, local people, and the economy, to save the incredible biodiversity of Madagascar? And allied to that: How can we improve what we do to be more effective in ecological restoration? The primary aim of the workshop is to promote discussion and identify what we need to know, and do, to slow (or stop) the decline and conversion of native forest, and successfully protect and restore forest habitats for all species. Potential leaders of the workshop belong to research and conservation institutions as well as companies involved with extractive industries. All have extensive experience in habitat restoration, and the building of a forest future for biodiversity in Madagascar.

