



Second Growth: The Promise of Tropical Forest Regeneration in an Age of Deforestation

Robin L. Chazdon

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For decades, conservation and research initiatives in tropical forests have focused almost exclusively on old-growth forests because scientists believed that these “pristine” ecosystems housed superior levels of biodiversity. With *Second Growth*, Robin L. Chazdon reveals those assumptions to be largely false, bringing to the fore the previously overlooked counterpart to old-growth forest: second growth.

Even as human activities result in extensive fragmentation and deforestation, tropical forests demonstrate a great capacity for natural and human-aided regeneration. Although these damaged landscapes can take centuries to regain the characteristics of old growth, Chazdon shows here that regenerating—or second-growth—forests are vital, dynamic reservoirs of biodiversity and environmental services. What is more, they always have been.

With chapters on the roles these forests play in carbon and nutrient cycling, sustaining biodiversity, providing timber and non-timber products, and integrated agriculture, *Second Growth* not only offers a thorough and wide-ranging overview of successional and restoration pathways, but also underscores the need to conserve, and further study, regenerating tropical forests in an attempt to inspire a new age of local and global stewardship.

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