Master's Thesis Defense

Abstract

Trees in the Agricultural Matrix: Reforestation Processes in a Tropical Dry Forest Landscape in Chinandega, Nicaragua.

by

Brittany Duffy

Tree management practices in the tropical dry forest region of Nicaragua were examined to determine opportunities and factors influencing tree-planting initiatives within the agricultural matrix. A 217.11 ha tree inventory and 44 social surveys were conducted in three rural communities. The inventory found 88 species, 66.68% were native, and 70 valued for multiple uses. Farmers’ reasons for maintaining trees varied, including live fencing, wood, fruit, and medicinal values. Tree planting interventions should supplement extant stakeholder motivation with technical training and basic materials only as explicitly requested by participants, rather than imposing costly or inappropriate project preferences, capitalizing on local knowledge while increasing stakeholder accountability. Initiatives should also focus on smallholders and on multi-use native species suggested by stakeholders in order to maximize the economic, social and environmental benefits provided. To encourage planting, the enforceability of current forestry laws should be evaluated, working with communities to limit extraction from riparian corridors.

Date: July 6th, 2016
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: WC 130

Department: Earth and Environment
Major Professor: Dr. David B. Bray