

LATAM Bamboo supply chains

Ecologically regenerative industry?

or

Continuation of the Global North > South Extractive
history





Lucas Oshun

Regeneration Field Institute -director

Los Arboleros Farm - owner

Regenerative Industries Think Tank - coordinator

Resource Fiber - (former) director of international business development 2020-2021

regenerationfieldinstitute.com

loshunintl@gmail.com











Demand increase after earthquake

- Disaster relief
- Eco-touristic re-development
- Farmers needing income began harvesting more bamboo
- Ecuadorian government fast-tracks bamboo building code approval



Understanding current bamboo market in Ecuador







Well managed *Dendrocalimus asper*



Measuring impact on ecosystems and communities

- Great deal of academic and commercial research goes into developing engineered bamboo products for construction
- Comparatively little effort is made to research how to optimize relationships with supply communities and bamboo ecosystems
- Due to this deficit and anticipating a growth in the bamboo industry of the Americas, in 2020, we created the Regenerative Industries Think Tank group: a collaborative interdisciplinary research group looking at case studies here in Ecuador
- We are currently implementing bamboo remote sensing inventories, socioeconomic surveys, bird, primate, and plant biodiversity surveys. Much more attention on the subject is required however





Balsa industry example

- Core material for windmill turbine industry
- 7 years ago, balsa not perceived as having value
- Ecuador produces 95% + world's balsa
- High demand and severely fluctuating prices led to clearcutting of naturally occurring balsa
- International buyers work through intermediaries and don't interact directly with farmers
- During upswings of price, large quantities have been planted: on formerly forested land clearcut for the new crop, and also in degraded pasture
- Will bamboo demand create a similar dynamic?
Perhaps a cautionary tale...



A close-up photograph of a stack of bamboo sticks. The sticks are light-colored with a distinct vertical grain and some darker, textured nodes. They are stacked in a somewhat haphazard pile, with some sticks pointing upwards and others downwards. The background is a dark, out-of-focus surface.

Future demand for bamboo

Using the whole culm





Crédito Productivo | Agropecuario

CAÑA GUADUA BAMBÚ

El bambú tiene relación con la supervivencia de más de 500.000 productores en Ecuador. BanEcuador y el Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería juntan esfuerzos para promover el desarrollo de este sector.

MINISTERIO DE
sembramos





Panels being manufactured in Ecuador

- The jury is still out: Will engineered bamboo products take off in the market place? Will companies invest in sustainable supply chains, prioritizing social and environmental justice?
- We can all play a role as scientists, engineers, builders, investors, environmental advocates, and consumers
- How can we support this industry to live up to its tremendous regenerative potential !?







