

Comment Form **【FS】**

February 5, 2020

Title of the Study	Fair for Whom? Politics, Power and Precarity in Transformations of Tropical Forest-agriculture Frontiers		
Research Term	FS	FS Manager	Grace WONG
<p>General advice and comments of the EREC:</p> <p>The issues addressed by this proposal -- tropical deforestation, land-use change, and transformation to intensive agriculture -- are important global environmental change problems. Working in a number of field sites in Southeast Asia and Africa, the project intends to address two types of impacts from these processes: human wellbeing and ecosystem change, by examining bundles of outcomes and analyzing how trade-offs occur between these bundles as landscapes change. Complementing the existing literature on swidden systems transformations, the project proposes not only to study the drivers and outcomes of change processes but in particular the dynamics linking these two.</p> <p>The Committee found the proposal clear, well-written and well-structured, including a framework for explicit comparison of sites and a multiple evidence base approach. Solid social science research can be expected from this project. At the same time, there were two aspects where the project can still be enhanced. First, given that there is a large body of literature on these issues, further articulation of where and how the project will be making an original or innovative contribution would be welcome.</p> <p>Second, the project has strong potential to deliver academic research outputs, but how will it ultimately link to real-world change and policy processes? Can the research suggest not only what societal change is needed but also how to bring about such change? How to engage with policy makers (at different levels) and other powerful stakeholders? Is facilitating change and contributing to policy change something that is to be left to the project's boundary partners, or can the team plan for and actively support such engagement? This is an area where further deepening is expected.</p> <p>Finally, several Committee members wondered if the project should not also address these issues in the Amazon and Pacific regions, if only by explicitly bringing existing research findings from these areas into the project.</p> <p>In sum, while noting the need for further innovation and development of policy engagement, the Committee recommends the proposal to be considered for selection as a Full Research Project.</p>			