Negative: Deforestation

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

AFF plan enacts a ban on imported commodities that were produced with "illegal deforestation." In some poor countries, forests are cleared illegally, against local law, to plant crops for export. The "harm" <cough cough> in this case is that we aren't fulfilling a supposed commitment to the UN Conference on Climate Change. Remember kids, it's not a harm until someone gets harmed. AFF cites the "Lacey Act" as "past precedent" the plan will work. The Lacey Act bans the importation of products containing illegally harvested wildlife. Illegally in the country of origin, not the US. People have gone to federal prison under the Lacey Act for importing something that they had no idea was in some minor violation of a law that no one knew about in a foreign country, but was perfectly legal under US law. Citing the Lacey Act as an example of success means under this plan, anyone could have something in their home and be a federal felon because they didn't know someone in some foreign country did something illegal when they harvested the wood that made the object.

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Negative: Deforestation

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. A/T "UN Climate Change Conference commitments to reverse deforestation"

There is no commitment: Paris Climate Agreement is a non-binding political statement, not a treaty. The US Senate never ratified it

Jessica Durney 2017 (JD candidate at Univ. of California, Hastings College of Law) "Defining the Paris Agreement: A Study of Executive Power and Political Commitments" Carbon & Climate Law Review (accessed 7 Jan 2023) https://www.jstor.org/stable/26245362

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2. Carbon impacts exaggerated

Ohio State & Yale Study: New trends in forest management mean deforestation's carbon effects are hugely exaggerated

John Anderer 2019 (journalist) 30 Dec 2019 "Study: Deforestation ‘hugely overrated’ as threat to environment" (accessed 17 Feb 2023) https://studyfinds.org/study-deforestation-hugely-overrated-as-threat-to-environment/

It’s undeniable that cutting down trees results in more carbon being released, but a surprising new study conducted at Ohio State University and Yale University finds that prior estimates regarding the amount of damage being done to the environment as a result of deforestation may have been greatly exaggerated. Previous research had concluded that cutting down trees led to 484 billion tons of carbon being released, which would account for about a third of all manmade emissions, since 1900. However, this new set of research, which accounted for reforestation strategies (planting more trees, forest management initiatives), estimates that only 92 billion tons of carbon have entered the environment due to deforestation since 1900. That’s led the study’s authors to conclude deforestation’s contributions to climate change as “hugely overrated,” in a [release](https://news.osu.edu/lost-trees-hugely-overrated-as-environmental-threat-study-finds/). “There was a significant shift toward treating forests as a renewable, rather than nonrenewable, resource in the last century, and we estimate that those reforestation and forest management efforts have led to a far smaller [carbon burden on the environment](https://studyfinds.org/lower-carbon-diets-better-planet-healthy/),” explains Ohio State professor of environmental and resource economics Brent Sohngen in the statement.

Net health of plants on earth is increasing, not decreasing (as we would expect if deforestation and other threats were really significant)

Craig Idso 2017 (founder and former President of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change and currently serves as Chairman of the Center’s board of directors) A Half‐​Century Increase in Global Terrestrial Net Primary Production Driven Primarily by Rising Atmospheric CO2 31 Aug 2017 (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.cato.org/blog/half-century-increase-global-terrestrial-net-primary-production-driven-primarily-rising

Net primary production (NPP) represents the net carbon that is fixed (sequestered) by a given plant community or ecosystem. It is the combined product of climatic, geochemical, ecological, and human effects. In recent years, many have expressed concerns that global terrestrial NPP should be falling due to the many real (and imagined) assaults on Earth’s vegetation that have occurred over the past several decades—including wildfires, disease, pest outbreaks, and deforestation, as well as overly‐​hyped changes in temperature and precipitation.  
**END QUOTE. HE GOES ON LATER TO CONCLUDE QUOTE:**  
The observed increase in global NPP over the past five decades is quite an accomplishment for the terrestrial biosphere, especially when one considers all the negative stories—nary a day goes by without notice of some environmental disaster (human‐ or naturally‐​caused) occurring somewhere in the world and wreaking havoc on nature. Since 1980, the Earth has experienced three of the warmest decades in the modern instrumental temperature record, has weathered a handful of intense and persistent El Niño events, and suffered large‐​scale deforestation, “unprecedented” forest fires, disease and pest outbreaks, and episodes of persistent, widespread, and severe droughts and floods. Yet, despite each of these factors, and every other possible negative influence that has occurred over the past half century, terrestrial net primary productivity has increased by 21.5 percent!

World biospheric productivity is increasing (not decreasing) thanks to increased CO2 in the air

Craig Idso 2017 (founder and former President of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change and currently serves as Chairman of the Center’s board of directors) A Half‐​Century Increase in Global Terrestrial Net Primary Production Driven Primarily by Rising Atmospheric CO2 31 Aug 2017 (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.cato.org/blog/half-century-increase-global-terrestrial-net-primary-production-driven-primarily-rising

Looking to the future, the National Assessment suggests that the situation will only get worse, unless drastic steps are taken to reduce the ongoing rise in the air’s CO2 content (e.g., scaling back on the use of fossil fuels that, when burned, produce water and CO2). But is this really the case? If growing crops are increasingly affected, damage should also be showing up in the global ecosystem. Is the productivity of the biosphere in decline? In a word, no! Observational data indicate that just the opposite is occurring (see, for example, the many studies reviewed previously on this topic [here](http://www.co2science.org/subject/b/bioproductivity.php)). Rather than withering away, biospheric productivity is increasing, thanks in large measure to the growth‐​enhancing, water‐​saving, and stress‐​ameliorating benefits of atmospheric CO2 enrichment.

3. Global oxygen impact exaggerated

Forests have close to zero impact on total world oxygen supply

Prof. Scott Denning 2019 (professor of atmospheric science at Colorado State University) 26 Aug 2019 " No, the Amazon fires won’t deplete the Earth’s oxygen supply. Here’s why." (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.pbs.org/newshour/science/no-the-amazon-fires-wont-deplete-the-earths-oxygen-supply-heres-why

But virtually all of the oxygen produced by photosynthesis each year is consumed by living organisms and fires. Trees constantly shed dead leaves, twigs, roots and other litter, which feeds a rich ecosystem of organisms, mostly insects and microbes. The microbes consume oxygen in that process. Forest plants produce lots of oxygen, and forest microbes consume a lot of oxygen. As a result, net production of oxygen by forests – and indeed, all land plants – is very close to zero.

Net effect of Amazon rainforest on world oxygen is virtually zero

Frances Lopez 2019 (journalist) 9 March 2019 " Is the Amazon forest really ‘the lungs of the planet’? " (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.euronews.com/2019/09/02/is-the-amazon-forest-really-the-the-lungs-of-the-planet

The net effect of the Amazon rainforest on the amount of oxygen in the global atmosphere is “virtually zero” since the new plant matter is, almost, balanced by microbes that decompose the dead plant material, said Vincent Dubreuil, a geography professor at the University of Rennes.

No, Amazon rainforest does NOT supply a large percentage of the world's oxygen. The net is actually zero

Joakim Book 2019 (masters degree from the University of Oxford, visiting scholar at the American Institute for Economic Research) 29 Aug 2019 " Why Shouldn’t Brazil Burn Its Rainforest?" (accessed 17 Feb 2023) https://www.aier.org/article/why-shouldnt-brazil-burn-its-rainforest/

Many of the melodramatic claims are also incorrect or misleading: the fires appear to be clearing [already-deforested](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/23/world/americas/amazon-fire-brazil-bolsonaro.html) fields and not to be wildly out of control; the Amazon does not supply the planet with 20 percent of its oxygen (or even [6 percent](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/08/amazon-fires-are-political/596776/)); rather, [it consumes all the oxygen it produces](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/08/amazon-fire-earth-has-plenty-oxygen/596923/); smoke from the Amazonian fires did not fall down as [black rain](https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/21/amazon-burning-sao-paulo-s-smoke-filled-skies-make-it-dark-at-2-p-m) in [São Paolo](https://beta.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/08/20/sudden-darkness-befalls-sao-paulo-western-hemispheres-largest-city-baffling-thousands/) 3,000 kilometers away. According to the [BBC](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-49415973), meteorologists claim that residue came from entirely separate burnings much closer.

4. Can't use data from one country to estimate world impacts

Each country's climate is different - effects of deforestation in one place don't apply to other places

Julia Crook , Cornelia Klein, Sonja Folwell, Christopher M. Taylor, Douglas J. Parker, Adama Bamba, Kouakou Kouadio 2022 (Crook and Parker are with School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds, UK. Klein, Folwell and Taylor are with UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Wallingford, UK. Bamba and Kouadio are with Laboratory of Material Sciences, Environment and Solar Energy (LASMES), University Felix Houphouet Boigny, Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire ) Effects on Early Monsoon Rainfall in West Africa due to Recent Deforestation in a Convection-permitting Ensemble 24 Aug 2022 (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://wcd.copernicus.org/preprints/wcd-2022-49/wcd-2022-49.pdf

The impact of deforestation on rainfall is dependent on the spatial scale of land cover change, the surface flux characteristics of the replacement land cover, the nature of the rain-bearing systems, and the potential role of topographic and sea-breeze circulations, which makes it difficult to extrapolate what would happen in one region from what happens in another (Lawrence and Vandecar, 2014).

5. Overall, no cause for panic

Deforestation concerns aren't really a problem and even if they were, Status Quo will solve

Joakim Book 2019 (masters degree from the University of Oxford, visiting scholar at the American Institute for Economic Research) 29 Aug 2019 " Why Shouldn’t Brazil Burn Its Rainforest?" (accessed 17 Feb 2023) https://www.aier.org/article/why-shouldnt-brazil-burn-its-rainforest/

Facts and reality have never been the green movement’s [strong suit](https://capx.co/beware-the-anti-humanism-of-the-green-movement/), and it has consistently operated on emotions, scare tactics, and worst-case-scenario catastrophizing. Yes, there are fires raging in parts of the Amazon. Yes, in parts of this vast rainforest the deforestation rates have risen slightly after some years of remarkably low clearing. The hysterical environmental response we are seeing is, as usual, massively exaggerated.  It is far from obvious that clearing Amazon rainforest is a bad idea; indeed, at this stage of Brazil’s development, it is hardly unreasonable to say that they ought to convert more rainforest into agricultural land. Ninety percent of the [world’s deforestation](https://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/D/bo3770940.html) happened before 1950, and the World Wildlife Fund target of [zero net deforestation](https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/wwf_2020_zero_net_deforest_brief.pdf) looks like it will be [met next year](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4808e.pdf). Forests can be replanted, and they [overwhelmingly are](https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/12/12/why-forests-are-spreading-in-the-rich-world) — once countries grow richer, and once we’re past “[Peak Farmland](https://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/councilarticles/pdr/PDR38supplAusubel.pdf).”

On balance (with some areas increasing, some decreasing), overall world forests are doing fine

Craig Idso 2016. (founder and former President of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change and currently serves as Chairman of the Center’s board of directors ) 10 Mar 2016 " A Century of Forest Coverage Change on South Africa’s Cape Peninsula" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.cato.org/blog/century-forest-coverage-change-south-africas-cape-peninsula

Though there are indeed some locations that are suffering from a variety of maladies, there are many that are not. In fact, multiple studies reveal forests that are thriving, with many increasing in productivity and expanding their ranges (see, for example, the many reviews posted on the CO2 Science website under the heading [Greening of the Earth](http://www.co2science.org/subject/g/subject_g.php) and [Forests](http://www.co2science.org/subject/f/subject_f.php)). And they are typically accomplishing these things despite all the real and imagined assaults on Earth’s vegetation that have occurred over the past several decades. In fact, forests have more than compensated for any of the negative effects these phenomena may have inflicted upon them.

Overall plant coverage of the earth's surface is increasing over time

NATURE CLIMATE CHANGE 2016. (peer-reviewed scientific publication; article was written by [Zaichun Zhu](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Zaichun-Zhu),  [Shilong Piao](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Shilong-Piao),  [Ranga B. Myneni](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Ranga_B_-Myneni),  [Mengtian Huang](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Mengtian-Huang),  [Zhenzhong Zeng](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Zhenzhong-Zeng),  [Josep G. Canadell](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Josep_G_-Canadell),  [Philippe Ciais](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Philippe-Ciais),  [Stephen Sitch](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Stephen-Sitch),  [Pierre Friedlingstein](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Pierre-Friedlingstein),  [Almut Arneth](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Almut-Arneth),  [Chunxiang Cao](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Chunxiang-Cao),  [Lei Cheng](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Lei-Cheng),  [Etsushi Kato](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Etsushi-Kato),  [Charles Koven](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Charles-Koven),  [Yue Li](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Yue-Li),  [Xu Lian](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Xu-Lian),  [Yongwen Liu](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Yongwen-Liu),  [Ronggao Liu](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Ronggao-Liu),  [Jiafu Mao](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Jiafu-Mao),  [Yaozhong Pan](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Yaozhong-Pan),  [Shushi Peng](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Shushi-Peng),  [Josep Peñuelas](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Josep-Pe_uelas),  [Benjamin Poulter](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Benjamin-Poulter),  [Thomas A. M. Pugh](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Thomas_A__M_-Pugh),  [Benjamin D. Stocker](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Benjamin_D_-Stocker),  [Nicolas Viovy](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Nicolas-Viovy), [Xuhui Wang](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Xuhui-Wang),  [Yingping Wang](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Yingping-Wang),  [Zhiqiang Xiao](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Zhiqiang-Xiao),  [Hui Yang](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Hui-Yang),  [Sönke Zaehle](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-S_nke-Zaehle) &  [Ning Zeng](https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004#auth-Ning-Zeng) ) 25 Apr 2016 "Greening of the Earth and its drivers" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate3004

Global environmental change is rapidly altering the dynamics of terrestrial vegetation, with consequences for the functioning of the Earth system and provision of ecosystem services. Yet how global vegetation is responding to the changing environment is not well established. Here we use three long-term satellite leaf area index (LAI) records and ten global ecosystem models to investigate four key drivers of LAI trends during 1982–2009. We show a persistent and widespread increase of growing season integrated LAI (greening) over 25% to 50% of the global vegetated area, whereas less than 4% of the globe shows decreasing LAI (browning).

6. Rainforest countries are motivated to exaggerate the problem

Rainforest nations will exaggerate statistics on deforestation, hoping to get compensation for reducing it

**[Example: If a country exaggerates and claims deforestation is happening at the rate of 500 per year, then some program is implemented, and they report the "real" number as 100 per year, they will claim an 80% reduction in deforestation, even though nothing actually changed.]**

Colin Filer 2010. (Convenor of the Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Program in the Crawford School of Economics and Government at The Australian National University) The impacts of rural industry on the native forests of Papua New Guinea, Pacific Economic Bulletin Volume 25 Number 3, The Australian National University (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/37211/2/01\_Filer\_Impacts\_of\_Rural\_Industry\_on\_2010.pdf

There is a perverse incentive for the governments of ‘rainforest nations’ to exaggerate the past, present and future rates of deforestation and forest degradation in order to claim a reward for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from a fictitious or exaggerated baseline to a level that approximates the real trajectory (Filer et al. 2009). This makes particular sense for a government that cannot do much to alter the real trajectory, since the cost of solving a non-existent problem is much lower than the benefit that might be gained from persuading other stakeholders that it has ‘in fact’ been solved.

Example: Papua New Guinea made up numbers to exaggerate deforestation to claim rewards for (seeming to) reduce it

Colin Filer 2010. (Convenor of the Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Program in the Crawford School of Economics and Government at The Australian National University) The impacts of rural industry on the native forests of Papua New Guinea, Pacific Economic Bulletin Volume 25 Number 3, The Australian National University (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/37211/2/01\_Filer\_Impacts\_of\_Rural\_Industry\_on\_2010.pdf

As a leading member of the Coalition for Rainforest Nations, Papua New Guinea (PNG) has a vested interest in proving to the international community that it could reduce the volume of greenhouse gas emissions from the process of deforestation and forest degradation if suitable financial incentives were to be provided for such action. An assessment of the baseline or ‘business-as-usual’ scenario for emissions from this process is therefore crucial to current debate about the relationship between national forest policy and measures taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This paper shows that the PNG government’s own attempts to construct a baseline scenario for the contribution made to this process by logging and agribusiness companies have ignored a number of significant supply-side constraints on their economic activities, both in the past and in the future. This can be understood as the result of a perverse incentive for the governments of ‘rainforest nations’ to exaggerate the past, present and future rates of deforestation or forest degradation in order to claim a reward for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from a fictitious or exaggerated baseline to a level which approximates the real trajectory.

SOLVENCY

1. No definition of "forest land"

**This isn't just the Negative team being picky. The lack of a consistent definition of "forest land" in the scientific and political literature is actually a big problem for policymakers internationally. If an environment in a certain place has 1 tree per square meter, is that "forested"? Does it need to have 2 per square meter? What if it has 3 trees per square meter but they're the type that grow rapidly, so if they're cut down, they'd grow back again in a few months - does that count as "forested" or "deforested"?**

Competing definitions of "forest land" exist and some of them aren't practical. Different climates and environments require different evaluation and the whole thing needs more study

Joss Lyons-White, Edward H.B. Pollard, Allison S. Catalano, Andrew T. Knight 2020. (Lyons-White - Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College London. Pollard - The Biodiversity Consultancy, King's Parade, Cambridge, England. Catalano - Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College London. Knight - Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College London) December 2020 ONE EARTH "Rethinking zero deforestation beyond 2020 to more equitably and effectively conserve tropical forests" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590332220305972 (brackets added)

The Accountability Framework Initiative (AFI; [accountability-framework.org](https://accountability-framework.org/)) has sought to build consensus across stakeholder groups on acceptable definitions of “forest” for supply-chain commitments. The AFI settled on the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) definition of ≥0.5 hectares with trees taller than 5 m[eters] and canopy cover >10%, excluding land predominantly under agricultural or other uses.  The AFI recognizes the HCSA as a practical tool to implement no deforestation in contexts where it has been validated. Consensus around the AFI definition is welcome, but it is difficult to apply a single definition of “forest” worldwide because management objectives and social, economic, and ecological processes vary across countries and regions. In Liberia, for example, trees regenerate rapidly due to favorable climatic conditions, and abandoned agricultural areas may quickly satisfy AFI/FAO forest definitions ([Figure 1](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590332220305972" \l "fig1)). During development of the national REDD+ Reference Level, some areas that satisfied Liberia's national forest definition (>1 ha with trees >5 m and >30% tree cover) were erroneously identified by field teams as agricultural fallows, illuminating the potential for contrasting perceptions of land uses and land types. Scrub/forest areas accounting for 15% of Liberia's extent were assessed in a desk-based RSPO consulting report as “aligning well” with the HCSA's definition of “young regenerating forest.”  This assessment requires further investigation.

2. A/T "The Lacey Act proves AFF plan will work" - Actually it proves it will fail

**The "Lacey Act" is an existing US law that bans importation of non-native species into the United States. AFF cites it as an example of success of something like when their plan was done before, but it actually proves failure.**

Lacey Act buries everyone in useless paperwork that fails at actually enforcing anything

International Wood Products Association 2012 (leading trade association for the international wood products industry in North America) 31 Jan 2012 "The Declaration Requirement: An experiment that failed" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.iwpawood.org/page/189/The-Lacey-Act-and-You-Volume-4.htm

One of the most expensive and ineffective provisions of the 2008 Lacey amendment was the mandate that all products containing plant or plant material imported into the U.S. had to be accompanied by an import declaration form. This form had to include the scientific name of the plant, the value of the importation, the quantity of the plant, and the name of the country from which the plant was taken—a bureaucratic burden had never before been required since Lacey’s original enactment in 1900. The declaration is such a heavy-handed regulatory overreach that even the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS)—the federal agency responsible for its implementation—described it as “burdensome,” “prohibitively expensive,” and “difficult if not impossible” to comply with. Since its implementation in 2008, the declaration requirement has not been associated with a single conviction under the Lacey Act, nor have any of the current Lacey investigations originated from the declaration form. Beyond lacking any real enforcement benefit, the process is burying the federal government—and honest business owners—under tons of paperwork, both figuratively and literally. According to APHIS’ own calculations, the agency is receiving approximately 9,200 declarations per week with annual burden to government and industry of up to $56 million. Not only has this crush of paperwork forced APHIS to stop incorporating new HTS codes as required by statute, but there is no ability to examine these import declarations, which have been stockpiled in warehouses.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Distracts us from the real threats

Worry about deforestation is bad because it distracts us from the real threat: industrial carbon emissions

John Anderer 2019 (journalist) 30 Dec 2019 "Study: Deforestation ‘hugely overrated’ as threat to environment" (accessed 17 Feb 2023) https://studyfinds.org/study-deforestation-hugely-overrated-as-threat-to-environment/

“Previous estimates overestimated net emissions because they did not take account of the planting and management of global forests over the last 70 years that was undertaken to build a renewable timber forest,” notes study co-author Robert Mendelsohn of Yale. “This forest renewal was a market response to the expectation that old-growth timber was going to run out by the 1990s. Companies started planting and managing forests in the 1950s to fill this gap, and the timber industry quietly switched from being a nonrenewable mining industry to a renewable forest-crop industry.” The study’s authors believe that [environmental activists](https://studyfinds.org/climate-change-major-news-coverage/) should focus the majority of their attention on industrial carbon emissions, not deforestation.

2. Deepens Third World poverty

The reason they're converting forest land is to escape from poverty, and we shouldn't stop them

Joakim Book 2019 (masters degree from the University of Oxford, visiting scholar at the American Institute for Economic Research) 29 Aug 2019 " Why Shouldn’t Brazil Burn Its Rainforest?" (accessed 17 Feb 2023) https://www.aier.org/article/why-shouldnt-brazil-burn-its-rainforest/

Transforming relatively unproductive rainforest land into relatively more productive agricultural land would improve the livelihood of some of Brazil’s poorest people — indeed, this is the primary reason they are doing what they’re doing. Indeed, why would we not want people to take advantage of a major asset at their doorstep, an asset that may fuel their growth and transition into a richer life?

3. Punishes the innocent

AFF cites the Lacey Act as a model of success for their plan. But Lacey punishes honest businessmen for transactions done in good faith

**The Lacey Act makes it illegal to possess products made with wildlife that were caught in violation of the source country's laws. But a US citizen cannot possibly know all the laws that exist inside a foreign country. AFF's plan will have the same problem: US citizens cannot possibly know whether the products they buy might have violated even 1 deforestation law in the country of origin.**

Joe Luppino-Esposito 2012 (Director of Rule of Law Initiatives at the Heritage Foundation) 7 May 2012 " The Lacey Act: From Conservation to Criminalization" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.heritage.org/crime-and-justice/report/the-lacey-act-conservation-criminalization

The Lacey Act was the first federal wildlife conservation statute, narrowly targeted at the interstate sale in poached game. But in the century since its enactment, the statute’s scope has been enormously expanded to the point that it now incorporates the wildlife and trade laws of every foreign nation. As a result, it has become a trap for the unwary, placing honest businessmen and businesswomen at risk of criminal liability for unknowing violations of hyper-technical foreign laws and regulations. In short, the Lacey Act has become the poster child for the phenomenon of overcriminalization and should be at the top of Congress’s list for reform.

Example of how Lacey punishes the innocent: Importing lobsters in a plastic bag

Joe Luppino-Esposito 2012 (Director of Rule of Law Initiatives at the Heritage Foundation) 7 May 2012 " The Lacey Act: From Conservation to Criminalization" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.heritage.org/crime-and-justice/report/the-lacey-act-conservation-criminalization

Since the beginning of the debate on the Lacey Act, Congress has been concerned about how the statute may affect legitimate business.  The result, one century later, is that the individuals who try to act within the law are too often ensnared by the Lacey Act. David McNab and Abner Schoenwetter, who were engaged in the lobster trade, were convicted under the Lacey Act for importing undersized lobsters in 1999. In addition, some of the lobsters were also egg-bearing, and all of them were shipped in plastic bags instead of cardboard boxes. These were not requirements of American environmental law, but requirements of Honduran law—requirements that Honduran courts later determined were invalid.  Nonetheless, McNab and Schoenwetter were sentenced to eight years in prison. Due to the low level of criminal intent required for conviction, it did not matter that the two men were unaware of the Honduran environmental regulations.

4. Harms US constitutional process

Link: AFF claims US "commitments" to the climate agreement are binding and we're harmed (somehow?!) if we don't follow them

That's in their 1AC

Link: Constitutional violation. Calling a commitment "binding" that wasn't ratified by 2/3 vote of the Senate violates the Constitution's definition of a treaty

Dr Marlo Lewis 2016. (Ph.D. in Government from Harvard University)"The Paris Climate Agreement Is a Treaty Requiring Senate Review" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://cei.org/studies/the-paris-climate-agreement-is-a-treaty-requiring-senate-review/

To safeguard America’s economic future and capacity for self-government, congressional leaders must expose Obama’s climate diplomacy as an attempted end-run around the Constitution’s treaty-making process. They should do so before the President signs the Agreement on Earth Day, April 22, at a United Nations ceremony in New York. The centerpiece of this counteroffensive should be a Sense of Congress resolution emphasizing a clear and simple message: The Paris Agreement is a treaty, and therefore, under Article II, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, the United States is not a party, and therefore not bound to its terms, unless the Senate ratifies it. Absent Senate approval, Obama’s climate pledges to the United Nations are just administration proposals, not commitments of the United States.

Dilemma: Either it's binding and it violates the Constitution. Or it's not binding and the harms of the AFF case evaporate

…since their "harms" were based on not keeping a commitment, that we don't even legally have.

Impact: Respecting constitutional separation of powers is key to avoiding tyranny

Jonathan Masters 2017 (leads writers and editors who produce wide-ranging content for Council on Foreign Relations. BA in political science from Emory University and an MA in social theory from the New School) 2 Mar 2017 " U.S. Foreign Policy Powers: Congress and the President" (accessed 18 Feb 2023) https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-foreign-policy-powers-congress-and-president

The periodic tug-of-war between the president and Congress over foreign policy is not a by-product of the Constitution, but rather, one of its core aims. The drafters distributed political power and imposed checks and balances to ward off monarchical tyranny embodied by Britain’s King George III.