

PROTECTION, PRODUCTION, PROSPERITY:
COSTA RICAN FARMERS RESPOND TO THE WINDBREAKS PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

In 1991 and 1992, farmers in Monteverde, Costa Rica participated in a reforestation project that involved installing windbreaks. The project was implemented by a local conservation organization. This thesis aims to add to the body of social research that has been conducted on the relationship between the farmers, the windbreaks, and the local organization that implemented the project. It examines farmers' motivations for involvement in the Windbreaks Project, benefits and disadvantages of windbreaks, management of natural resources and assistance needed, opinions of past reforestation activities, and economic impacts of the windbreaks. Findings show that farmers indicated conservation benefits of the windbreaks as well as a wide range of techniques used in the management of natural resources. The most common among these included enclosing resources, avoiding damage to resources, and engaging in reforestation. Most farmers indicated positive opinions of the past reforestation activities and are willing to participate in future activities. However, some farmers lamented the Monteverde Conservation League's current lack of presence in the countryside. Communication between this local social organization and the farmers in the area around Monteverde needs to be reestablished prior to the implementation of any new reforestation activities.