

PUBLICATION FACTS

JOURNAL

JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT

PUBLICATION DATE

2018

VOLUME/ISSUE

89

PAGES

306-333

AUTHORS

Blackman, Allen
Goff, Leonard
Rivera Planter, Marisol

DOES ECO-CERTIFICATION STEM TROPICAL DEFORESTATION? FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL CERTIFICATION IN MEXICO

ABSTRACT

Since its creation more than 25 years ago as a voluntary, market-based approach to improving forest management, forest certification has proliferated rapidly in developing countries. Yet we know little about whether and under what conditions it affects deforestation. We use rich forest management unit-level panel data including information on deforestation, certification, regulatory permitting, and geophysical and socioeconomic land characteristics along with matched difference-in-differences models to identify the effect of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification on deforestation in Mexico, the country with the third-highest number of FSC certifications in the developing world. We test for a variety of different temporal and subgroup effects but are unable to reject the null hypothesis that certification does not affect deforestation. (C) 2018 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

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