

But it seems unlikely that rural birth rates would fall to urban levels, given that in Europe (where contraception is available everywhere) rural households do still have larger families than city dwellers.

Access to contraception cannot be considered the original driving force behind fertility decline as, historically, fertility declined in Europe without modern contraceptives; the desire for smaller families created the demand for contraceptives, not vice versa. Furthermore, in Addis Ababa, family size correlates positively with wealth. Poverty is associated with failure to marry, increased rates of divorce, and slower birth rates after marriage (2), when the wealthy presumably have as good or better access to medical facilities than the poor.

Demographers have always focused heavily on the proximate determinants of fertility, especially since Bongaarts's classic paper (3), but often to the exclusion of any underlying theory of reproductive decision-making. Emphasis on proximate determinants cannot answer questions such as why families of particular sizes are favored, or when fertility is predicted to stop declining (an earlier notion that fertility decline would stop at replacement levels is not supported by the very low fertility now seen in Europe). Demography has been described by its own practitioners as a field without a theory (4). Evolutionary demographers are attempting to provide that theory through the related fields of human behavioral ecology, evolutionary life history theory, and cultural evolution. It is possible that demand for contraceptive services will eventually be so high everywhere that much of the variation in fertility will disappear; but even if so, the question of why demand for contraception is so high still needs to be addressed. **RUTH MACE**

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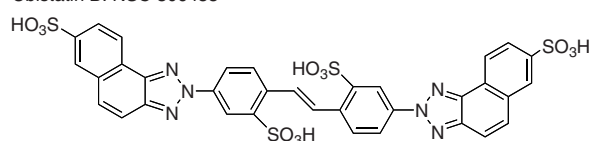
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Financing Tropical Forest Preservation

IN THEIR REVIEW "CLIMATE CHANGE, DEFOR-estation, and the fate of the Amazon" (11 January, p. 169), Y. Malhi *et al.* advocate international incentives to reduce tropical deforestation and limit climate change through programs that they admit will require extensive time and effort to develop. But while seeking

Reports: "Ubistatins inhibit proteasome-dependent degradation by binding the ubiquitin chain" by R. Verma *et al.* (1 October 2004, p. 117). In Fig. 1D, the structure of ubistatin B is incorrect. The correct structure is shown here. The reported results for ubistatin B are correct and reproducible; the only error was in the reporting of the structure.

Ubistatin B: NSC 306455



TECHNICAL COMMENT ABSTRACTS

COMMENT ON "Habitat Split and the Global Decline of Amphibians"

David C. Cannatella

Becker *et al.* (Reports, 14 December 2007, p. 1775) reported that forest amphibians with terrestrial development are less susceptible to the effects of habitat degradation than those with aquatic larvae. However, analysis with more appropriate statistical methods suggests there is no evidence for a difference between aquatic-reproducing and terrestrial-reproducing species.

Full text at www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/ful/320/5878/874c

RESPONSE TO COMMENT ON "Habitat Split and the Global Decline of Amphibians"

Carlos Roberto Fonseca, Carlos Guilherme Becker, Célio Fernando Baptista Haddad, Paulo Inácio Prado

Habitat split, defined as human-induced disconnection between habitats used by different life history stages of a species, is a strong factor negatively affecting the richness of Brazilian Atlantic Forest amphibians. Here, the disconnection between streams and forest fragments is shown to reduce the proportion of species with aquatic larvae in local communities.

Full text at www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/ful/320/5878/874d

these kinds of long-term solutions to reduce fossil fuel dependence and global carbon emissions, we need stopgap remedies that require limited technological advances, will not jeopardize developing economies, and have a high chance of success.

Although many promote limitation of tropical deforestation as critical to alleviating climate change (1), the relative importance of tropical versus boreal forests as carbon sinks remains uncertain (2). Preserving tropical forests may curb net carbon emissions and protect substantial amounts of global biodiversity. However, the capacity of developing nations to manage tropical forests appears limited in terms of current administrative infrastructure, technical knowledge, and political or economic stability. It is essential, therefore, to focus initial attention on the carbon sequestering potential of existing boreal forests (3). The financial resources and administrative capacity of the boreal nations (Canada, Russia, the United States, Finland, Sweden, and Norway) make such action possible, even in the face of increasing demands for harvesting. This approach is also fair, given that global warming is a problem that was created primarily by developed nations.

We propose that carbon credit funds be immediately directed toward preserving

boreal forests. Boreal countries should then reinvest these carbon funds to build capacity, buy land, swap forests for debt, and provide alternative livelihoods in developing tropical nations. This will result in substantial carbon and biodiversity benefits overall in both boreal and tropical regions.

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Letters to the Editor

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