Undertaking large-scale forest restoration to generate ecosystem services

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The global community is seeking to substantially restore the world's forest cover to improve the supply of ecosystem services.

Table 1. The relationship between increasing tree species richness, the traits of these species, and the provisioning of ecosystem services.

a higher level of species richness is also an advantage when the objective is to improve landscape aesthetics or provide recreational opportunities. Between these two patterns are a large number of ecosystem services that can be supplied by restoring some, but not necessarily all, of the former species richness. In most cases, the supply of these services increases in proportion to any increase in species richness (indicated by line B in Fig. 1). Examples of these relationships are soil conservation, watershed protection, and the restoration of soil fertility. Not all of the relationships are clear and many are also in uenced by species traits, the relative proportions of species used in planting mixtures as well as by planting densities (which affect the extent of understory development). The landscape context is also important (see further below).

An example of the uncertainties in these relationships is provided by the relationship between diversity and hydrological processes. Annual water yields and dry season ows are often of major concern to those undertaking restoration. But the in uence of species richness on hydrological processes is complicated; any kind of restoration will increase evapotranspiration and diminish stream ows but, at the same time, restoration of severely degraded lands may also improve water in ltration rates, increase groundwater stores, and reduce overland ows. The impact on base ow and whether or not dry season stream-

ow improves then depends on the relative importance of these two processes (Bruijnzeel 2004). Some evidence suggests that multispecies plantings may use more water than monocultures and thus reduce both annual and seasonal water ows (Table 1). But other studies have not found this relationship. Likewise, the effect of multispecies plantings on the in ltration capacity of soils also remains unclear (Table 1). However, the net impact depends as well on the proportions of different species used and their transpiration rates, differences in growth rates and rates of rainfall interception by canopies and litter, as well as differ-al ences in understory biomass and the way forests are managed (Lacombe et al. 2015). Finally, hydrological relationships are also in uenced by location and scale (see further below). In summary, it is possible that planting a simple species mixture may improve dry season ow in heavily degraded sites but, more generally, it seems that hydrological ows are not as strongly in uenced by species richness as by a variety of other factors. The issue obviously deserves further investigation.

These same uncertainties also exist in our understanding of the processes underlying the delivery of many other ecosystem services as well (Birkhofer et al. 2015). Re ecting this, the relationships in Table 1 are shown as A–B, B–C, or A–B–C depending on the evidence that is currently available. This means that, of the 12 ecosystem services reviewed, there was evidence for relationship A in 8 cases, for relationship B in 9 cases, and relationship C in 5 cases. In short, relatively modest numbers of tree species are likely to generate a number of ecosystem services although different species may be more effective than others depending on their traits and on the service required. But the evidence also suggests a wider variety of ecosystem services will be generated when a larger number of species are used. Interestingly, van der Plas et al. (2016) have noted that more species can generate a greater degree of multifunctionality when only moderate levels of functioning are required but that this diversity may be negatively related when higher levels of functioning are required for certain services. Again, much depends on the species traits.

Spatial Location of Restoration and the Generation of Ecosystem Services

Despite the prominence given in the literature to biodiversity–ecological functioning relationships, the diversity of tree species is not the only factor in uencing the extent to which restoration generates ecosystem services. Locations are also important because landscapes are not uniform and some locations are more critical than others for certain ecosystem services (Table 2). Note that some of these critical sites may occupy a large proportion of a particular landscape (e.g. steep lands) while others, though functionally important, may occupy only small areas.

The spatial location of restoration is obviously important for reducing erosion but it is also in uences hydrological ows. For example, in subhumid areas, tree planting on foot slopes or in riverine locations has a much larger effect on groundwater use than when carried out at locations further w5ysc9feiw5yspr frueancesthe and ()01(nalnsity)-3796(byt)-778.6(acelnerating)-378.6levtrnesporation to caeffited w(atiatiable));fifted 0 -1.2096 TD [(of)-010.3(r(fo(esration)-026.6(c)-0.1

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 Table 2. Locations within landscapes where restoration can help generate various ecosystem services.

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Control of erosion	Steep slopes	By stabilizing soil surfaces and impeding soil movement (Vanacker et al. 2007; Wang et al. 2012).
Control of sedimentation, improved water quality	Riverine areas	By reducing stream bank erosion and limiting soil and

et al. 2013). Most of these studies separated the year-to-year variation on stream ow from the effects of land cover changes using hydrological modeling approaches but the reliability of such analyses is severely constrained by uncertainties in areal rainfall inputs. As noted earlier, reforestation can also have pos-

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and institutions will be needed encourage the use of these new approaches and to facilitate the necessary trade-offs needed to implement them across large landscapes.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to colleagues J. Aronson, S. Bruijnzeel, R. Chazdon, P. Erskine, and B. Jackson for offering feedback on drafts of the manuscript.

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