

Contemporary Colonization and Deforestation in the Mexican Tropics: The Case of Sierra Santa Marta

Leticia Durand

*Coordination de Posgrade, Institute de Investigaciones Antropologicas. Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Ciudad Universitaria, CP 04510 Mexico, D.F.
Fax: 622 9651, E-mail: leticiad@servidor.unam.mx*

KEYWORDS Colonization. Deforestation. Agricultural Settlement. Tropical Resources Use

ABSTRACT The present paper describe the percent colonization of Sierra Santa Marta, Mexico, and evaluate the relationship between colonization and deforestation. Ten communities in the area were visited for this purpose. It was found out that colonization, the evolution of productive systems and the use of biological resources in the new settlements, were related to national social and economical policies which did not consider environmental factors. Tropical colonization and its ecological consequences cannot be properly understood without taking into account the regional and national influences.