

Faculty Profile

Alix Peterson Zwane is an Assistant Cooperative Extension Specialist in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UC Berkeley. Alix received her Ph.D. in Public Policy from Harvard University in 2002.

Alix's recent research in the areas of environmental and resource economics has focused on climate change and deforestation. Her dissertation research on deforestation investigates whether available evidence supports the common hypothesis that households living near tropical forests clear additional land over time because they cannot finance desired agricultural investments. Using data from Peru, Alix shows that income is positively correlated with land clearing, though at a decreasing rate, and, that because of labor market constraints, land clearing is positively correlated with household size. Marginal increases in income are not associated with increased fertilizer expenditure. In this case, policies to reduce both poverty and deforestation may exist, but small increases in incomes of the poorest are unlikely to reduce deforestation. Targeted support for the purchase of inputs and improvements in local labor markets may be more effective tools to raise incomes and reduce pressure on forests.

Her work on climate change enters the debate over an international climate change regime. In a paper published in the *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, Jeffrey Sachs, Theodore Panayotou and Alix suggest a means by which equity concerns may be addressed in treaty negotiations. They develop a system of income transfers that is motivated by the difference between the damage caused by a country and the damage suffered by that country as a result of climate change. Their results suggest that transfers flow from temperate to tropical countries, but the degree of uncertainty associated with these calculations is very large.

Alix's ongoing research and outreach focuses on issues at the intersection of globalization, the environment and agriculture. With Colin Carter at UC Davis, she has analyzed the impacts of the recent Farm Bill for California's agricultural trade, with particular emphasis on the new requirement that fresh fruits and vegetables be labeled at the retail level to inform consumers of their country of origin.



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Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics \hat{E}
UC Berkeley \hat{E}

They wrote an article on this topic which appears in this issue of the *ARE Update*. Other research investigates how the private sector might be encouraged to invest in R&D for tropical agriculture. She hopes to help organize a conference on globalization and agriculture for the Fall of 2003.

While at Harvard, Alix was based at the Center for International Development at the Kennedy School of Government where she taught in Executive Education courses on climate change and development and did other consulting and outreach work. This experience helped prepare her for the challenges of Cooperative Extension.

Alix and her husband, Thabiso Zwane, live in San Francisco with their cats. They enjoy cooking and gardening. Long-time Bostonians, they are exploring Northern California. In response to a frequently asked question: her last name is pronounced "zwah-neh."

Alix Peterson Zwane can be contacted by e-mail at zwane@are.berkeley.edu or by telephone at (510) 642-7628.