

COURSE REPORT

Training-for-Trainers of Tropical Forest Restoration

February 10 to March 10, 2014

An online course organized by:

The Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative (ELTI)

Background: With increasing global awareness about the importance of rehabilitating degraded landscapes and the expansion of ecological restoration as a field of study, a growing number of people throughout the tropics are becoming actively involved with, or are planning to implement, restoration projects. In many cases these people are trainers who bring knowledge back to their communities and organizations, implement projects at the local level and disseminate restoration techniques. This online course aimed to teach a range of strategies, tools, resources and perspectives to restoration trainers and practitioners who serve to teach those individuals involved with the implementation of tropical forest restoration initiatives.

Contents: Through a series of discussions, presentations and exercises, this course provided a platform for individuals from diverse sectors to share methods and experiences for teaching and providing technical assistance on tropical forest restoration. The course was divided into the following four thematic modules:

Module 1. Actors and sectors involved in restoration training

Module 2. ELTI's site-based approach to capacity building to meet local needs

Module 3. Training pedagogy of other organizations

Module 4. International networks and communities on restoration

For the majority of the course content, the participants completed homework according to their own schedules. However, an important component of this course was the weekly live sessions, during which participants met during predetermined blocks of two to three hours on the Saturday at the end of each module in order to participate in the videoconferences and live discussion sections.

During the course, participants completed homework assignments that were directed towards helping them to develop a training plan that related the course content to the participants' own work. The sections of the training plan included: target audience, subjects covered, modalities of teaching and methods of evaluating success of training activities.

ELTI is a joint initiative of:



Participants: Thirty participants were selected from a large pool of applicants. Coming from 11 different countries, the participants worked in local and national government, non-governmental organizations, private companies, academia and public-private partnerships and were selected for their achievement and potential as trainers on tropical forest restoration in Latin America.

Educational Tools: This course included presentations, readings, videoconferences and live discussion sections to guide the learning process each week. Each module was structured according to the following pedagogical framework for online learning:

Inform, Confirm, Extend, Reflect

Informing about the topic (Monday through Friday)

- Pre-recorded guest lectures depicting video and audio of the speaker along with the PowerPoint slides;
- Optional and required readings to complement the presentations;

Confirming knowledge (Monday through Friday)

- Quizzes about the presentations and readings

Extending or expanding on the themes with live interaction (Saturdays)

- Live videoconferences and discussion panels to interact with facilitators and guest experts
- Group discussions to interact with classmates

Reflecting on the themes of the week (Sundays)

- Discussion forums where the participants publish questions, answers, and reflections
- Short answer assignments related to the final project where the participants analyze and reflect on how the material learned each week relates to their professional development.

Framework adapted from the ICE framework by Dr. Jim Rolf, Yale University

Image of a live panel discussion on Restoration Networks and International Communities. Features of the live session include webcams of presenters (bottom left), participants in the session (top left), powerpoint slides (middle), and simultaneous comments in the "Chat" feature.

The screenshot shows a live online session interface. At the top, the title bar reads "Conferencia de Entrenamiento para Capacitadores en Restauración de Bosques Tropicales" with language and help options. The main window is divided into four panels:

- Top Left (Participants):** A list of 23 users with status, name, and media icons. Visible names include ececon61@gmail, Gillian Bloomfield, Ana Maria Benavides, Ana Peña, Carlos Alexander, Carlos Manuel, Cesar Castañeda, César Raziel Lucio, Dave Kramer, Eder Guillermo, ELTI Invitado, ELTI Observador, and ELTI Observador.
- Middle (Presentation):** A slide titled "Entrenamiento para Capacitadores en Restauración de Bosques Tropicales" with the ELTI logo. The content includes a welcome message "¡Bienvenido al 4ro Sesión en Vivo!", an itinerary for the session, and a prompt to write in the chat. The itinerary lists: Panelistas hablar uno por uno por ~10 minutos sobre su trabajo con varios redes y comunidades de restauración/conservación. (~60min); Dialogo entre los panelistas y puedo hacer preguntas introductorias (~30min); Preguntas y hay dialogo entre todos (~45 min). The chat prompt says "Mientras esperamos, para romper el hielo... Escriba en el chat su: Árbol favorito". A link is provided: "Mi favorito: Cedro Espino (Pachira quinata) en Panamá →". A photo of a tree is shown.
- Bottom Left (Webcams):** A grid of video feeds for participants. Visible feeds are labeled EC, GI, EL, and D.
- Right (Chat):** A chat window with a "Public" tab. It shows a list of messages with timestamps. Visible messages include: "A mi me gusta mucho las tabebuias", "Hola Eder, muy bueno el material que compartiste por email! lo estuve mirando esta mañana", "Leucaena leucocephala", and "Olvia! Leucaena es una invasora en Brasil, hay muchas por toda parte por aca".

Instructors and Coordinators: The delivery and management of the course was facilitated by:

- **Gillian Bloomfield**, M.F.S (USA), Web-Based Training Program Coordinator, Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative (ELTI) at Yale University.

Additional guest facilitation was provided by:

- **Aníbal Ramírez Soto**, M.Sc. (Mexico) Coordinator of the Ecoforest Program, Pronatura Veracruz, A.C.

Recorded guest lectures and live discussion sections were delivered by:

- **José Ignacio Barrera Cataño**, Ph.D. (Colombia), Professor at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, President of the Iberoamerican and Caribbean Society for Ecological Restoration;
- **Zoraida Calle**, M.Sc. (Colombia), Center for Research in Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems (CIPAV);
- **Eliane Ceccon**, Ph.D. (Brazil & Mexico), Researcher at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinator of the Committee on the Implementation of the Mexican Strategy for Plant Conservation, CONABIO;
- **Cecilia del Cid-Liccardi**, M.F. (USA & Guatemala), Coordinator of the Neotropical Training Program, Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative (ELTI) at Yale University;
- **David Kramer**, M.A. (USA), Facilitator of the Virtual Network for Conservation Training, EcoLogic Development Fund;
- **Florencia Montagnini**, Ph.D. (USA & Argentina), Yale University, School of Forestry & Environmental Studies;
- **Carolina Murcia**, Ph.D. (Colombia), Research Scientist and Specialist in Restoration Ecology, Adjunct Professor at the University of Florida. Scientist at the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS);
- **Daniel R. Pérez**, Lic. Esp. (Argentina), Titled Professor of Intervention in Degraded Landscapes, Coordinator of the Network for Ecological Restoration of Argentina; and
- **Severino Rodrigo Ribeiro Pinto**, Ph.D. (Brazil), Director for the Center of Environmental Research of the Northeast (CEPAN).

Jude Breidenbach and Gillian Bloomfield managed the recording and editing of pre-recorded guest lectures, with support from the Yale Office of Digital Dissemination & Online Education.

Course objectives

- Present the actors, sectors and international networks involved in restoration training;
- Discuss and evaluate the methods that ELTI and other organizations use for capacity building for tropical forest restoration; and
- Offer the space for dialogue and learning in which the participants can get to know each other and share experiences, concepts and practical tools with the course facilitators and other guest experts.

Outcomes and Follow-up: Twenty-seven participants actively engaged in the course and developed restoration-training plans. These participants also benefited tremendously from the feedback they received from the instructors and their peers. In the months following the course, ELTI will follow-up with the participants to evaluate: (1) how the course and the term paper may have influenced their professional development; and (2) how they are progressing with their efforts to training the implementers of tropical forest restoration.



This event was possible thanks to Arcadia Fund, whose Environmental Conservation grants support programmes that protect and enhance biodiversity, and provide field training and academic research (www.arcadiahfund.org.uk). For more information about ELTI, please visit our website: <http://environment.yale.edu/elti>.