



# ***Biodiversity threats and patterns in the Asian tropics***

*Alice C. Hughes*  
*Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden*  
*Chinese Academy of Sciences*

**Thursday, 9 May 2019**  
**12:45 - 14:00**

**Venue: KB 419, Knowles Building**  
**The University of Hong Kong**

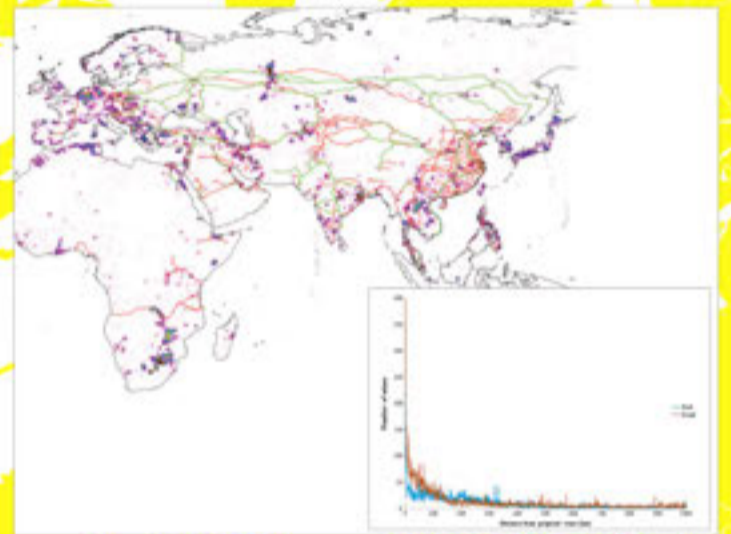
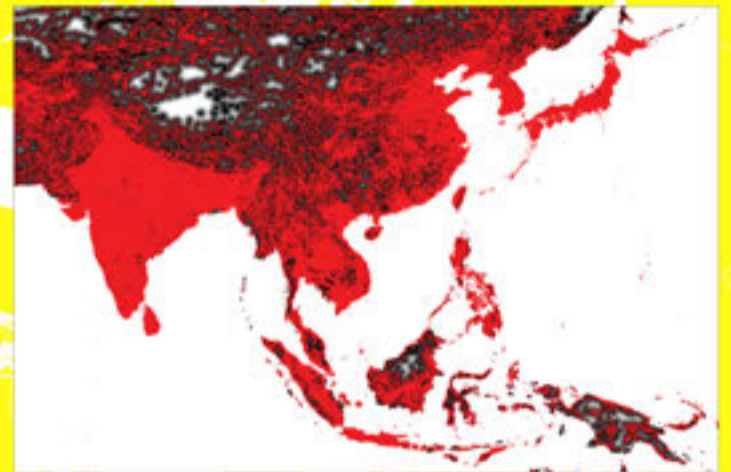
**Hosted by the Division of Landscape Architecture**

*This event is free and open to the public*

Despite their high levels of biodiversity and endemism, the Asian tropics are frequently forgotten in global discourse on tropical biodiversity loss. Here, in addition to mapping regional biodiversity patterns, I explore the main threats to the region's biodiversity, evaluating their relative impact and outlining the prognosis for different areas and key ecosystems. Much of Asia has reached a point of almost no return for much of its native biodiversity, with rates of undocumented road building in many parts of the region (e.g., 90% of roads in central Kalimantan are unmapped) symptomatic of the rapid deforestation and exploitation of natural resources and native species in these regions. I also discuss priorities for action and implementation, approaches to setting these priorities, and the major barriers to implementing the necessary policy and management protocols to secure a future for the region's biodiversity. Finally, I discuss scalable conservation approaches and the role of intergovernmental agreements in enforcing various regulations (e.g., SDGs, Aichi targets) to try to change the trajectory of this region and its threatened biota.

Alice C. Hughes is Associate Professor at Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China, and Vice Director of their Field Studies Program. Alice has worked extensively across the Tropics, and previously held positions in Thailand, Australia, Costa Rica, and the UK. Her work focuses on patterns of biodiversity and drivers of biodiversity change, at various spatiotemporal scales in order to develop pro-active management strategies that aim to mitigate the impacts of human activities on biodiversity. Hughes is a board member of the Association of Tropical Biology and Conservation, the Society for Conservation Biology, the European Tropical Ecology Society, and the International Network of Next Generation Ecologists. She is Secretary of the Asia-Pacific Chapter of the ATBC, and Chair of the Capacity Building and Meetings committees. Hughes is actively engaged in capacity building, with a focus on real-world conservation and management issues. Since 2012 she has directly trained over 500 students from over 40 countries and organized training for many more. She has organized conferences on key issues such as trans-boundary conservation, the illegal wildlife trade, and climate change ecology.

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(Top) Mapping roads across the Asian region as a basis for understanding their impact on fragmentation and as a driver of other forms of biodiversity loss.

(Center) The relationship between planned Belt and Road Initiative routes and mine density across Eurasia and Africa.

(Bottom) Mapping roads of Borneo based on different datasets and the importance of data selection on analysis and ultimately conservation and management conclusions.



Alice C. Hughes. Photo © Chien C. Lee.