

Tropical biology and conservation in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic

As Biotropica's Editors wrote in a recent open letter (<http://biotropica.org/a-letter-to-the-biotropica-community/>), the global COVID-19 pandemic has been reshaping our workplaces, homelife, and schedules so rapidly that it is often hard to keep up with the pace of change. The speed at which the pandemic spread across the globe is frightening, but also underscores the deep connections among people, communities, countries, and ecosystems. This crisis calls for a deep reflection on the impact of the pandemic to biodiversity and conservation, as well as the role of tropical biologists and conservationists in a world undergoing rapid change during and after a public health crisis. The apparent zoonotic origin of the new coronavirus suggests a particularly vital role for tropical research moving forward. Beyond research, the COVID-19 pandemic also speaks to how we practice science. Given the nature and geographic extent of COVID-19, solving the current crisis depends on highly collaborative research networks, including scientists from different geographical areas and backgrounds. This is the very nature of tropical biology, which highlights the importance and responsibility of tropical scientists to the current crisis.

The Editorial Board and the leadership of the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) are planning a series of activities over the next year to explore these issues, including webinars, activities, and *Biotropica* commentaries. These activities will feature diverse voices and perspectives on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the science and conservation of tropical ecosystems, as well as our global community of researchers, practitioners, and collaborators. We will address topics such as how to consciously build resilient research collaborations, the consequences of the pandemic for the wildlife trade, how to strengthen and internationalize tropical ecology education, the role of bat research in a COVID-19 world, and the impact of COVID-19 on climate change. We hope to provide a path forward in promoting a reflective and responsive community that furthers the mission of the ATBC to "foster the scientific understanding and conservation of tropical

environments." We welcome suggestions from our readership and membership for topics to include in these activities. Please direct these to our Editorial Office.

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