Deforestation and the Central Tendency to Disperse

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Deforestation and forest degradation may account for as much as 15% of annual carbon emissions, as much as the global transporation sector. An emissions source of this magnitude must be addressed to avert severe climate change. International efforts to curb the rate of deforestation have thus far been piecemeal and bilateral agreements, with primary focus on Brazil and Indonesia, the two largest contributors to global deforestation. In 2007, the two countries accounted for approximately X% of deforestation, worldwide. However, as international attention continues to focus on Brazil and Indonesia, deforestation has become more spread out, especially around the periphery of these regional hotspots. In this note, we describe the broad geographic trends in deforestation, illustrating the increased dispersion with many more countries becoming more significant contributors to the excessively high rates of clearing.

We utilize the FORMA data set to track deforestation in the tropics for each 500-meter pixel and each 16-day interval between December 31, 2005 and September 18, 2012.

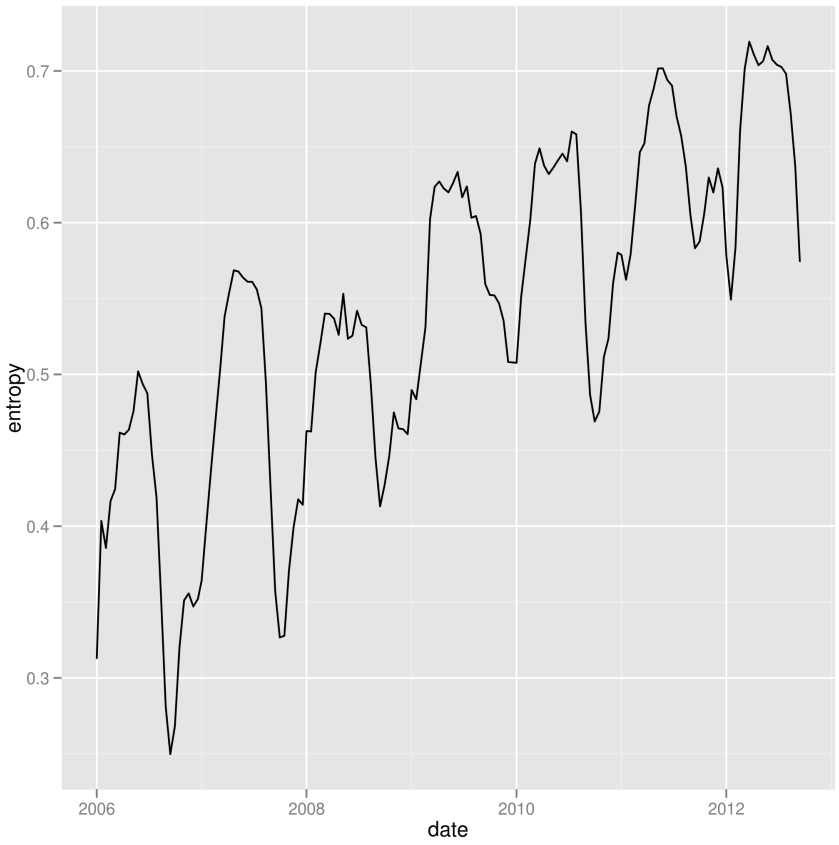

Figure 1: Normalized entropy at the country level between Dec 2005 and Sept 2012.