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## Mobility, Rural-urban Linkages, and Land Use Change: Implications for Forest Livelihoods and Land Tenure Security in Amazonian Extractive Reserves

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### Abstract

This paper presents results from long term research with rubber tapper households in the Chico Mendes Extractive Reserve in Acre, Southwestern Amazonia, Brazil, and analyses changes in land use and income composition, household turnover and migration patterns, and examines the flow of goods and services between forest and urban areas. While migration has long been part of Amazonian landscapes, mobility along a forest-urban continuum has increased significantly in the last two decades — however, in more complex ways than one-way rural exodus. Linked to rapid changes in land use and income opportunities, mobility and increased rural urban linkages present new threats to livelihood and land tenure security for forest-based smallholders and fundamentally changes the forms of territorial occupation. Nevertheless, increased rural-urban linkages also provide improved opportunities for forest product marketing in expanding and new urban centres. The research identifies a significant commercial and non-commercial flux of forest and agricultural products and capital from forest to urban areas and in return a flux of industrial products, temporary labour, and capital investment from urban to rural areas, mostly through family ties. As a result, forest peoples are increasingly linked to urban areas and in many cases hybrid forest-urban livelihoods emerge. For policy makers, regional planners, development and conservation projects, as well as social movement organisations it is important to take continued mobility and rural-urban linkages into account when addressing challenges such as land tenure security, forest income generation, and deforestation.

**Keywords:** Brazil, land use change, rubber