# Potential for natural forest regrowth to capture carbon

September 29 2020

Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Researchers from Australia's national science agency CSIRO joined scientists from 17 other countries to publish a first of its kind, 'wall-to-wall,' global, 1-km resolution map that highlights areas with the greatest

carbon returns, when they are allowed to reforest naturally.

The report, led by The Nature Conservancy, highlights the role of natural forest regrowth and refines previous international estimates, said co-author Dr. Stephen Roxburgh, Principal Research Scientist at the CSIRO.

Dr. Roxburgh said CSIRO supported the study through the supply of datasets, including 72 stands of natural regeneration that CSIRO had surveyed for biomass carbon.

These datasets were collected for the Australian Government's national greenhouse gas accounting program. The datasets were also used to better understand the carbon storage potential from restoring degraded woody vegetation.

This global study complements recent Australian work on carbon accumulation rates for planted and naturally regenerating stands of woody biomass across Australia. Human induced natural regeneration of woody vegetation is a substantial contributor to carbon storage activities being carried out under Australia's Emissions Reduction Fund.

The study found that climate, rather than past land use, was the most important driver of potential carbon accumulation, with the work providing an important benchmark to assess the global potential of forest regrowth as a climate mitigation strategy, said Dr. Roxburgh.

Provided by CSIRO