

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Macaulay Honors College Presents CUNY Faculty in Discussion of New Books About Nature, the Environment and Sustainability

**(November 14, 2016, New York, NY)** Macaulay Honors College at The City University of New York presents a discussion on new books from CUNY professors and others that look at nature and the environment. The presentation, to be moderated Macaulay Dean **Mary C. Pearl**, includes John Jay College Macaulay Director **Nathan Lents**' book *Not So Different*; Brooklyn College Macaulay Director **Tammy Lewis**' book *Ecuador's Environmental Revolutions*; and a book edited by Professors **A. Alonso Aguirre** and **Raman Sukumar**, *Tropical Conservation: Perspectives on Local and Global Priorities*, for which Dean Pearl provided a preface and co-authored two chapters.

"These books all relate to people's relationship to the environment, but in different ways," said Dean Pearl. "Each celebrates the importance of the link between humans and wildlife, including a popular press book, a scholarly text, and a multi-authored textbook. Each book enlightens and advances the cause for protecting nature."

The event is free and open to the public and takes place Monday, November 28, 2016 at Macaulay Honors College at 35 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street from 6PM-8PM. Reservations are recommended. To RSVP: <http://macaulay.cuny.edu/event/registration/?ee=122>

Professor Lents's *Not So Different* argues that evolutionary forces of cooperation and competition have shaped both humans and animals. Animals fall in love, establish rules for fair play, exchange valued goods and services, hold "funerals" for fallen comrades, deploy sex as a weapon, and communicate with one another using rich vocabularies—as humans do. Lenz marshals evidence from psychology, evolutionary biology, cognitive science, anthropology, and ethology to further advance this work and to drive home the truth that we are distinguished from animals only in degree, not in kind. In addition to being the Macaulay Director at John Jay College at CUNY, Lents is also a professor of molecular biology and director of the biology and cell and molecular biology programs there.

Professor Lewis' *Ecuador's Environmental Revolutions* traces the movement for sustainable development in that country from 1978 to the present. Ecuador is biologically diverse, petroleum rich, and economically poor. It has attracted

attention from various transnational conservation groups, and itself has more than 200 environmental groups dedicated to sustainable development. Ecuador's 2008 constitution grants constitutional rights to nature. The current left-leaning government is committed to lifting its people out of poverty, as well as pursuing sustainable development. However, petroleum extraction is its leading source of revenue—causing environmental destruction. Lewis looks at these competing concerns as Ecuador tries to achieve sustainability. Besides serving as the Macaulay Director at Brooklyn College, Lewis is a professor of sociology there, and at the CUNY Graduate Center in sociology and earth and environmental sciences.

Professors Aguirre's and Sukumar's *Tropical Conservation* addresses research, capacity building and policy advances needed within the next decades in the tropics and subtropics, home to about 75 percent of the global human population, as well as some 90 percent of plant, animal and insect species of the planet. The co-editors, along with teams of contributors, focus on the challenge of integrating environmental conservation more fully into the local, national, and global development agendas of 170 countries and territories. The book will be a key resource on the biodiversity conservation crisis in the tropics and subtropics for university professors, students, researchers, and practitioners in government and civil society organizations. Aguirre is chair and associate professor at the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at George Mason University. Sukumar is professor of ecology in the Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science. Dean Pearl, a wildlife scientist, environmentalist and educator, is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Her preface outlines the origins of the Wildlife Trust Alliance (WTA), which she headed earlier in her career, and which guided the production of *Tropical Conservation*.

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