of this trend, which is the economic recession that preceded the Brazilian economic plan Real of 1994 (*6*). The highest deforestation was in 1995. The best measure of frontier governance is the enforcement of Brazil's ambitious environmental regulations on the active agricultural frontier, as Mato Grosso state has begun to achieve in the target areas of its deforestation regulation program.

As for Laurance and Fearnside's comment that the idea of a highway toll on the Cuiabá-Santarém highway does "stretch plausibility," this idea comes from soy producers themselves. We have discussed with them the possibility of using part of such a toll to finance conservation and development activities along the corridor.

In conclusion, the Brazilian government has taken historical steps toward frontier governance that must be evaluated and reported by the scientific community, even as continuing environmental and social problems are analyzed and documented. The scientific challenge is to move beyond sweeping condemnation of infrastructure investments that are already made, and being made, or risk fostering a self-fulfilling prophecy of business-as-usual forest destruction.

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Letters to the Editor

Letters (~300 words) discuss material published in *Science* in the previous 6 months or issues of general interest. They can be submitted by e-mail (science_letters@aaas.org), the Web (www.letter2science.org), or regular mail (1200 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA). Letters are not acknowledged upon receipt, nor are authors generally consulted before publication. Whether published in full or in part, letters are subject to editing for clarity and space.

Healthy Discussion of Planetary Science Goals

IN HIS DISCUSSION OF THE NATIONAL Research Council's ongoing prioritization of solar system missions, Andrew Lawler says that some Washington observers see the discipline as being in disarray (News Focus, "Planetary science's defining moment," 4 Jan., p. 32). To the contrary, we are a community having ardent, but entirely appropriate and healthy, debates about our long-term goals.

To choose the most productive missions for the next decade is a substantial challenge: Exciting opportunities for significant advances abound, from torrid Mercury to the icy Kuiper Belt. Should the space program strive to better understand Earth, or to explore new worlds, or to learn how sentient beings came to be? Do we focus on surfaces, atmospheres, or magnetospheres to truly comprehend a planet's workings? Is exploration of mysterious Pluto to be preferred over revisiting enigmatic Venus or the rich Neptune system? Is Mars, Europa, or Titan a better choice to seek insights into life's origins? Should we retrieve martian surface samples soon or wait until further reconnaissance is completed?

"Is exploration of mysterious Pluto to be preferred over revisiting enigmatic Venus or the rich Neptune system?"

Each is a defensible objective, but with diminished federal discretionary funds, just a few can be attempted. Thus, community consensus is essential before bold initiatives can be undertaken. Fortunately, the whole planetary community—from novices to popes—has been deeply involved as future objectives have been defined and refined. Our tradition of lively debates about scientific priorities, balanced with realism about cost and technical feasibility, is leading to a decadal survey that will make both scientific and political sense.

Planetary scientists are welcoming this opportunity to recall our accomplishments, to carefully select our most important objectives, and to then speak with one voice to policy-makers. Now, as the open debate ends, we are solidifying ranks, just as we have done previously.

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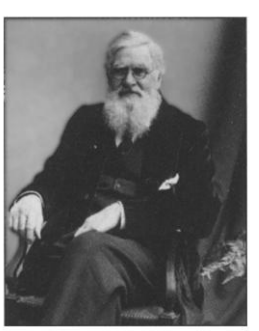
The Nationality of a Naturalist

THE LETTER FROM W. H. EVANS AND D. LLOYD regarding the nationality of Alfred Russel Wallace as given on my Web site (*1*) is accurate as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough (1 Feb., p. 797). Wallace's mother and father were of English and English-Scottish descent, respectively. They moved from St. Georges, Southwark, to Usk in southern Wales about 1820, probably for financial reasons. At that time Usk was part of the area known as Monmouthshire, nominally an administrative division of England.



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Wallace himself was born in Usk in 1823, but in 1828, a death in the extended family allowed Wallace's family to move again, this time to Hertford. They never returned to Wales as a family. Wallace did, however, re-