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CFA Newsletter

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Necessity not niche – fair trade timber



Pitsawing in Malawi - formalising and organising small producers into groups with the scale and quality needed to meet market demand is the major challenge for fair trade timber (Photo: Paul Mubosha)

In the global economy, fair trade products are often seen as 'niche' goods, but the current development of fair trade timber by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Fairtrade Labelling Organisations (FLO) may need to be treated as more of a necessity if we are to tackle some of the pressing issues of our time. High rates of deforestation are a global threat to our climate and biodiversity. Many forest frontiers contain an explosive combination of deep poverty, weak governance and unequal scrambles for timber and agricultural land. Informality and corruption are often rife in forest sectors that have generally ceded long-

term industrial concessions to large firms without resolving competing local resource claims. Too often people take what they can while they can. Forests, and ultimately our climate, suffer as a result.

Avoiding deforestation while also reducing poverty will require an urgent emphasis on social justice alongside traditional concerns for sustainable forest management. With spiralling demand for food, energy and construction materials, the squeeze on forests continues. Anchoring timber, non-timber forest products and environmental service rights to responsible community forest

enterprises is perhaps the best bet to reduce poverty, avoid deforestation and tackle climate change in a complementary fashion. Beyond agriculture, forests are one of a few resources that offer the poor a chance to develop entrepreneurship and dignified work opportunities, generate local income, secure tenure and resource rights, take on social and environmental responsibilities and defend their ethnic identities and cultures. But they can only do this with fair resource rights and recognition and rewards for good practice in the market.

While governments have historically been reluctant to give control over forest resources to local communities, this is changing. Rights over forest resources are increasingly ceded to community forest enterprises, as large-scale industrial logging is now largely discredited in the sustainable development context. Community ownership and management of forests doubled in the fifteen years up to 2000¹ and the trend continues². But consumers cannot yet use their purchasing power in support of such trends. Existing timber labels only guarantee that timber purchases come from sustainable forest management, they do not yet allow consumers to discriminate in favour of products originating from community forest enterprises³.

Unlike coffee and cotton, timber has yet to become a fair trade commodity. But a recent industry survey of leading timber industries worldwide, funded by the Interchurch Organisation for Cooperation and Development (ICCO) suggests that there is no shortage of demand for such products⁴. The 52 industry responses from 21 countries included 16 companies in the timber trade, 19 medium to large-scale retailers and 17 specialist or niche firms. All either had or planned to have an ethical sourcing policy. Almost half already sourced some timber products from communities (although often in tiny amounts). A small number had tried but stopped after negative experiences. A convincing 100% of the specialist firms, 73% of the timber traders and 56% of the medium or large-scale retailers approved in principle of the idea of 'distinguishing community forest products in the market' (especially in the UK, the Netherlands and the USA). More detailed value chain work in Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Papua New Guinea also gave a ringing endorsement to the benefits of fair trade timber.

In terms of designing a fair trade timber scheme, most of

the industrial respondents did not wish to see any further proliferation of labels beyond forest certification and fair trade labels (such as FSC and the Fair Trade Mark). Some 60% of the respondents wished either to know more about piloting new mechanisms or definitely expressed willingness to pilot. They saw a number of advantages, including their own competitive advantage, greater options for ethical consumers and a better deal for poor producers. With fair trade timber, they felt that CFEs could boost their entrepreneurial capacity based around democratic business models with in-built social and environmental responsibility.

In 2007, the global strategy of FSC published its commitment to developing fair trade timber within two years⁵. Following an international workshop in Edinburgh in October 2007 to discuss the industrial demand survey results and systems options and through participation on the steering committee of the same project, the FSC then worked with FLO to present a motion to the FLO board in November 2007. At that board meeting a green light was given for the development of a full feasibility study on the dual certification of Fairtrade and FSC forest products. Completed and presented to the FLO board in May 2008⁶, a decision was then taken to move forward with a pilot implementation and testing phase subject also to FSC approval.

There are many good potential pilots to choose from - examples of responsible community forest enterprises that trade internationally, put control and benefits directly into the hands of the poor and manage forests sustainably. Some have attained certification by the FSC. There is particular scope to pilot new fair trade timber schemes in Central and South American countries such as Bolivia, Brazil and Guatemala, but there are also increasing prospects in Africa and Asia. While it would be foolish to underestimate the challenge of matching community capacity with international market demand, it is difficult to see how this challenge can be bypassed if we are to provide a joined response to the complex realities of the global economy, poverty, forest loss and climate change.

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¹ White, A. and Martin A. (2002) *Who owns the world's forests?* Forest Trends, Washington, USA.

² Sunderlin, W.D., Hatcher, J. and Liddle, M. (2008) *From exclusion to ownership? Challenges and opportunities in advancing forest tenure reform.* Rights and Resources Initiative, Washington D.C., USA.

³ Macqueen, D.J., Dufey, A. and Patel, B. (2006) *Exploring fair trade timber – a review of issues in current practice, institutional structures and ways forward.* IIED, London, UK.

⁴ Macqueen, D., Dufey, A., Gomes, A.P.C., Nouer, M.R., Suárez, L.A.A., Subendranathan, V., Trujillo, Z.H.G., Vermeulen, S., Voivodic, M.de.A and Wilson, E. (2008) *Distinguishing community forest products in the market: demand for a mechanism that brings together forest certification and fair trade.* IIED Small and Medium Forestry Enterprise Series No. 22. IIED, Edinburgh, UK

⁵ FSC (2007) *Strengthening forest conservation, communities and markets – the global strategy of the Forest Stewardship Council, FSC, Bonn, Germany.*

⁶ Conroy, M.E. (2008) *Feasibility study on the dual certification of fair-trade and FSC forest products.* Colibri Consulting and ICCO, Netherlands.

Association News

CFA launches Legacies Appeal

As you know, the CFA is a charity, which means that we need your support in order to continue meeting our goals. Have you thought about adding us to your Will? It's easy, and to help you we have produced a new Legacy leaflet to explain both why we need your support and how to



go about including us in your Will. We would be happy to send you a copy if you contact us (see contact details on front page), or you can get more information, including a download of the Legacy leaflet, on our website at <http://www.cfa-international.org/legacies.html>

Thank you for thinking of us.

Forest scenes

Forestry in the New Zealand emissions trading scheme

The NZ Government has passed legislation implementing an emissions trading scheme for the NZ economy as its core price-based measure for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing forest carbon sinks. The NZ Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) will operate alongside other policies and measures designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help achieve the country's broader sustainability objectives.

Specific policy is... "to support and encourage global efforts to reduce emissions below business as usual levels and to comply with NZ's international obligations (including the Kyoto Protocol) while maintaining economic flexibility, equity and environmental integrity at least cost".

The ETS has particular significance for the NZ forestry sector as during the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (2008 – 2012 inclusive) carbon sequestered by planted forests will be the country's main offset for emissions elsewhere in the economy. Emissions are largely from agriculture (methane from ruminant animals, particularly the very large dairy cattle industry) and motor vehicles, with power generation (coal and gas) a minor contributor.

One of the objectives of the ETS is accordingly to stimulate further tree planting and to place more focus on forests and wood products as carbon sinks.

Key features of the ETS are:-

- All participants will hold units equivalent to their emissions
- Ultimately all sectors will participate, although entry is staged (Forestry 1 January 2008, liquid fuels and

stationary energy 2010, agriculture 2013).

- Owners of forest planted after 31 December 1989 will get credit for carbon removed from the atmosphere (sequestered) and liability for carbon released once these same forests are harvested, but only up to the limit of any credits received. This policy assumes instant oxidation of the harvested forest, i.e. carbon is assumed to immediately be returned to the atmosphere when a tree is felled.
- Forests planted before 1 January 1990 will not get credit for carbon sequestered but will have liability for emissions charges if the forest is felled and not replanted – their deforestation liability.
 - Owners of pre-1990 forest will be required to report any deforestation
 - Deforestation of areas of less than 2.0ha of total pre 1990 forest holdings is exempt from this policy.
 - Forest owners with less than 50 ha of forest over their entire land holdings as at 1 September 2007 may apply for exemption from this policy/liability. This exemption will endure through subsequent changes of land ownership, etc – the fixed date is to avoid subsequent subdivision activity.
 - Removal of "weed" trees (e.g. wilding acacia, lodgepole pine, etc) is also exempt.
 - There may be an exception for areas of native forest being planted/regenerated before 1990 however that decision has not yet been made. Generally native forests have been excluded from the ETS at this stage although forests planted with native

species after 1989 participate fully.

New Zealand has a history of planted forest areas being converted to other uses following harvest – plantation forest areas are also a potential land-bank and in recent times higher prices for dairy products have encouraged suitable areas of plantation forest land to be returned to pasture for dairy farming. Similar landuse change is commonplace across the entire agricultural sector and creates important landuse flexibility, so the decision to introduce a very significant landuse change “tax” (estimated to be well in excess of NZ\$ 25 000/ha) is quite widely viewed as the most negative aspect of the ETS.

- One emission unit is equal to one tonne of emissions, and a New Zealand unit (NZU) has been created and will be the main unit of trade.
 - Methodologies for assessing carbon stock are being determined by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) and will be paid for by the forest owner.
 - For the period 2008-12 the ETS will be linked to the international Kyoto Protocol market, in which NZUs will be interchangeable with KP Assigned Amount Units (AAUs). However the total amount of AAUs that can be transferred overseas is limited to 10% of NZ’s assigned amount, net of purchases.
 - Forest areas will be determined by GPS or survey plans.
 - Carbon assessment will be determined via lookup tables (small areas) or by Registered Carbon Certifiers (generally registered forestry consultants).
- A modest free allocation of units is to be supplied to owners of forest planted before 1990 – around 10% of the potential deforestation liability and roughly equal to the long-term rate of deforestation. This is tacit acknowledgement that the introduction of the retrospective deforestation “tax” has significantly devalued plantation forestry land.
- Owners of forests planted after 1989 will have 18 months after the passing of the ETS legislation to decide whether to join the scheme and earn credits or not, otherwise they must wait until after 2012.
- Risk associated with fire, disease, storm, etc remains

with the forest owner permanently but liability is limited to the number of NZUs uplifted.

- Satellite and other aerial imagery will be used to determine if deforestation has occurred and penalties will exist for those not meeting their reporting obligations.
- Forest owners will have the option of using lookup tables (smaller forest owners) to determine their carbon sequestration rates, or employing a Registered Carbon Certifier to make the assessment. The look-up tables are very conservative particularly for indigenous species.

Generally owners of Kyoto compliant forest (i.e. forests planted after 1989) regard the ETS as positive however owners of forests planted before 1990 remain very concerned about the implications of the deforestation penalties.

New Zealand negotiators have meanwhile signalled that their Kyoto Protocol policy for Commitment Period 2 will include more focus on the importance of wood products as carbon stores, and use of offsetting mechanisms where conversion of planted forest areas on high quality agricultural land are compensated for by planting carbon equivalent areas of lower quality land.

As noted above a range of other initiatives have been progressively implemented which will also be of interest to both forest owners and the wood processing industry:-

1. An afforestation grant scheme (AGS) which provides up front assistance for land owners willing to plant trees for both carbon sequestration and carbon storage purposes.
2. A permanent forest sinks initiative (PFSI) which similarly provides carbon credits to land owners planting permanent forest – including forests from which limited harvesting is permitted but which must retain a permanent forest canopy.
3. Promotion of wood for its environmental benefits – including embodied energy (stored carbon).
4. Government policies giving priority to using wood in construction of Government buildings.
5. A contribution to enhanced design and performance data for wood in use including to professorships at the main schools of engineering.

Peter Berg

CFA Governing Council

‘LumberJills’ finally receive recognition

The year was 1942, a chilling time when the War against the Axis Powers was not going well. A disparate band of young women and girls (some giving a false date of birth in order to volunteer) were about to set off on a most unusual assignment. They came from many different backgrounds and occupations including shop girls and factory workers with some never having been away from home before. For the next four years they were about to embark on something few, if any, had even dreamed of.

These women who were called-up to the colours of the Women’s Timber Corps (W.T.C.), part of the Women’s

Land Army, were about to undertake the gruelling work of LumberJills. The work was difficult, at times dangerous, back-breaking, muscle-aching stuff performed in harsh, tough conditions often in remote isolated countryside, but they worked, tirelessly, uncomplainingly, on the home front of Britain’s war effort. Some of the women were involved in bad accidents, some contracted Pulmonary TB, but nearly all discovered reserves of stamina and power that they had previously not thought possible.

Finally, in 1946 the W.T.C. was disbanded, the adventure was over and the women returned home. An old Scottish maxim states that “Eaten bread is soon forgotten” and it

was true in this case as in no time the sterling work undertaken by the doughty and able Lumberjills was by accident or design airbrushed from the annals of the Second World War.

Some disquiet existed among the members of the W.T.C. that there was no formal recognition of the valuable work that they had undertaken. As one might have expected, they took up the challenge to rectify the situation, but although they fought both long and hard, some fifty years later they seemed no nearer to the long-overdue and richly-deserved recognition due them.

In 1998, following my retirement, I joined their campaign and began to research the subject. Although the British postal service, the Royal Mail, did not take up my suggestion of issuing a special W.T.C. commemorative stamp to

honour the Lumberjills, the Forestry Commission appeared more interested. I also discussed the issue with Donald Dewar, Scotland's First Minister then Henry McLeish his successor and in due course the third incumbent, Jack McConnell. Others who were involved in discussions were various Members of Parliament, Members of the Scottish Parliament, the Church of Scotland, and the National Museum of Scotland.

These and many other approaches were made in order to gain belated recognition for the work of the women with the particular view that if something was not done soon then for many of the survivors it would be too late. At this point I was helped enormously by the Sunday Express who as part of a series of articles highlighting the anniversary of the Second World War covered some of the work undertaken by the W.T.C. Some nine years had passed since I became



The long-overdue memorial to British Lumberjills recognises their contribution during WWII

actively involved in the campaign and Mr James McDougall of the Forestry Commission Scotland was now manager for the project. Progress was being made and we were excited to learn that Fife-based artist Malcolm Robertson had been commissioned to create the memorial to be located at Forestry Commission Scotland's David Marshall Lodge, Aberfoyle.

On Wednesday, October 10th, 2007 under a rare cloudless sky former W.T.C members gathered near the memorial dedicated to their memory. Mr Michael Russell, Scottish Environment Minister, unveiled the statue, and in his speech said "I am pleased that the Commission has taken steps to help remember the group and instigate the creation of the statue, which represents an unnamed heroine of the Women's Timber Corps. This will be a lasting tribute to these brave women."

It had been a long and hard-fought struggle to obtain formal recognition, yet due to the persistence of former members such as Rosalinda Elder, Bonnie McAdams and latterly John McIntyre together with the help and support of James McDougall at the Scottish Forestry Commission the battle had been won.

Soon afterwards it was announced that the former members of the W.T.C. would qualify for a badge from the Government in recognition of their war-time efforts. At a small presentation ceremony in Downing Street, the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, acknowledged that their efforts should have been recognised earlier.

John M. Scott

ITTO project helps to increase forest potential through LUS testing and marketing

SINCE commercial logging began in 1624, Guyana has used just a few of the tree species found in its tropical forests. In 2004, drafting of a project commenced to address the promotion and development of lesser used species (LUS) in Guyana. ITTO project PD344/05 REV.2 (I) focused on enhancing knowledge and use of LUS in the forest industry of Guyana. The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) began implementing the project in 2007 and has since worked towards: 1) analyzing physical and mechanical properties of a selected set of LUS; 2) increasing awareness and use of LUS; and 3) improving wood processing techniques for LUS used by local industry.

Expanding species utilization

When implementing the project, the GFC formed key linkages with the Forest Products Marketing Council (FPMC) of Guyana, a body set up in 2005 to boost Guyana's marketing

of forest products in a more coordinated manner, focusing on providing market intelligence and product development functions for the forest sector. The Council's promotion of Guyana's wood products regionally and internationally fit well into the activities of the ITTO project. The fifteen species targeted under the project were selected following a thorough review process examining key factors such as availability (based on forest inventory data), species distribution and accessibility of identified areas of occurrence, feedback from the local industry, physical and mechanical properties as well as possible end use applications. The following species were chosen for inclusion under the project: limonaballi (*Chrysophyllum pomiferum*); black kakaralli (*Eschweilera sagotiana/E. subglandulosa*); muniridan (*Qualea rosea*); burada (*Parinari campestris*); iteballi (*Vochysia surinamensis*); darina (*Hymenolobium flavum*); fukadi (*Buchenavia fanshawei*); tonka bean (*Dipteryx odorata*); wadara (*Couratari guianensis*); itikibororalli (*Swartzia benthamiana*); morabukea

(*Mora gonggrijpii*); futui (*Jacaranda copaia*); suya (*Pouteria speciosa*); dalli (*Virola surinamensis*); and kurokai (*Protium decandrum*). Trada Technology, a UK based consultancy firm, was contracted under the project to review and conduct tests on these species. Following the review, it was concluded that many of the species are strong potential substitutes for prime commercial species, especially for marine and construction purposes as well as other added-value end uses. The selected fifteen species will undergo abrasion testing applicable to use in both marine construction and decking, and will be benchmarked against other well established species in these end use applications, such as greenheart, ekki, oak and balau. Marine borer testing will also be conducted on selected species and benchmarked against greenheart and ekki, species traditionally used for marine applications. Natural durability tests will be used to assess suitability in end-use applications. In natural durability tests, reference to the European Union Standard EN 350-1 will be made for each species tested. This will, in part, aid marketing throughout the EU and other markets due to the international recognition of this standard. Marketing work has also commenced with the design and production of sample boards to promote targeted LUS. In addition, promotional booklets are being prepared and published for dissemination to local stakeholders and target markets locally, regionally and internationally. Training in the utilization of LUS, including dissemination of information on results of the testing, was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2007 with forest concession holders, saw millers, lumber yard operators, exporters, education institutions and other stakeholders.

Challenges and lessons learned

Guyana's unique timber species mix and high species diversity often pose challenges for forestry enterprises. Grouping species by properties and end-use application, a key recommendation of the project, will assist greatly in consolidating larger volumes and more reliable supply. The FPMC is currently engaged in promoting Guyana's timber species by end-use application, grouping species by common physical and

mechanical properties. Forest-based communities and small forest enterprises will particularly benefit from the outputs of this project, since the areas available to them will have greater relative value compared to current levels of utilization and market focus. Often, these entities do not have knowledge of extended species utilization, nor the resources for marketing and product development. The entire forest industry will benefit from expanding the current species utilization base, allowing increased production while maintaining sustainable forest management principles.

Future activities

The results of all LUS testing and the subsequent forest industry training program will be included in the final report of the project. In addition, promotional booklets on targeted LUS will be distributed at the local and regional levels. The GFC has already commenced work on additional activities to boost development of the forest sector. The local industry in Guyana has shown significant interest in adding value locally and many mills have undertaken production of high quality timber products for niche markets. Demand has remained strong for Guyana's timber products for use in outdoor applications, including marine, construction and decking end-uses, along with indoor applications such as flooring and furniture. The GFC will continue to work with the forest sector in Guyana to ensure that a high level of quality is maintained in forest products to raise Guyana's image in international markets. The project has been very successful in building a solid foundation for expanding the species utilization base of Guyana. This will certainly decrease the pressure on prime commercial species and continue to enhance the development of the forest sector in Guyana.

Project outputs are available from the ITTO Secretariat (fi@itto.or.jp).

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Community Asset Mapping: forest-based communities in the Upper St. John River Valley of New Brunswick, Canada

With competing forest fibre coming in from warmer climates, combined with the downturn in the construction industry in the US and over cutting by the industrial forestry model, with a subsequent depletion of the forest resource itself, the Upper St. John River Valley of New Brunswick is experiencing the closure of mills, out migration from single industry towns and some people are feeling that the future is looking economically rather bleak.

In order to combat this pessimism, Falls Brook Centre (FBC) has been working within the Acadian Forest Upper St. John River Valley of New Brunswick to bring communities together around a positive identity and a collective cause. From Nackawic to Perth-Andover, FBC has been facilitating

a process known as Community Asset Mapping. Specifically, the St. John River Valley – Community Asset Mapping Project approached the communities of Nackawic, Hartland, Woodstock, Florenceville, and Perth-Andover. The purpose of Community Asset mapping aims to encourage and facilitate communities in visualizing a future based on the current assets of the area combined with aspirations for the future.

The process of Community Asset Mapping helps people to think positively about the place in which they live and work, while at the same time challenging people to recognize how others see and experience the same community. Assets can include many different things. They can be natural, man-made, social, economic, structures, services or skills, expertise and people. This asset mapping process has the potential to be

inclusive of all community dimensions, features and interests. In an effort to include all members of the community a survey was also sent out to five schools for grade 12 students to take part in mapping out their thoughts on the assets in their communities. These surveys allowed the younger generations of communities to participate in sharing their valuable ideas, as sometimes it is hard for them to attend formal meetings

Asset mapping provides a very useful starting point for this process as it produces a common view of what is considered important in a community. Doing something that everyone recognizes as valuable is the way to build civic engagement. Once you have a record of those things that are valued within the community, you can start to strategize together about how to develop and strengthen those assets. The asset mapping process helps engage community members in shaping their future, empowering them to take responsibility for their own development. It also builds the capacity to take action and begins at a place of strength rather than focusing on weakness helps to foster a positive development process. These elements of expression and strategy are key for engaging communities in sustainable patterns of development and organization.

Rural organization is important in a province like New Brunswick, where a large portion of the population lives in rural areas. The St. John River Valley – Community Asset Mapping Project is a tool that has recently been introduced to facilitate organization and capacity building in order to enrich certain social, economic and human resources that already exist within the community.

Sophie-Michelle Cyr, leading this work says that the Community Asset Mapping process has helped the communities in the region identify their assets, ideas for actions and a vision for the future. Cyr expressed that this was only the first step of the process, in which the connections with communities revealed that all want to initiate change at the local level and begin to build from their understanding of assets over their deficits. The community asset mapping process not only looks at the strengths and opportunities involving the expressed community assets, but also, as an equalizing action, looks at the threats and weaknesses that these assets can present.

The region of Perth-Andover to Nackawic historically has been a region with an industrial forestry economy, but is now in decline. The common background reality of the region involved economies driven by the forestry and potato farming industries. Throughout the facilitation Cyr found similarities in these areas all along the St John River Valley, which include the St. John River and its tributaries, small businesses, existing infrastructure, aging and retiring population, gateway to the U.S., national parks, lake systems, and natural reserves, new highway. The community expressed that each of these assets represented some form of potential economic growth, recreation and education in the region, with the exception of the highway where people thought of it as a possible threat to tourism in some areas.

Community members presented many similar recommendations in support for the aforementioned assets and methods to sustain them and a need to develop the networking and governance structures that exist, boost marketing and tourism possibilities off the new highway, development of a tourism strategy and increase the availability of local products and businesses. The centralization of services and general globalization are threats to the sustainability and resilience of the communities in the region. The above inputs of strengths and weaknesses in the communities form the basis of a common vision for the future of the St. John River Valley. In conjunction with the facilitation by Falls Brook Centre of this project this vision must be realized by the initiative of a large diversity of community members.

This part, Phase 1, of the St. John River Valley – Community Asset Mapping Project has just been wrapped up and a community report can be found at www.fallsbrookcentre.ca/community/futureplanning.htm. This report summarizes the information shared and gathered at the various community meetings and student surveys, throughout the Perth-Andover to Nackawic region.

Jean Arnold

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SILVAE – Forestry as Art

About six years ago Laurie McGugan, a Toronto artist, developed the idea of harvesting trees to form a giant design on a hillside and she has been working on transforming this concept into reality ever since. Laurie says that the aim of this project is to, “use environmentally sensitive forestry practices as the medium to create a work of art.” Her designs are based on the concept that when trees are removed from a site, the exposed rock, stumps, brush and undergrowth contrast strongly with the remaining trees. Laurie’s designs are inspired by the shapes of fossils that, like her forest artwork, are only exposed



Computer-generated image of the first Silvae design to be implemented, at Gavin Lake, British Columbia, Canada

when the top layer is removed.

In 2006 Laurie brought an exhibition of large oil paintings, each illustrating a different hillside design, to UBC’s Faculty of Forestry. Professor Stephen Sheppard, of the Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning, incorporated her designs into 3D visualizations. Laurie subsequently received approval to refine and implement one of her giant art pieces on a site alongside Gavin Lake in the Alex Fraser Research Forest (AFRF) where it will be seen by school children who attend the Gavin Lake Forest Education Centre as well as by other visitors to the area. The road will be put in this winter and selective cutting will take place next

winter (2008-2009).

Although Laurie developed the initial design for this site on paper, she needed the forestry expertise of Ken Day, RPF, manager of the AFRF and Ken Fairhurst, RPF, a PhD candidate at UBC and visual resource planning consultant, to implement it on the ground. To predict the appearance of the design, Laurie and 'the two Kens' combined detailed survey data with information on wind, forest species, time of year, elapsed time since cut, etc. They also had to consider a number of other important factors:

- The minimum width of remaining stands;
- The visual effect of cutting just below a ridgeline;
- The surrounding watersheds;
- The size and species of trees present;
- The comparative elevation of the viewing point, which is a road on the other side of the lake;
- The appearance of the cut in different seasons and subsequent years.

Ken Fairhurst's use of 3D visualization software helped to illustrate how Laurie's design would look on the ground. Ken F says that in the winter, "recently cleared areas would be sharply contrasted with the surrounding forest and the softness and pale colour of bare tree trunks and branches would provide a break from the shaded darkness of the conifers in the low winter light." And in the spring, "verdant young growth would contrast with dark older growth." Ken Fairhurst's software manipulation skills were complimented by Ken Day's first-hand knowledge of forestry and of the research forest, allowing the team to tweak the design for maximum visual impact while achieving the objective set out in the forest management plan.

Laurie says the *Silvae* project has no purpose or explicit message beyond creating works of art. She anticipates that observers will bring their own experiences to her art and interpret it in their own unique ways. But does *Silvae* have value beyond 'art for art's sake?' Ken Day sees practical benefits and says, "this part of the research forest is managed to protect visual quality and recreation opportunities, using the

shelterwood method as our general approach. Laurie's project gives us an opportunity to demonstrate our management of the visual resource while following through on our management plan." The strip shelterwood method utilized on this site will leave about 50% of the area for approximately 20 years, thus protecting the visual quality of the slope while creating Laurie's artwork. "We are considering manipulating the species composition of the regeneration to perpetuate the artwork even after the final removal," says Ken, referring to the careful logging that will implement Laurie's design.

Ken Fairhurst suggests that *Silvae* could become a new way for people to connect to the forests, encourage local buy-in to forestry and provide an added attraction for visitors. *Silvae* may also enable logging to occur in areas presently

off limits because of their high public visibility. Perhaps the least obvious benefit of the *Silvae* project was how much the team learned as Laurie and the two Kens navigated the planning process. This learning, as well as creative use of the landscape visualization software, may have many more applications in the future.

Laurie is also exploring the possibility of extending *Silvae* to other locations, "I would like to take *Silvae* to a large slope that could handle a more complex design and I would also like to work on sites around the world."

Closer to home, Ken

Fairhurst suggests that, "a *Silvae* design could be combined with an integrated visual design plan for a large landform, such as the long ridge seen looking south from Highway 1 near Chilliwack, BC. A fast-growing deciduous forest that would provide sustainable bio-energy could be designed by *Silvae* for its ever-changing patterns and colours."

This fall, Laurie and Ken Fairhurst are joining forces to identify a new site and seek funding through the Forest Investment Account, government and industry partners to take *Silvae* to the next level. Perhaps in the future, you will see an elegantly designed forest near you.

For more information on *Silvae* check out Laurie's website (www.lauriemcgugan.com) or contact Ken Day, RPF, at Ken.Day@ubc.ca or Ken Fairhurst, RPF, at ken@1rdi.com.



SilvaetoLake: a re-design of the plan for Gavin Lake

Julia Lee

From kings of the land to slaves

Indigenous peoples have long suffered the invasion of their land: most often for the exploitation of natural resources, sometimes for evangelisation or military conquest. In this long, tragic history, amongst the most sought-after natural resources have been minerals such as gold and silver, hydrocarbons such as oil and gas, and tropical hardwoods such as mahogany.

In recent years, two new threats have emerged on a global scale: carbon trading and biofuels (or 'agrofuels'). Both provide significant financial incentives for others to lay claim to land belonging to indigenous people, either to benefit from the monetary value placed on the carbon stored on this land or to plant oil palm trees to harvest palm oil.

Many indigenous people have already suffered as a result from both carbon trading and biofuels. For example, in countries such as Guatemala, Ecuador, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) indigenous peoples have experienced all manner of different problems as a result of carbon projects on their land. These problems include eviction from their homes, invasion of their territories, the destruction of villages and crops, reduced access to or destruction of traditional resources, and violent conflict. There have even been reports of deaths.

One example is the Bateke Plateau in the DRC where thousands of hectares have been forested with a view to generating carbon credits that can then be sold. According to a report published by the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of Tropical Forests (IAITPTF), the indigenous Batswa Pygmies have been invaded by colonists, had their land stolen, their natural resources put under increasing pressure, their sacred sites destroyed, and are now having to deal with the arrival of prostitution and sexually-transmitted diseases.

'There has been no involvement of the Pygmy Indigenous Peoples, nor any apparent will to involve them,' the IAITPTF report states. 'Indigenous Peoples' rights, experiences, and cultural and spiritual traditions are being ignored. Nothing to ensure the Pygmy's preliminary consent, which was mandated within the framework of the project, has been done since consultation begun.'

Partly in response to experiences like this, partly in response to wider global debate about carbon trading and its role in combating climate change, certain sectors within the indigenous community have expressed serious concern about carbon trading. To this end, the Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change has issued a series of statements since 2000, noting on one occasion that carbon trading 'reduces our sacred land and territories to mere carbon sequestration which is contrary to our cosmology and philosophy.' A spokesperson from the Coordinating Body for the Indigenous Organisations of the Amazon Basin [COICA] put it even more succinctly: 'We are not only victims of climate change, we are now victims of the carbon market.'

As for biofuels, the consequences for indigenous peoples have been, and are forecast to be, disastrous. Indeed, the chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), Victoria Tauli-Corpus, was reported as stating in May 2007 that, if biofuel expansion continues as planned, 60 million indigenous people worldwide are threatened with losing their land and livelihoods.

Perhaps the biofuel that has raised most concern to date is palm oil. In Malaysia, the world's largest palm oil producer, it is estimated that 'millions' of indigenous people have been affected by palm oil plantations, while in Colombia 'thousands of families', both indigenous and Afro-Colombian, 'have been violently evicted from their land by paramilitaries in Colombia who are helping palm oil companies clear land to produce biofuels.'

And neither country intends to stop there. Malaysia plans to expand its palm oil plantations, including 1m hectares in Sarawak on land where the indigenous inhabitants have been granted 'Native Customary Rights', and Colombia is eyeing up 6.3m hectares of the Vichada savannah to be turned into plantations, palm oil among them. According to estimates, this could potentially affect up to 18 indigenous ethnic groups and 102 indigenous communities.

In Indonesia the situation is even more shocking. By 2005 6m hectares of oil palm had been planted, 'most [on] the ancestral land of indigenous peoples', and the government has announced plans for another 20m hectares to be planted over the next two decades.

Take Kalimantan, the Indonesian province on Borneo. Plans for palm oil plantations cover (fully or partially) the ancestral territory of over a million Dayak people, while the UNPFII's chairperson has estimated that palm oil projects in west Kalimantan will displace 5 million indigenous people.

In Papua, where the Indonesian government has never recognised indigenous peoples' land rights, NGOs and church leaders describe palm oil as 'a critical issue' and 'hot topic.' To date, 5 million hectares have been set aside by the government for palm oil plantations, including large areas inhabited by the Muyu, Auyu, Mandobo and Marind people, and another 4 million hectares are expected to be set aside in the near future. 'If the government take our land, what will we have left?' a Muyu leader asked. 'If there is a plantation, our land will be destroyed.'

Existing plantations in Papua have seen homes and hunting grounds destroyed. A Mooi leader said, 'The forest constitutes the future life source of the Mooi people, and this is destroyed. Before, people could catch and eat wallabies easily and cassowary birds or wild pigs could be caught in only a few hours. Now they must search day after day.' A church worker closely involved with a palm oil plantation put it this way: 'The people feel now that their land is gone. They don't have land to hunt pigs and cassowary. All the land is gone. The people of Papua were the kings of the land, but now they are the slaves of the land.'

This is not to say that, like projects of any kind involving indigenous people and their land, neither carbon trading nor biofuel plantations cannot benefit them. This is possible, but only if these projects acknowledge their rights, respect them, and in so doing involve them with their free, prior and informed consent. Until that happens, it is difficult not to see both carbon trading and biofuels as simply the latest in a long line of threats to indigenous peoples' land, livelihoods and, ultimately, survival.

David Hill

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www.survival-international.org

Exporting destruction. Export credits, illegal logging and deforestation

A new FERN report shines a light on the role that export credit agencies (ECAs) play in financing global deforestation. *'Exporting Destruction. Export credits, illegal logging and deforestation'* is the conclusion of research including detailed case studies and historical research and offers a set of policy recommendations that would, if implemented effectively, bring export credits in line with other publicly-funded institutions and reduce their potential for negative social and environmental impacts.

While the primary, if not sole, remit of ECAs is to promote their country's domestic industries in competitive and risky environments, particularly in poor emerging markets, the huge amounts of money involved mean that they also have an important effect on policies and actions in the countries in which they support projects. To put their size in context, ECAs underwrite around US\$100 billion annually in medium and long-term credits and guarantees, compared with, for example, multilateral development banks, which have a combined total of US\$60 billion in loans per year.

ECA involvement in activities that have fuelled unsustainable, and often illegal, deforestation in a number of countries has been documented since the mid 1990s. Evidence, gathered from community groups around the world, suggests that a number continue to be centrally involved in the sector. Their significance is primarily the result of their 'door opening' public finance status, as well as their focus on countries that are a high-risk for commercial operators, usually those which also lack the institutional governance to regulate their industries effectively.

Direct ECA support for logging or timber trading is minimal because they are not particularly capital-intensive sectors, but significant support from ECAs has been instrumental in aiding large infrastructure projects and the pulp and paper sector for the last fifteen years, particularly for controversial expansion projects in Indonesia. This support was, and continues to be, 'blind', not taking environmental or social issues into account

or investigating whether operators' prospectus documents were based on realistic assessments of the nature or ownership of the forest resource.

This lack of diligence in assessing projects one of the core problems of ECAs. Although taxpayers fund them, their remit is limited to economic considerations, and they are not currently subject to the binding environmental, social, human rights or transparency standards by which other public sector agencies are governed. The case studies clearly show that this has led to increased illegal logging, corruption and the opening of previously isolated forests. Indeed, experience from various case studies suggests that no ECAs have the relevant procedures in place to identify and address the flawed operating and expansion model that much of the pulp and paper sector has followed.

What's more, by aiming for very low-transaction costs, most ECAs have little internal capacity for assessing the environmental or social impacts of the operations they help to finance. FERN calls on Governments to urgently address the negative international impact of ECA-supported operators, particularly in sensitive sectors such as forestry. It also highlights the need to develop safeguards that would ensure export credit agencies' operations do not undermine international commitments to sustainable development and good governance in some of the poorest countries in the world.

For more details see FERN's full report as a pdf-file at: http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document_4155_4160.pdf or request a hard-copy of the report from julie@fern.org

Judith Neyer

FERN (Forests and the European Union Resource Network)

FERN works to achieve greater environmental and social justice, focusing on forests and forest peoples' rights in the policies and practices of the European Union.

www.fern.org

Around the world

Central Africa: Calls for bushmeat ban rejected

A blanket ban on bushmeat hunting in Central Africa would endanger both humans and animals, says a new report. If current hunting levels persist, many species will be extinct in less than 50 years, says CIFOR - the Centre for International Forestry Research. But bushmeat provides up to 80% of protein and fat needed in rural diets. Giving locals the

rights and incentives to hunt sustainably would protect their livelihoods and save forest mammals from extinction, claims CIFOR. "The bushmeat crisis is not only a crisis of extinction, it is also a crisis of livelihoods and food security," said Frances Seymour, Director General of CIFOR, speaking to the BBC. "Criminalising the whole issue of bushmeat simply drives it underground. We need to decriminalise parts of this hunting

and trade and give local communities the rights and incentives to manage these resources sustainably for their own benefit.”

CIFOR estimates that the annual harvest of bushmeat in Central Africa amounts to more than one million tonnes - the equivalent of four million heads of cattle. According to the report, large mammal species are particularly vulnerable. Many - such as elephants, gorillas and other primate species - have already become locally extinct. But CIFOR warns that existing policies designed to “crackdown” on hunting are often counter-productive, as they “effectively outlaw” the hunting of rodents and other fast-breeding species that are not under threat of extinction.

Overall, international trade in wild animal products has an estimated value of US\$3.9bn. For West and Central Africa alone, the estimates range from \$42m to \$205m a year. Yet, these statistics are still “largely ignored” in official trade and national policies regulating forest policy, claims the CIFOR report.

The authors of the study call on policymakers in the region to develop policies protecting endangered species, while allowing sustainable hunting of “common” game, since there is no clear substitute available if common wild meat sources were to be depleted. They cite successful models in Peru and also in Sarawak, Malaysia, where a ban on trading in bushmeat was complemented with recognition of the hunting rights of indigenous peoples.

“If local people are guaranteed the benefits of sustainable land-use and hunting practices, they will be willing to invest in sound management and negotiate selective hunting regimes,” said Ms Seymour. “Sustainable management of bushmeat resources requires bringing the sector out into the open, removing the stigma of illegality, and including wild meat consumption in national statistics and planning. “Reframing the bushmeat problem from one of international animal

welfare to one of sustainable livelihoods - and part of the global food crisis - might be a good place to start.”

The report - Conservation and Use of Wildlife-based Resources: The Bushmeat Crisis - was produced for the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. It will be discussed at the forthcoming IUCN World Conservation Congress, in Barcelona, on 5 October. The study highlights the role of the timber industry in sustainable wildlife management, as around half of the remaining forest in Africa now falls within timber concessions.

The authors note that European consumers are also “partly responsible” for the bushmeat crisis. “Apart from the direct demand for bushmeat products from expat communities, European demand for African timber exports helps to drive this local timber extraction - both legal and illegal.” The report recommends that the local and international timber industry work with NGOs, local communities, and governments to develop forest policies and management plans that incorporate wildlife concerns.

CIFOR’s recommendations were broadly endorsed by Dr Noelle Kumpel, programme manager, Central, East and Southern Africa Programme, Zoological Society of London, who said: “Unless bushmeat hunting is legalised - obviously within an adequately enforced regulatory framework - it will remain largely unregulated and increasingly unsustainable.

“But as well as empowering local people and creating mechanisms for community management of bushmeat, which includes working out what level of hunting is sustainable, we need to direct funds (eg from payments for ecosystem services or carbon) to communities so that they have incentives to do this.”

news.bbc.co.uk

World: Space cameras to monitor forests

Plans to use a state-of-the-art camera onboard a satellite to monitor deforestation levels in Africa’s Congo Basin have been unveiled. The high resolution RALCam3 camera will provide the first detailed view of the area’s rate of forest cover loss. The project is part of the Congo Basin Forest Fund, a £108m joint-initiative by the UK and Norwegian governments. The fund aims to curb climate change by preventing deforestation in the region.

Speaking at the launch of the scheme, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown said: “We are pledging to work together to secure the future of one of the world’s last remaining ancient forests. “Preserving our forests is vital if we are going to reduce global emissions and tackle climate change.”

The Congo rainforest is the second largest in the world, containing more than a quarter of the planet’s remaining tropical rainforest. It is also home to more than 50m people, and supports an estimated 10,000 plant species, 1,000 types of birds and 400 different kinds of mammals. A UN study warned that unless action was taken to tackle deforestation in the region, more than 66% of the rainforest would be lost by 2040.

The high definition camera will be made by a team at the

UK’s Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL). “We’re delighted to be involved in this very important and timely project,” said Nick Waltham, head of RAL’s Imaging Systems Division. “RALCam3 will provide 10-metre per pixel ground sampling from an orbit of 650 km (400 miles) altitude,” he told BBC News. “The image [width] is 88km (55 miles) thereby enabling large areas of the terrain to be imaged in one satellite pass.” Dr Waltham said the system would also have other applications, including surveillance of environmental change and offshore pollution.

The camera is one of the first projects to be supported by the fund, which is headed by former Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai. “The Congo Basin Forest Fund is a joint response to a global problem whereby an innovative and consensual mechanism has been embraced,” Professor Maathai explained. “It involves various partners committed to preserve and protect one of the most unique ecosystems in the world.” The fund, which has received an initial £58m (73m euros) from the UK government and £50m (63m euros) from the Norwegian government, will support anti-logging projects in the region until 2012.

news.bbc.co.uk

Brazil: Deforestation rises sharply as farmers push into Amazon

Concerns over the destruction of the Brazilian rainforest resurfaced recently after it emerged that deforestation jumped by 64% over the last 12 months, according to official government data. Brazil's National Institute for Space Research said that around 3,145 square miles - an area half the size of Wales - were razed between August 2007 and August 2008.

With commodity prices hitting recent highs and loggers and soy farmers pushing ever further into the Amazon jungle, satellite images captured by a real-time monitoring system, known in Brazil as Deter, showed that deforestation was once again on the rise after three years on the wane.

The figures launched the controversy over how best to preserve the Amazon rainforest onto the front pages of Brazilian newspapers, and triggered a war of words between environmental campaigners and members of the government who claim that their struggle to protect the rainforest is not being given sufficient recognition. "This is not about luck, it is about work, work, work," Brazil's environment minister, Carlos Minc, told reporters. News that total deforestation rose over the entire year came quickly after the announcement of monthly figures showing that month-on-month deforestation had in fact fallen. Government figures show that between May and June this year deforestation fell by 25%.

Despite the good news in recent months about the deforestation of the world's largest tropical forest slowing, Minc admitted his country still faced huge challenges in order to stamp out illegal logging and described the levels of destruction as "alarming". "We can't celebrate [the monthly drops] because deforestation is [still] very large. We have to invest everything into sustainable development," Minc told the *Folha de Sao Paulo* newspaper.

Critics claimed that the annual statistics gave a more accurate picture of the destruction been wrought on the Brazilian jungle.

Environmental campaigners fear that Brazil's push to expand its economy and develop the Amazon region is posing increasing threats to Brazil's natural resources. They accuse the government of retreating from its promises to defend the Amazon rainforest, which has been decimated since the 1970s by a mixture of logging, cattle ranching and soy farming.

"The president [Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva] said there would be no steps backwards," the former environment minister Marina Silva said in a recent interview in the *O Globo* newspaper. "But suddenly there is a conjuncture of things that go against everything that was being done."

www.guardian.co.uk

Indonesia: Orangutan from non-conserved forests can only survive three years

During the next three years, more than 8,000 orangutans face the threat of extinction as palm oil industries are refusing moratorium or spaces when opening up land. Environmental activist group Greenpeace considers this as one effective way to protect orangutans that live outside protected forests.

Novi Hardianto, manager of the habitat program at the Center for Orangutan Protection (COP) said recently that two big palm oil companies, IOI Group and Agro Group, have cut down forests that were known to be the habitat of orangutan. This was despite the fact that these forests were included in the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

Novi said that this proves RSPO cannot protect the orangutan population. "The population has been reduced by 3,000 per year. If we cannot improve this, we will not see orangutan anymore in the three years' time," she said. Edi Suhardi, the public relations manager at Agro Group, denied this. "It is not true that we have cut the forest there," he said.

"We just started our preliminary study to identify areas with high conservation," said Edi.

Meanwhile, RSPO spokesperson Desi Kusmadewi said that RSPO would check out the area mentioned by Greenpeace. "If it is true, we will give chance for the company to repair what they have done first before being removed from RSPO," said Desi.

Tonny R. Soehartono, Director for conservation and biological varieties at the Forestry Department, said the reduction of the orangutan and perhaps other species was normal. Government has decided the areas for fauna and the areas for cultivation. "We cannot make all forests only for wild animals," said Tonny.

He went on to say that the number of orangutan in Indonesia is still 60,000. "This is more than the number of Sumatran tigers," said Tonny.

www.tempointeractive.com

UK: UN plan to protect forests flawed

Plans to pay tropical countries to protect forests under a U.N. pact to fight climate change are flawed and risk alienating voters in rich nations, according to Britain's top adviser on forests.

Clearance of forests to create farmland in developing nations emits about a fifth of the greenhouse gases blamed for climate change. Trees store heat-trapping carbon dioxide as they grow and release it when they rot or are burnt. "I believe there are real flaws in the whole model of avoided deforestation which the U.N. (climate body) says it wants to use," said Barry Gardiner, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's special envoy for forests.

Major tropical countries felling their forests fastest, especially Indonesia, argue their trees provide a global service to slow climate change and have lobbied for compensation not to chop them down, as part of a new U.N. deal for combating global warming. But problems include estimating the threat of future deforestation, and therefore the level of any payments for "avoided deforestation". "To say I'm going to take your taxes and I'm going to pay other countries around the world for not doing what we think they may have done otherwise under some hypothetical model, that doesn't strike me as a very good argument," Gardiner said.

Almost all nations at a round of fractious U.N. climate treaty

talks in Ghana last month expressed support for including ways to avoid deforestation in a new U.N. pact meant to be agreed in Copenhagen by the end of 2009. Gardiner proposed instead that rich countries should simply make payments to tropical nations based on the size of existing forests. If countries continued to log or burn they could be expelled from the scheme.

"There is a very simple, very positive, direct relationship between the payment and the forest, between the product and the payment for the product," he said. "Trees are performing a function for the world, sequestering carbon, and you pay for that function."

The U.N. talks on forestry focus on slowing deforestation and have made little progress in finding parallel incentives to reward countries which are not clearing their forests. They may otherwise earn nothing and even have an incentive to start logging again to take up slack in timber supply.

"I'm not seeking to blame Brazil and Indonesia for pursuing their national interest, that's inevitable. What I'm trying is to look at a model which functions equally for Gabon, Ecuador," Gardiner said.

africa.reuters.com

Europe: EU takes a weak step against logging

The European Union has reached a new agreement aimed at preventing import of illegal timber from Africa, but environmental campaigners believe bolder action is needed to curb deforestation across the globe.

Under a deal reached with Ghana on Sep. 3, the EU has undertaken to establish border controls to prevent unlicensed wood from the West African state entering the Union's 27 countries. Known as a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), the deal also commits the EU to aiding the Accra authorities in developing an improved system for monitoring a wood trade worth 400 million dollars per year. More than half of Ghana's annual timber exports are destined for Europe.

The accord has been given a guarded welcome by conservation groups. Kyeretwie Opoku from the organisation Forest Watch Ghana said that it could help to crack down on such problems as corruption and in ensuring a more sustainable management of the country's natural resources. But Opoku expressed concern that the agreement would be separate to other anti-deforestation schemes operating in Ghana, such as one financed by the World Bank, and says that proper links need to be established between the various programmes and donors involved.

Ghana is one of several countries involved in negotiating VPAs with the EU; others include Cameroon, Congo, Indonesia and Malaysia. Russia and China have not yet entered such talks, though they are reported to be two of the largest suppliers of illegal wood to the EU.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) recently published estimates that the volume of illegal timber imports into the EU in 2006 could have been as high as 31 million cubic metres. That would be equivalent to almost one-fifth of the Union's total timber imports. Illegal wood exports to the EU from Russia and China were estimated at 10.4 million and 3.7 million cubic metres respectively.

The EU is the main export market for wood from Russia, the Amazon Basin and Africa. It is believed that up to 80 percent of all Amazonian timber originates from trees that have been felled without permission.

In 2003, the European Commission issued an action plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). It undertook to assess whether legislation was needed to complement voluntary agreements with wood-producing countries.

The Commission was due to formally propose such legislation in July this year, but has postponed the move until later this month. Barbara Helfferich, the institution's environment spokeswoman, said the delay had been a result of "scheduling problems." There have been "no major political disagreements" among officials on the content and scope of the law," she claimed.

Sebastien Risso, a Greenpeace campaigner, said that voluntary agreements can be a "useful instrument" to help countries with valuable forest resources to manage them better. But such agreements "appear to be insufficient" on their own, making legislation necessary.

Greenpeace is urging that the legislation should place the onus on companies involved in the timber trade to prove that they only deal in wood from legal sources. Penalties should be imposed on those who do not comply with the law, it believes.

It is also seeking a standardised system that can be used to check products in order to verify that they use legal wood. That system would apply to paper and packaging, as well as to timber destined for the construction industry and for furniture and wood chips used for energy generation.

Iola Riesco from the ecological group Fern said that there have been positive moves in Ghana in recent years to give campaigners a greater say in monitoring how forestry is managed. But she added that "it is too early to say" if the new

EU-Ghana agreement "will lead to less illegal timber entering the EU's market."

Ralph Ridder from the European Forest Institute, which provided advice to EU officials negotiating with Ghana, said: "For many years, Europe has talked the talk of saving the world's forests but demanded increasing volumes of cheap wood imports, providing profitable markets for illegal wood from very poor countries. Now European consumers are increasingly sensitive to global deforestation, so the EU has responded by seeking to turn around this dynamic through the VPA mechanism and today's agreement."

allafrica.com

India: Vanishing act - State's private forests on the decline

With Goa's coastal areas becoming prime property, the forest cover over them is fast disappearing. Take the case of Reis Magos in North Goa or Agonda in South Goa, where huge chunks of private forests have disappeared. "A good deal of the forest has been illegally felled or burnt. Forest department officials say that they can only control what happens on government forests," said environmentalist Claude Alvares. However, under the Trees Act, 1984, the department does have the power to intervene in private properties if trees are cut. But this is rarely done.

"If Goa continues to lose its greenery, we will lose tourists. We want development but there cannot be blatant cutting of the trees and destruction of natural resources," said former president of Travel and Tourism Association of Goa (TTAG), Charles Bonifacio. Of the total 7031.2 hectares identified as private forest land in the Sawant and Karapurkar committee reports prepared in 1999 and 2002, about 2887 hectares no more fall within the private forest area.

Rubbishing allegations of destruction of private forests to construct homes, president of the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India, Goa, Datta Naik said, "We will treat private forests as eco-sensitive zones. However, there is confusion regarding private forest areas as the survey is incomplete and is ambiguous. But once the area is earmarked, we will definitely adhere to the rules and regulations".

Data submitted by the forest department in the high court reveals that while in Siolim 133 hectares were identified as private forest by Sawant and Karapurkar committees, only 4.40 hectares remain. In Arpora, of 50 hectares, only 3.9 are now

earmarked as private forest land. In Pernem, of the 10 hectares earmarked as private forest, nothing remains. The same is the case with Agonda which had 15 hectares of private forest.

Of the 120 hectares private forest land at Pomburpa only 8.16 hectares remain, while in Siridao of the 44 hectares identified, only 2 hectares are now identified as private forest.

The situation in rural Goa is not very good either. In Poinguinim, of the 385 hectares earmarked as private forest, only 106 hectares remain. In Bainguinim, of the 50 hectares, now 19 hectares come under private forest area. Of the 60 hectares private forest in Pilerne, only 20 hectares remain. In Raia, of the 25 hectares earmarked by Sawant and Karapurkar committee, only 6.80 hectares forest has been identified. Loutolim, Sulcorna and several other villages have lost more than half of their private forest cover.

According to forest officials, a survey of several private forest areas revealed that they were found to be non-forest areas as they didn't satisfy the criteria for classification as forest land. But environmentalist Rajendra Kerkar alleged, "Private forests have been destroyed to give way to development projects and siltation will soon increase".

However, Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Nitin Kunkolienker said, "To state that private forests have been destroyed for construction would be wrong. Earlier, wrong data of private forests was given. But after the survey, the correct picture is coming forward," he added.

timesofindia.com

Australia: Carbon scheme putting forests at logging risk

Two Canberra academics are warning the inclusion of plantation forests in an emissions trading scheme could drive emissions up not down, by encouraging the logging of native forests.

The latest warning is from Dr Judith Ajani a forest economist at the Australian National University. "The effect of the emissions trading scheme, with respect to the forestry sector both native forests and plantations, is potentially quite negative from a climate change mitigation perspective," Dr Ajani said. She argues that under the proposed emissions trading scheme, plantation owners are likely to make more money from using plantations for carbon storage rather than for logging.

She and a colleague at ANU have used a mathematical model to prove their point. Their research is included in a submission to the Government on its green paper for the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). "We found that plantation growers would need only quite low CO₂ prices before they would receive the equal revenue that, as the alternative of logging a plantation," Dr Ajani said. "So we would be looking at prices for a hard wood plantation of around \$10 to \$15 a tonne of CO₂ for plantation growers to be attracted by the carbon market rather than the wood market."

Dr Ajani says that is bad news for native forests. She argues plantations should be excluded from the ETS. "If we see a curtailment of plantation processing in Australia, what will happen is we will revert back into more native forest logging," she said.

In the Government's green paper on the carbon pollution

reduction scheme, plantations established since 1990 are able to opt into the scheme. Dr Ajani says that policy will do little for reducing carbon emissions. "More native forest logging rather than plantation logging means that we'll have more emissions, CO₂ emissions going up because plantations are less dense in carbon than native forests," she said.

The Australian Conservation Foundation is also concerned. The group's Tony Mohr says the Government's green paper is too heavily weighted in favour of industry. "The Government's proposed to exclude the clearing of native forests from the emissions trading scheme but include plantation forestry inside the scheme on an opt-in basis," Mr Mohr said. "And that means the industry can make money out of credits, but doesn't have to pay for their pollution from clearing native forests."

But the National Association of Forest Industries has rejected the research. Chief executive Allan Hansard says the proposed scheme will not see more plantations being used for carbon storage rather than wood processing. "I can't see how that would happen because the products we produce from our forests are carbon stores as well, and if the Government recognises that in the emissions trading scheme it wouldn't make sense to actually do that at all," Mr Hansard said.

"There may be some cases in marginal land areas where, a long way away from wood markets, where trees could be grown just for carbon, but that would be in those sorts of special case areas only."

www.abc.net.au

Canada: Old-growth B.C. forests worth more standing than fallen

Leaving British Columbia's old-growth forests standing may make more economic sense than cutting them down for timber, especially as the province looks to strategies to cut global warming, a new B.C. study suggests. The report from Simon Fraser University challenges the status quo and uses Ministry of Forest data to show conservation wins out over logging when forests are valued for their role in capturing carbon from the atmosphere, protecting endangered species and providing opportunities for recreation.

The study backed by three environmental groups - Wilderness Committee, David Suzuki Foundation, and Ecojustice - used computer modelling to look at a variety of conservation and logging scenarios in a large tract of forest near Vancouver. In almost every scenario, researchers say they found the value of the carbon captured and stored by the trees far outweighed the value of the lumber harvested from the logs.

Faisal Moola, science director for the David Suzuki

Foundation, called the results a clear indicator that B.C. should be protecting its old-growth forest as it works with other western provinces to reduce global warming. "The old-growth forests that we have are not only going to be a benefit in the fight against climate change, but there's also a significant economic windfall that could be celebrated by British Columbians," he said.

As the B.C. government begins to participate in a market for carbon credits with other western provinces and states, the study suggest the towering trees and the rich soil that surrounds them could become a cash crop for their carbon-storing properties.

Trees absorb and store carbon dioxide, using it as a building block in their development. When old-growth forests are harvested, that carbon is released into the atmosphere. While much of global warming is caused by the combustion of fossil fuels such as gasoline, Moola said 25 per cent of the carbon dioxide that hits the atmosphere is caused by destruction of carbon stores of old-growth forests. "The study

shows there's direct economic benefit for B.C. if we can account for the carbon stored. B.C. should be protecting its old-growth forest as a strategy to combat global warming," he said.

The cap-and-trade system currently in the works through the Western Climate Initiative puts a ceiling on carbon emissions. Polluters that can't reduce their emissions will be able to purchase offsets to make up the differences mandated under the cap, which could give B.C. a significant revenue stream as the price of carbon rises, Moola said.

Duncan Knowler, the SFU associate professor behind the study, said the report is being conservative in its assessment of carbon prices, which are set to rise in coming years. It values carbon at \$20 to \$150 per tonne, well below other estimates of \$350 per tonne. For example, at \$75 per tonne, the forest in the Fraser timber supply area that is home to the endangered spotted owl is worth \$1.64 billion, according to the study.

The study also excludes the role forests play in purifying water and protecting fish habitat, which could make for a more robust argument in favour of conservation, Knowler said. And though the study considers only a specific area of Lower Mainland forest, he said the "surprising" results could prompt a rethinking of the current strategy around cutting old-growth forest. While the end results may differ in other parts of B.C., "the basic principles . . . are not so different," he said. "The

biggest single benefit of preserving the forest was the carbon capture benefit, and you're going to get that in all old-growth forests."

The area studied is also home to B.C.'s entire spotted owl population - just 10 birds that Gwen Barlee of the Wilderness Committee says are on the brink of extinction in the province. Barlee said the report refutes the government's main argument against protecting the owl: That it's too costly to protect their habitat, given the money raked in from logging.

Instead, the report shows that protecting the habitat of endangered species actually has direct benefit for community and human well-being, as well, she said. "Preserving these old-growth forests . . . could potentially prevent species from going extinct, but could also help residents of B.C."

Barlee is careful to point out the report doesn't argue for an end to logging, but instead calls for a reduction in the coming decades. "We need to value nature in a different way than we have in the past," she said. The rapid decline in the spotted owl is one of many warning signs nature is giving, Barlee said. "Typically, endangered species come from endangered ecosystems. You have an ecosystem in such trouble that it can't support a species that has lived there for millennia."

canadianpress.google.com

Cameroon: 14 forest exploitation companies suspended

Forestry and Wildlife Minister, Prof. Elvis Ngolle Ngolle, has suspended some 14 forest exploitation companies for disrespecting forestry regulations. According to the decision suspending the companies, they can only be allowed to resume their activities in Cameroon if the charges against them are lifted. According to the communiqué, the ban on the companies can only be lifted when they show proof of payment of forest royalties and exploitation taxes to the competent authorities.

The companies concerned are: PEMACO; SCDS; SEF; SETRAF; CIC; ISIBOIS; SFW; SOFOROC; TTS; SITAF; S.N EWAFI; SFIL; ZINGUI judas and SOFICOM.

The suspension came in the wake of a July 16 communiqué in which the Minister ordered some 33 forest exploitation companies to pay over FCFA 2 billion as outstanding forest royalties. The communiqué had faulted the companies for failing to pay the first and second quotas of the royalties

as required by the law governing the forest sector in the country. Ngolle Ngolle, in the note, stated that the companies concerned were notified on July 14 and given up till July 21 to regularise their financial engagements or "face repressive sanctions in conformity with the regulations enforced."

Last March, Ngolle Ngolle suspended some 27 forest exploitation companies for various irregular activities. This was followed a month later by a press conference organised by a French NGO, Les Amies de la Terre, defending claims that Cameroon's forest was being exploited in total disregard of the tenets of sustainability.

The suspension of the companies is in conformity with the numerous promises and warnings Ngolle Ngolle has been sending to corrupt and illegal forest exploiters.

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Madagascar: New eco-deals protect unique forests

Madagascar has signed a series of environment agreements to protect unique forests and support local communities as part of a commitment by the government to ramp up environmental protection on the Indian Ocean island.

In its largest ever debt-for-nature swap, Madagascar signed a deal with France this month, in which US\$20 million of debt owed to the former colonial power was put into a conservation fund, the Foundation for Protected Areas and Biodiversity (FPAB).

"Thanks to this, the money will go into the protection

of the Malagasy environment instead of to France,” Nani Ratsifandrihamanana, the environment director of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) told IRIN. Her organisation played a crucial role in brokering the deal that will help protect Madagascar’s forests, home to many of the world’s most fascinating creatures. Nearly all the island’s land mammals, over 90 percent of its reptiles and 80 percent of its plants are found nowhere else.

In a separate deal, Madagascar committed itself to selling nine million tons of carbon offsets to help protect its forests. The money will be used to protect the vast Makira forest, one of several under threat as a result of the poverty of the overwhelmingly rural population.

Scientists say deforestation in the tropics contributes to about 20 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions and that reducing deforestation is one of the quickest ways to fight climate change. Deforestation in Africa is twice as high as anywhere else in the world, where some 13 million hectares of forest are cleared every year. Thanks to this, the money will go into the protection of the Malagasy environment

Conservation International (CI), a non-profit environmental group, said the main drivers of deforestation in Madagascar were slash-and-burn agriculture, charcoal production for use in towns and cities, mining, and the conversion of forest to plant maize.

Reducing deforestation is a hard battle to win because more than 75 percent of the island’s 18 million people are rural and depend on land and natural resources. The new carbon credit deal, managed by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), based at the Bronx Zoo in the US, represents an innovative way to tackle the problem.

Offset schemes allow polluters to pay for emission cuts in other countries, while providing a source of precious foreign currency to developing countries. The Malagasy government has had some success in forest protection in recent years and has been able to increase the number and size of protected areas. According to environmentalists, the rate of deforestation has been dramatically cut in some of these areas.

allafrica.com

UK: Scientists ask to plant GM trees

Scientists have applied to plant a group of genetically modified trees on land owned by the Forestry Commission. University of Southampton researchers want to establish a settlement of GM poplar trees for biofuel research. The Forestry Commission confirmed the application, but said no decision had been taken yet.

The plantation would be the first attempt to cultivate GM trees in the UK since 1999, when activists destroyed 115 plants in Berkshire. Campaigners warned that allowing the move

to go ahead would be “an unknown and worrying risk” for Britain’s ecosystems.

Clare Oxborrow, a GM campaigner for Friends of the Earth, said: “Our concerns with GM trees are even more serious than crops because trees are very long lived. “They are inherently geared up for spreading seeds and pollen because of they way they reproduce. There’s a huge potential for cross-pollination.”

news.bbc.co.uk

USA: Chicago company launches tree free paper

Cutting down on the use of paper is easy enough, but in spite of all your efforts you’ll never become 100% paperless. That’s where tree free paper comes in. Recently launched on the market by GPA, a Chicago paper company, Ultra Green paper is 100% tree free. And of equal importance; the paper is produced without any water. What more can you ask for? This paper is going to be a massive selling point for business leaders vying for deals. Not to speak of greendesign/advertising.

Ultra Green is made from inorganic mineral powders derived from limestone and calcium carbonate, with a trace amount of non-toxic resin and high density polyethylene (HDPE) as a binding agent. No chlorine is used.

Sounds too good to be true? There’s more! Ultra Green paper is also won’t yellow or become brittle no matter how long it’s exposed to sunlight. The paper is resistant to scuffing, water, grease and oils and can be used outdoors without

being at risk from decomposing. Plus it offers antimicrobial protection and conforms to FDA standards for food contact! And due to the water and energy savings made in its manufacturing process, Ultra Green paper is priced 30 to 40% below than regular synthetic paper and film.

Replacing one ton of traditional paper with one ton of Ultra Green paper saves 20 trees, according to Environmental Defense’s paper calculator. It also eliminates 42 lbs of waterborne waste, 7,480 gallons water/wastewater, 167 lbs solid waste and 236 lbs carbon emissions. Energy savings amount to 25 million BTU.

GPA says that the paper combines the printability of a traditional paper product with the durability of a plastic sheet. It does not require special inks or manufacturing processes. This paper ought to be the invention of the year!

www.enn.com

Zimbabwe: Company reviving forest plantations in cities

Forestry Company of Zimbabwe has embarked on a programme to revive forest plantations in the country's urban areas as it moves to re-green the cities and mitigate the effects of climate change that comes with deforestation. The programme is expected to see an estimated total of 300 000 hectares put under exotic and indigenous trees for this summer season.

Forestry Conservation and Extension officer for Harare Mr Kudzanai Gwande said there was a need to replace the trees that have been chopped over the years to minimise the effects of deforestation. He said his company was disturbed by the rate of deforestation in the country. "A pilot project of 90 hectares has already been launched in Dzivarasekwa while ten hectares have already been planted with eucalyptus grandis and the rest with indigenous trees. "Negotiations with the city of Harare are underway for more land to establish such plantations. Discussions are also underway with other local authorities while seed lots are being established for the purpose," Mr Gwande said.

He said forests bordering towns and cities were being seriously affected by indiscriminate cutting down of trees for firewood and agriculture purposes. FCZ is currently working with environmental organisations like Environmental Management Agency, Environment Africa and Zimbabwe

Environmental Lawyers Association to curb the rampant abuse of forests in the country.

Environment Africa Regional Manager Mr Barnabas Mawire said forests were considered as a biological climate regulator and hence should be protected. "Urban forests help in regulating urban climates, the generation of precipitation and in the process prevent excessive warming of the atmosphere through absorbing excessive energy. It should be everyone's responsibility to promote the growth of trees," Mr Mawire said.

He bemoaned the current state of Cleveland catchment area in Harare urging the local authority to regulate activities in the area. Recurrent power outages and general lack of monitoring have resulted in a 100 percent increase in deforestation from between 200 000 hectares and 312 000 hectares within a year, a situation that has been blamed on general lack of effective monitoring by the respective authorities.

Zimbabwe is losing an estimated 300 000 hectares of forests annually due to illegal tree felling in peri-urban farming strengthening the need for intensified environmental conservation campaigns.

allafrica.com

World: FSC stakes out its REDD role

The Forest Stewardship Council has warned that any moves to set up a carbon market around avoided deforestation should not lose sight of the other environmental and social issues that intertwine in forests. The independent responsible-forestry certifier also says it should play a role in any emerging forest carbon finance system.

There is now strong and broad international support for formal incentives for a global financing mechanism for preserving forests, or what's become known as Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD). The REDD initiative would see payments from the developed world to governments and communities in the developing world, particularly those in which tropical rainforests lie.

The recent UN climate meeting in Accra saw broad agreement that such a system, involving either direct funding

or a carbon trading market, should be part of a future climate change treaty to follow on from the Kyoto Protocol after 2012.

In a statement on climate change, the FSC says the forest management standards it has built up over 15 years makes it well-placed to ensure that the carbon financing incentives that arise are fully harmonised with other forest uses values – such as biodiversity and the rights of forest communities.

The FSC says its forest management standards and certification system should be a pre-requisite for any carbon financing initiatives. It sees a lead role for itself in the verifying of the carbon benefits of avoided deforestation activities and says its auditing tools can do the job on additionality, permanence and leakage.

www.carbonpositive.net

Mexico: Rise in illegal logging threatens butterflies

The traditional wintering site for tens of millions of monarch butterflies in central Mexico is under continuing threat after conservationists failed to halt the onslaught of illegal logging in the area. The butterflies are in the middle of their annual

journey of up to 2,800 miles from eastern Canada to the small area of evergreen fir forest that acts as their wintertime sanctuary. But, despite an unprecedented drive to protect it, deforestation is threatening the Monarch Biosphere Reserve and its visitors.

A report from the WWF showed deforestation of the area up nearly 10% over the last year, at 260 hectares (650 acres), reversing a downward trend established with the help of unparalleled efforts by the authorities and conservationists. "The problem is more complicated than we had thought," said Omar Vidal, director of WWF Mexico. "It is very worrying."

Before the latest figures came out activists and government officials were hinting at victory in the battle to protect the mountainside reserve, which was formed in 1986 from land owned by 38 communities. Deforestation soared after the arrival of the logging mafias in 2001, reaching a peak of 460 hectares in 2006. The impending disaster led to unprecedented efforts to protect the reserve's 11,000 hectare core. Police and the army manning checkpoints cracked down on trucks piled high with logs leaving the reserve and local people were offered financial incentives to conserve the forest, and advice on other ways of making money, such as tourism.

"We were making such good inroads with the local people we thought it was only a matter of time before all the communities joined in," said Ernesto Enkerlin, head of the National Commission of Protected National Areas. A 48% drop

in deforestation the previous year fired the optimism, boosted by the declaration of the reserve as a World Heritage Site this summer. But meanwhile the logging mafias had cemented ties to the Crescencio Morales community, which is now responsible for 92% of deforestation in the reserve.

The latest figures have led to calls for emergency measures to persuade the community to switch to conservation. But the loggers have a reputation for violence and intimidation, and the authorities worry that rewarding the transgressors would send the wrong message. Lincoln Brower, an expert on the monarch, said the fact that the butterflies, which arrive in November, often head for the same patch of forest their great grandparents abandoned the previous spring adds to the threat. One colony, he said, arrived at a traditional site in 2006 only to be wiped out because inadequate tree cover allowed temperatures to drop too low. There was nothing obviously stopping them moving to healthy forest nearby. "The logging has got to stop. Otherwise it's a catastrophe," he said.

www.guardian.co.uk

Nigeria: Tree planting to be a condition for building plan's approval

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) will soon come out with a policy that would make tree planting a condition for the approval of a building plan in the territory. Alhaji Isa Shaaibu, FCDA's Director, Parks and Recreation, disclosed this recently in Abuja in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). He said that the policy will be strictly enforced in the territory, adding that tree planting was a top priority in the agenda of the FCT Administration.

He also said that the Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB), would soon take measures to enforce the law on illegal felling of trees in the territory. "The FCT Minister has vowed to enforce the law relating to the illegal felling of trees in the FCT and warned those engaged in the illegal felling of trees within the territory to desist or be prepared to face the full wrath of the law.

Besides, he said that about 1,000 tree seedlings will soon be distributed across the territory's six area councils as part of efforts to promote tree planting. "The minister has also directed us to organise programmes that will sensitise the people on the importance of tree planting," he said.

He also said that the FCTA will soon be organising competitions among schools in the territory on tree planting and added that the administration was taking the measures because of its consciousness of the adverse effects of climate change and the need to sustain the environment.

"This is one of the reasons behind the formation of the Abuja Green Society," he said. "That is why many areas have been mapped out as green areas and stream valleys and we intend to plant more trees in those areas," he added.

Shaaibu, however, appealed to the diplomatic community in Abuja to support the FCTA's efforts to achieve the objective of the tree planting programme. He said that the FCT will also encourage every visitor to Abuja to plant at least one tree. He, nonetheless, commended the ECOWAS Secretariat for collaborating with the FCTA in the tree planting campaign, calling on the states of the federation to emulate the FCT's tree planting programme. "By so doing, our environment will be secured from the dangers inherent in climate change which have now become a global concern," he said.

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The CFA

The Commonwealth Forestry Association

The Commonwealth Forestry Association (CFA) is the world's longest established international forestry organization, tracing its history back to 1921. Today it unites foresters, scientists, students, NGOs and policy makers throughout the world in a unique international network that provides professional support to its members and forms a key element of civil society.

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