CFA Newsletter

No.45 June 2009 ISSN 1463-3868

Contents:

CFA Newsletter
is the newsletter of the
Commonwealth Forestry Association

Editor: Alan Pottinger

Contact: The Crib, Dinchope, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 9JJ, UK

Tel: + 44 (0) 1588 67 28 68

Email: cfa@cfa-international.org

Web: www.cfa-international.org

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the CFA.

A View of UNFF-8

The eighth session of the UN Forum on Forests took place from 20 April to 1 May 2009. This was the first UNFF session held since the negotiation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument (NLBI) and UNFF's second Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) at UNFF-7 two years ago. Under the new MYPOW, UNFF-8 was scheduled to address the theme of 'forests in a changing environment' in preparation for the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP-15) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), due to take place in Copenhagen in December, and to tackle financial issues related to implementation of the NLBI.

Delegates at UNFF-8 succeeded in agreeing a resolution on 'Forests in a Changing Environment, Enhanced Cooperation and Cross-Sectoral Policy and Programme Coordination, and Regional and Sub-Regional Inputs'. This resolution focuses on forests and climate change, reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation, combating desertification, and forests and biodiversity conservation. It emphasises the NLBI as an integrated framework to implement SFM, to contribute to addressing the interrelated challenges of climate change, forest loss and degradation, and desertification, and to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity. In addition, the resolution invites enhanced cooperation on forest law enforcement and governance.

During negotiation on this resolution, delegates took up a call from UNFF Director Jan McAlpine to send a specific message to the UNFCCC. This message became the subject of considerable debate as it raised, once again, an issue that has come up so often in the past: the status of the UNFF vis-à-vis the UNFCCC and the other Rio conventions (the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)).

The eventually agreed message consists of two paragraphs within the body of the main resolution. These two paragraphs did not ultimately include specific language that had been proposed on the need to reach agreed outcomes at upcoming UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD COPs on the role of SFM in addressing challenges posed by climate change, loss of biodiversity and desertification. The message does, however, invite the CPF members, particularly the COPs of the UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD, to continue to integrate, as appropriate, the sustainable management of all types of forests into their strategies by 'considering' the NLBI and the four global objectives on forests contained within the NLBI, and by 'building on existing and well-established forest-related tools, processes, programmes and activities available at the national, regional and international levels to implement SFM,' such as national forest programmes, criteria and indicators for SFM, capacity-building, and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

While this thematic work under the MYPOW was being completed, negotiations on related text on financing and means of implementation of the NLBI wound on into the night of the last day of negotiations, ultimately reaching a complete stalemate as day dawned on 2 May. This always highly contentious subject of debate within the UNFF and its predecessor bodies (the IPF and IFF) had already been left hanging from UNFF-7, making this deadlock all the more significant if the less surprising. The conflict was not, as has often been the case in the past, over the need for 'new and additional' financial or other resources, but about how these should be operationalised. Developing countries as a bloc maintained their position favouring a global forest fund, first proposed over a decade ago. Developed countries' opposition to this proposal centred on the transaction costs and time that setting up (yet another) new fund would entail, with no guarantee that it would receive any voluntary contributions. The

Publication of the CFA Newsletter is supported by the Commonwealth Foundation

developed bloc argued that greater access to existing sources of funding for SFM—even in the form of training and capacity-building—represents a more constructive use of any new funds, and favoured a 'facilitative mechanism' to provide the means by which to accomplish this. This proposed label was perhaps unfortunate, as it sounds somewhat reminiscent of the Global Mechanism established under the CCD, and it was changed during the UNFF-8 discussion to 'facilitative process'.

As it became clear that no decision to establish a global forest fund would be taken at UNFF-8, the debate became bogged down on a timeline for reaching a decision on its establishment, with developed country representatives expressing hopes of operationalising a 'facilitative process' quickly in order to establish its credibility as an effective assistance mechanism before being forced to decide on establishing a global forest fund. The negotiations finally broke down over whether a decision 'on establishing' a global forest fund would be taken at UNFF-10, although, given the lack of full discussion on some other elements of that decision, it is not entirely clear that they could have been finished in the very short amount of time left before flights were due to leave New York at the time the impasse was reached.

During the tense hours of uncertainty on the final day of UNFF-8, some participants voiced concern about what signal a stalemate on finance might send as to the viability of the UNFF itself. Once the damage had been done, however, and the dust began to clear, it became apparent that for many people who have an interest in the UNFF the reports of its death have been greatly exaggerated (with apologies to Mark Twain). Although huge questions remain on precisely how the UNFF may move forward from this point, the sentiment that the UNFF is worth devoting resources to still appears to be very much alive.

Over the last year and a half, it is the climate change regime, out of all environmental regimes, that has dominated the headlines, international attention, and funding proposals that hold the potential to increase forest financing considerably. This may mean that the UNFF, which has floundered in the past due to lack of a clear mandate, could continue to lose credibility in competition with that far larger regime. On the other hand, there is fear that the current heavy focus on forest-related carbon within the climate change regime could marginalize other forest values. This common fear amongst the international forest community could make an international organisation that exists to promote achievement of sustainable forest management in its widest sense very attractive. Ultimately, this may spur the forest community to a far deeper level of support for the UNFF, which is just such an organisation.

Deborah Davenport

Director of the MA Programme in Global Affairs at the University of Buckingham, where she lectures in international environmental politics. She attended UNFF-8 as a member of the UK delegation.

Association News

The CFA AGM will be held 3rd September 2009 – see the website for more details

Donation supports book distribution in Zambia

Generous personal donations made at Christmas by CFA members have enabled us to launch a project in Zambia to distribute copies of our book *Commonwealth Forests* to colleges and forestry training centres throughout the country. Our Zambia Chair, Victor Kawanga is coordinating the project and said "These books will be greatly appreciated as many people in Zambia don't have access to such information".

Personal donations are vital for us to continue to support wise forest management throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. If you would like to send a donation to the CFA to support our work please contact our office (details on front page) to discuss details.

Strong winds in East Africa: report on SPGS/CFA workshop

The winds of change are currently gaining strength, and now blowing through the forest sector in East Africa. The winds are bringing with them a clear shift from public to private sector, especially in the area of commercial plantations. This was just one of the many conclusions to come out of a SPGS/CFA Workshop held in Uganda from 22nd-24th April, 2009, and supported by the Commonwealth Foundation. The Commonwealth Forestry Association (CFA) clearly shares the vision that SPGS and UTGA have - namely, to promote and support this private sector

Paul Jacovelli explains how SPGS works

Participants at the SPGSCFA workshop

investment into plantations.

The Workshop was entitled ***"Developing a Commercial Forestry Industry in Eastern Africa: promoting regional cooperation through using case studies from the region".*** It certainly exceeded any expectations we at the SPSG had. The networking alone was fantastic, with many excellent contacts being made for future collaboration. There were representatives present from both public and private forest sectors in Kenya, Tanzania, S. Sudan and Uganda. There were also people involved directly with forestry education, training and research as well as representatives from two major private investors in the region – namely, Africa Forests (Tanzania and S. Sudan) and Green Resources Ltd. (Tanzania, Mozambique, S. Sudan and Uganda). The main objective of the workshop was to have commercial forestry recognized as a business with a good potential for developing an industry in the region as well as publicizing the pivotal role played by the private sector in achieving this goal. To set off the workshop, we had the privilege of Hon. Aston Kajara, Minister of Stare for Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Investments) delivering the opening speech. He noted the unique nature of the commercial forestry business and commended the private sector's efforts towards developing the industry. He also welcomed the idea of a regional forum to address current and future challenges of the sector and pledged government's support in ensuring security of the investments.

Jim Ball (CFA Chair) delivered a keynote address, giving a global perspective on plantation forestry. Delegates then got down to business with an update of what is happening in the four countries (Kenya, S. Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda) as regards to commercial forestry. The huge level of investment by both Green resources and Africa Forests was very encouraging. The SPGS and UTGA models attracted great interest from the foreign delegates too. It was also interesting that all the state forest operations except in S. Sudan) expressed plans for them to remain as major players in the commercial forest sector – presumably for them to raise revenue in the future (although it was not clear whether the public funds would materialize for such a large scale investment). It also came out that the challenges faced in the different countries were very similar - for example, land tenure issues, inadequate financing, limited research support, ineffective communication channels and limited technical support in terms of experienced and knowledgeable foresters. This pointed to the need for a regional approach, and delegates were given a working example of the East African Tree Biotechnology Project that is multiplying and disseminating eucalypt hybrid clones in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Of course it wouldn't be a proper workshop without some serious socializing and so the first day was crowned with a sundowner cocktail to clear the minds of the delegates in preparation for the tough work ahead but also to form important social networks in an informal setting. It must have been the infamous Kampala traffic jam that delayed so many delegates! Day two was dedicated to identifying the specific challenges and suggested solutions to the four broad themes of: the Investment Climate, Training, Communication and Research. Participants split into groups based on their area of specialization or interest and were guided by a theme group leader. The two hours flew past whilst the groups sifted through pertinent issues and came out with workable solutions. They also nominated individuals to follow up with particular tasks. The workshop came up with a number of resolutions out of the thematic group discussions which are to be sent to governments, private investors, communities, growers associations, NGOs and development partners. The visiting delegates were on the third day taken on a safari to visit Ferdsult Engineering Company, a commercial tree grower (supported by the SPGS since 2004) in Lugazi, near Jinja. The group had interesting discussions on many issues relating to not just plantation silviculture but also how the SPGS is achieving its results and how the project could be adapted for other countries in the region. Finally, it was clear from our feedback forms that participants greatly appreciated the idea of bringing together key players in the sector from within the East African region. Many proposed making it a regular event but let us first digest what came out of it. The SPGS and CFA are coordinating the process of drafting resolutions from this gathering: these will be published in the next SPGS News but will be posted earlier onto the web at www.sawlog.ug

Celia Nalwadda
SPGS Plantation Officer and CFA's Youth Officer

CFA Regional Coordinator becomes KEFRI Director

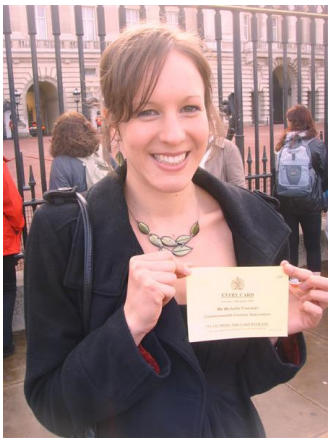
Dr. Ben Chikamai, CFA Regional Coordinator for Africa, has been appointed the new Director of the Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI) with effect from 1st May 2009. Ben is also the Executive Secretary and Regional Coordinator for The Network for Natural Gums and

Resins in Africa (NGARA), and the Coordinator for the Association of Forestry Research Institutions in Eastern Africa [AFREA] among other accolades. Prior to his current appointment, he was the KEFRI National Programme Coordinator in charge of Partnerships and Networks.

My day at Buckingham Palace

On the 28th of April the CFA offered me the amazing opportunity to attend a reception hosted by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, in celebration of the diamond anniversary of the modern Commonwealth. As I walked past the hoards of tourists looking wistfully through the gates and into Buckingham Palace, I felt truly privileged to experience an event I will not forget.

Once inside the Palace I was welcomed graciously and directed into the Picture Gallery where hundreds of guests from an array of Commonwealth countries and organisations were mingling, enjoying the champagne and canapés being offered and looking at the many gifts given by Commonwealth countries to the Queen over the years.



Michelle holding her entry card outside Buckingham Palace.

After all the guests had arrived we were ushered through to be received by the Queen, who shook each person's hand and welcomed them to the Palace. After an address by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, the 'Commonwealth Cantata', a piece composed especially for the event, was performed before we returned to the Picture Gallery. At this time the Duchess of Gloucester and Princess Alexandra of Kent introduced themselves to me and we spoke for some time about forestry and my work with the CFA as Youth Liaison Officer with the International Forestry Students Association.

In all, my experience at Buckingham Palace was wonderfully overwhelming; the lavishness of the Palace, the warm welcome I received, shaking hands with the Queen and socialising with people from many different backgrounds. It was a fantastic evening and I cannot thank the CFA enough for presenting me the opportunity to attend.

Letter

REDD and the Elephants in the Room etc.

Dear Editor,

I must congratulate you and the editorial board on the excellent articles and information contained in the Review, vol. 11 (1) and the March 2009 Newsletter. I was saddened to hear of the death of Alf Leslie. I joined FAO at the same time as Alf, he as a seasoned forester and me as a green one.

In Alf's spirit of scepticism and argumentative debate, I would like to raise some points from the Review and Newsletter.

In his article 'Towards a New Global Forest Science', Alan Grainger talks about "devising methods to identify normative long-term trends in national forest cover to make a Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) feasible". REDD is also cited in the article by Hajjar and Innes on the evolution of the World Bank's policy towards forestry.

In neither of these articles do the authors talk about the principal causes of deforestation, namely, the need for more agricultural land to meet the food requirements of an ever increasing population in developing countries, and the desire of these countries to clear land for cash crops to increase their gross national product (GDP).

I undertook a study in Africa on the correlation between population increase and the need for additional agricultural land. Over a ten-year period, I examined country by country, the amount of agricultural land required to meet the food requirements and then compared it to the forest area cleared in that period. Over ninety percent of forest clearing was for arable and pastoral agriculture. My paper is published as Chapter 11, "Natural resources: population growth and sustainable development in Africa" in a book entitled Climate Change and Africa, Edited by Pak Sum Low and published by Cambridge University Press in 2005.

In the Newsletter, Barry Gardiner lists the causes of deforestation (Paying for Forests), and Megan Liddel states in the article 'Seeing People through trees etc.', that "By 2030, the

world is likely to need 515 million more hectares to grow food and biofuel, twice the amount of additional land that will be available."

Unless agricultural productivity increases at or above the rate of population increase, deforestation will occur, irrespective of what measures are taken to preserve forests and woodlands. Therefore, there have to be concerted efforts to slow down (and eventually reverse) population increase and to increase agricultural productivity. Unless such efforts are fruitful, efforts to reduce REDD may be fruitless.

Increased agricultural productivity is not part of the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change, -. Clean Development Mechanism (UNFCCC–CDM). At present, the CDM is limited to afforestation/reforestation projects, although farm tree planting could increase both arable and pastoral productivity. If serious attempts are to be made by UN agencies to reduce deforestation, then increasing agricultural productivity should be paramount.

Discussions about population reduction seem to be a no go area, so as not to upset social and religious sensibilities. But the World's population currently 6.8 billion is heading for 9 billion plus by the year 2050. In my opinion, there are insufficient resources to meet the requirements of such a population unless there is a considerable reduction in everybody's living standards.

The 'Club of Rome' postulates the limits to growth from available resources. One forecast is that the World can support three billion people enjoying today's living standards of developed countries. At present, the population of the richest 28 countries is about 0.9 billion. The economic policy of most of these countries is to pursue a growth rate of 3-4% per year. This means doubling income in 18 to 25 years, with a concurrent demand for resources. This will lead to conflicts, with the poor losing out, unless there is a concerted effort to redistribute income both within and between countries and to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. Otherwise, humans will probably sign their own death warrant!

The article by Hajjar and Innes on 'the evolution of the World Bank's policy towards forestry; push or pull?' brought back vivid memories. I was a staff member of the WB/UNDP Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP) and was involved in helping with the original forest policy paper. Amongst other things, this was concerned with improving the management of all forest and I helped write a background paper on production and trade of wood products. However, the 'environmental lobby' was concerned about preserving tropical high forests (THF) and because the original policy paper expressed the view that these forests should be monitored and managed sustainably, the original authors of the policy paper were replaced with a more environmentally friendly team who proposed that the Bank would not support logging in any form on these THf's.

Many Bank foresters, including myself wrote memos to the effect that this policy shift was narrowly based and that the lack of the Bank's involvement in the sustainable management of THF's would not stop logging, or the clearing of land for agriculture. FAO was very concerned about the shift in the policy paper and sent a long memo to the Bank expressing concern about the bias to THF's, the lack of mention of other forests and woodland and their proper management. However, it did no good and the revised policy paper was published. I have three box files relating to the policy paper and the review, which was carried out in 1998/9. This review was critical of the policy paper and showed that the Bank's ban on involvement in THF logging had no effect on the timber trade or deforestation. Indeed it had an adverse effect, because the Bank had no say in how such forests could be managed. As Hajjar and Innes point out, the 2002 forest policy endorsed a move away from forest conservation to sustainable forest management to harness the potential of forests to reduce poverty, to integrate forests in sustainable economic development and to protect vital and global environmental services and values. This is more or less what was proposed in the original 1991 forest policy paper – 10 wasted years!

My work with ESMAP was mainly concerned with household energy in developing countries. Many studies highlighted the importance of biomass, especially fuelwood and charcoal as being the most important energy form for households, the service sector and (rural) industries. The article by Namaalwa, Hofstad and Sankhayan highlight the importance of charcoal to meet urban demands in Uganda.

However, many people treat 'traditional' wood energy as non-sustainable and non-commercial. Indeed, the World Bank is holding a workshop for the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF) on the 15th May 2009 to discuss the promotion of (non-traditional) biomass renewable resources to substitute for biomass and fossil fuels. A background paper produced for this workshop stated that 72% of energy in developing countries is traditional and non-sustainable. Yet many studies by ESMAP and others show the opposite. In sub-Saharan Africa, annual growth of wood on all land use types is 3-4 times annual demand for all forest products. Not only that, fuelwood and charcoal are the most important commercial energy forms and provided employment to many rural families. A recent study financed by the EU on a biomass strategy for Malawi, estimated that commercial biomass energy provided 130,000 full-time jobs in its growing, production, transport and trade. This is 2 to 3% of the workforce and 3-4% of GDP. For sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, commercial biomass could employ as many as 10 million people. Yet the SCF wants to promote wind, water and solar as substitutes for biomass. These energy forms will mainly generate electricity, when thermal energy is what is demanded. So it looks like another false start.

One last thought, the 'modern' use of biomass is being promoted as a boiler fuel for electrical generation and as a feedstock for motor ethanol and bio-diesel. As Megan Liddle points out in the Newsletter, this may entail the clearing of forests for biofuels. However, what is missing from the debate is the production of methanol (wood alcohol). This is made from any kind of biomass residue by destructive distillation. Methanol can be used directly as a motor fuel or used as a building block for other organic chemicals and fuels. Indeed, it was one of the first inputs for the nascent organic chemical industry, before it was replaced by chemicals from coal and then petro-chemicals.

Keith Openshaw
Vienna, USA
openshaw.keith@gmail.com

Forest Scenes

Gorilla in the Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest, Uganda

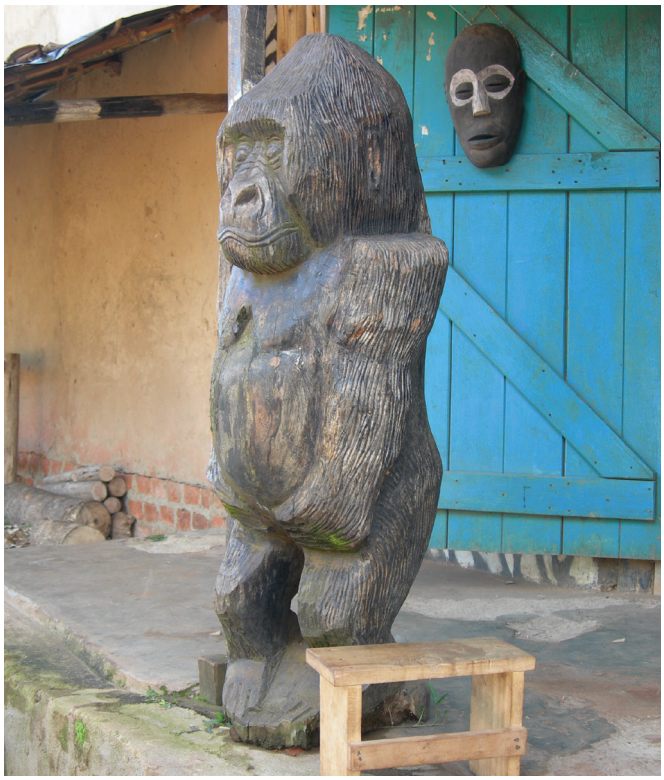
My first encounter with gorilla was, quite frankly, terrifying. It was 1966 and I was a young District Forest Officer responsible for Ankole and Kigezi Districts in the south-west of Uganda, including two forests with resident populations of mountain gorilla: the Mgahinga reserve of the Virunga volcanoes, on the Rwanda border, and the Impenetrable forest reserve on the Congo border.

It was in the latter that I hired a Batwa (pygmy) guide and we set off into this rainforest, one of whose component tree species was the podo (*Podocarpus gracilior*), with the intention of both checking for illegal pit sawing of this popular timber and trying to see the elusive gorilla. We had a tiring scramble up and down the steep ridges, made more difficult by the tree ferns (*Cycas*) whose prickly stems were most painful when one tried to get a handhold. Soon we came across the rough nests on the forest floor where a gorilla family had spent the previous night, and started to follow their tracks. But the dominant male of the group must have been aware of us, for it suddenly burst out of the undergrowth, beating its chest and shrieking; my guide pushed past me and ran, while I had the presence of mind to grab from him our sole weapon – a spear which I pointed at the gorilla, noting in an objective moment how its tip was quivering in my trembling hands! The gorilla lumbered off into the bushes, the encounter was over and the guide returned laughing.

Forty three years later I returned to Uganda in connection with the SPGS/CFA Workshop, reported on elsewhere in this Newsletter. I took the opportunity to revisit some of the forests I'd managed in those days, including the renamed Bwindi-Impenetrable, now the responsibility of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). There have been some changes since those days, when this forest was not only nearly impenetrable but well-nigh inaccessible too. Today the forest is better served by roads to cater for the much-increased population living around the forest – many of whom now grow tea. The greatest change, however, to me at least, is that three of the gorilla groups have been "habituated" to people and no longer react in the alarming fashion that I experienced.

Tracking gorilla is now highly organised. Shortly after dawn trackers locate where the gorilla group spent the night and follow it, reporting back by radio when they locate it. The tourists, meanwhile, undergo a thorough briefing and set out with one or two guides and two armed game guards just after eight o'clock to reach the trackers. The hills we climbed are just as steep as in my day, the only difference being that I am more than twice as old. Fortunately there are porters who one can hire to carry one's rucksack and even haul one up the steeper slopes!

Our first day we came across a group of six gorilla in dense forest, consisting of a large silver-backed male, a female with a baby, and three black-backed young males. All of them ignored us, carrying on feeding and grooming as if we were not there; one of the younger males decided to move off at one point and pushed past me so close that I could have patted it. We humans are not supposed to get closer than 5 metres but sometimes one cannot move out of the way in time! On the second day



Carving of gorilla for sale in Buhoma, a village on the forest border

Silverback male gorilla, Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest

the group consisted of seventeen individuals, including two silver-backed males and two females with young. They were in open woodland on the edge of the forest making it much easier to get good photos. Nearby a group of workers ignored both gorilla and tourists and continued plucking tea.

Gorilla tracking does not come cheap; permits are $500 each and are quickly snapped up, even in these economically straitened times. The local people benefit from the tourists since 20% of the fees are shared with communities living on the forest boundaries. There are also opportunities for employment in the lodges that have been built to cater for tourists and there are various shops selling cards, carvings and so on.

Seeing gorilla up close is unforgettable; watching them unconcernedly go about their lives is one of life's great experiences. One could ask, however, if their habituation, which started in 1993, has not diminished them, turning them into something like domestic pets? The UWA has obviously thought of this, and visits to any group are strictly limited to one hour daily. But if it comes down to a choice between habituated gorilla with associated benefits to the local communities, or wild gorilla at risk from an alienated people who see them occupying forest which could be converted to tea or shifting cultivation, then there is no choice. The numbers tell their own story: in the 1980s the total population of mountain gorilla in Uganda, Rwanda and the Congo was estimated as 600 whereas now it is 750.

If you want to know more about gorilla tracking in Uganda then see the UWA website www.uwa.org.ug. 2009 is also the Year of the Gorilla, sponsored by UNEP; the UNEP website has much more on both the mountain and the lowland gorilla www.unep.org/

Jim Ball
CFA, Chair

Welcome to wood for good

Wood for good's funding from industry sponsors and members, results in the effective, long-term promotion of timber as a sustainable construction material. Rather than product specific marketing, *wood for good* promotes timber more broadly, informing and educating architects, builders, contractors and developers on how to use more wood appropriately.

The campaign's four audiences each have quite different needs. Despite this variation, the aim for all is simple: to have the confidence and know-how to advise clients, "You should make *that* in wood".

To reach and influence these audiences the campaign works via partnerships and standalone projects. Three collaborations of note aim to develop wood windows, timber's role in the Olympics and providing practical information for builders.

Started in 2008, the Wood Window Alliance is a project with the British Woodworking Federation. It has quickly helped to halt the onward march of plastic windows which had dominated the market for some time. The programme has helped unite the industry and improve the way wood windows are marketed.

Wood for Gold is also uniting the industry, in this case to maximise the use of timber for the 2012 Olympics In partnership with TRADA, wood for good has produced two brochures entitled 'Wide Span Sports Structures' and 'Reusable and Adaptable Wood Structures' which have been mailed to the top 1200 architectural practices and to key members of the Olympic Delivery Authority

And finally, the perennial Wood Awards which proudly showcases the brightest and best timber construction to inspire architects and the wider building trade.

Looking ahead, it's likely the campaign will be focusing on two strategic areas: how wood helps to deliver the low carbon economy (seen by many as the new wood age) and an information and education stream. A new advertisement has been developed as well as a PowerPoint presentation with speakers' notes, a publication with Frequently Asked Questions and Killer facts about wood and a film which will be released shortly. The education and information stream concentrates on providing information about wood presented in a variety of attractive and simple formats.

Choose and Use information sheets have been produced in collaboration with TRADA – the timber trade technical body. These sheets are available through timber and builders' merchants across the country.

A second initiative is wood for good's online learning resource. It has over 2,500 registered users looking to expand further their technical knowledge of timber.

One of the attractions to architects is that *wood for good* has joined the Royal Institution of British Architects (RIBA) CPD providers' network. RIBA has also accredited the modules for CPD point accumulation, helping architects work toward their annual requirements.

Currently 13 modules cover topics as diverse as landscaping with wood; the properties, species and science of wood; certification, procurement and specifying timber; and the

use of structural timber in construction and roofing. Further modules are planned on windows, doors, building with timber frame and a builders' merchant module providing an "A-Z" of timber issues relevant to staff.

If you're interested in finding out more about *wood for good* and how it is helping to develop the timber market, please visit, www.woodforgood.com

Charles Trevor
Managing Director of wood for good

Timber, mutton or fuel?

The Institute of Chartered Foresters 2009 National Conference

Exactly 90 years after the establishment of the Forestry Commission, the same issues concerning land use are now exercising professional foresters as they were in 1919. Alongside issues such as food security, land prices, and domestic sufficiency in timber and fuel production, we must now also contemplate the impact of flooding and its mitigation, conserving biodiversity, and managing carbon to name but a few issues. In April, over 130 delegates attended the ICF's 2009 National Conference in Cardiff to hear both UK and international speakers outline the drivers and issues they believe will affect UK forestry in the decades to come, and to debate the role of forestry in land use.

The conference was opened by Elin Jones, Minister of Rural Affairs for the Welsh Assembly Government, who outlined the history of land-use change in Wales and described the new forestry strategy that will soon be brought into action. She also highlighted the important roles that Chartered and other professionals in forestry must play in promoting understanding, providing advice and maintaining standards.

Roger Street from the UK Climate Change Impacts Programme posed a simple question; what does climate change mean for forestry, and what does forestry mean for climate change? He stated that we must mitigate to achieve 2°C maximum temperature rise but it will be prudent to plan to adapt to a 4°C temperature rise. At 4°C cereal productivity will reduce, so we must prepare for that and other key impacts. Forestry policy may need to focus more on managing forests for carbon rather than (or in addition to) managing for timber production. Professor *Chris Pollock* simply stated "climate change is real" and questioned whether we can 'afford 'to manage all our land sustainably, and ultimately we should be prepared to question how much environmental damage we can tolerate in order to feed everyone.

Anna Brown from Forest Research alerted delegates to threats posed from new pests and diseases, and highlighted that the global plant trade was in fact the greatest danger vector. Pest and pathogen intensity and range is likely to change dramatically too, which in combination from climate change-induced stress, is a lethal combination. *Nick Brown* followed on by suggesting that it would be foolhardy to continue planting large-scale monoculture plantations, and called for more research into suitable species and provenance suitability.

Oliver Combe of BSW Timber gave an overview of the world timber trade and the recent impact of the economic downturn on UK forestry. He said that British forestry should be proud of its achievements but be flexible looking to the future, perhaps growing smaller diameter/quicker growing crops to meet different markets. *Gabriel Hemery* illustrated through audience participation how England's forest resource is moribund with only 4% of the land area under 'managed forest' conditions. He said that 'native-only' woodland policies were blind alleys if they did not embrace wider opportunities such as producing fibre.

The roles and values of trees in the landscape were highlighted by *Rob Cooke* from Natural England, and he proposed that the emerging 'Green jobs' agenda is likely to be significant and may provide a good opportunity for the forestry sector. Representing the private landowner community, *William Worsely* warned that there is a possibility that woodland owners may halt all woodland management and 'lock the gates' due to the costs of management and bureaucracy. *Pushpam Kumar's* presentation outlined TEEB; a new project that has set out to estimated the economic value of ecosystems. He revealed that the project outcomes could support business in building a green economy and green jobs. Perhaps this may lead in the long term to woodland owner's benefiting financially for the ecosystem services they provide through their trees?

Neal Hockley questioned where we should be growing/producing our resources, citing examples of Welsh lamb having potentially a higher carbon footprint that lamb imported from New Zealand. More data and understanding is required for us to be able to plan with any confidence how we should be using our land resources. *Petri Lehtonen*, from the Finish forest industry, highlighted that pulp and paper industries have disintegrated in Europe, with a production shirt to emerging markets and to the Southern Hemisphere. New production technologies in countries with favourable growing conditions and production capabilities will open up new opportunities, particularly with biofuels. Professor *Colin Price* explained the economics of forestry and highlighted the potential impacts of the emerging woodfuel market and carbon values on rotation length but cautioned that shorter rotations may have significant impacts of biodiversity and landscape.

Before the final debate, *Peter Wood*, provided a wider perspective on the issues surrounding land use and the potential to produce food and/or biofuels in developing countries. Many delegates were introduced to a novel term; 'algaculture'. The debate questioned whether in a resource-poor 21st Century, the UK forestry sector must once again make timber and energy production its over-riding priority? There was general consensus amongst delegates that, far from polarising any possible arguments between the two sides, the debate drew them together, and the conclusion that the two extremes no longer exist was reflected in the agreement of an altered balance of priorities for multi-purpose forestry.

Summary proceedings are available: www.ForestryHorizons.eu/resources.htm

Gabriel Hemery
Chief Executive of the Sylva Foundation. *The Forestry Horizons* think-tank is a project of the Sylva Foundation.
www.Sylva.org.uk

Highlights of the Malaysian National Timber Industry Policy, 2009 – 2020

Introduction

Malaysia is a major producer and exporter of sawntimber, plywood, medium density fibreboard, particleboard, flooring, doors and other panel and joinery products in the international market. In 2008, export of timber and timber products contributed to about RM 22.5 billion[1] or 3.3 percent of the total export earnings of RM 674 billion and is one of the major revenue contributors to the economy. The timber industry has also provided employment to an estimated 300,000 workers.

The Malaysian timber industry covers both upstream and downstream activities. The upstream activities cover the systematic harvesting of the natural forests on a sustainable basis and the establishment and development of forest plantations, while the downstream activities cover primary, secondary and tertiary processing of raw materials and the manufacturing of semi-finished and finished timber products. Currently, 60 percent of the export values are derived from primary processing of logs, sawntimber, plywood, veneer, fibreboard and particleboard. The other 40 percent being the contribution from the export of mouldings, flooring, laminated veneer lumber, laminated timber, furniture, builders' joinery and carpentry, such as doors, windows and window frames, balusters and other engineered woods, which are derived from secondary and tertiary processing activities.

Without a formal policy, the development of the timber industry in Malaysia has been guided in the past by the First Industrial Master Plan, 1986 – 1995, where activities in the timber industry were mainly concentrated in the production of logs, sawntimber and plywood with special emphasis on value-added processing. This was followed by the Second Industrial Master Plan, 1996 – 2005, where value-added processing was further intensified and exports of timber and timber products grew at an annual average rate of five percent.

During the current Third Industrial Master Plan, 2006 – 2020, export from the timber industry is targeted to grow annually at 6.4 percent to RM 53 billion with the main contributors to this targeted growth coming from furniture and panel products, such as medium-density fibreboard and plywood. During this period, a number of issues are expected to be encountered pertaining to the supply of raw materials, skilled and adaptable manpower, the use of advanced and environmentally clean technologies, and the increasing market requirements for timber and timber products to be obtained from not only legal sources but also from sustainably managed sources.

In this regard, on 17 February 2009, the Government of Malaysia launched the National Timber Industry Policy, 2009 – 2020 (NATIP) that will re-align the timber industry to realise the targets of the Third Industrial Master Plan, 2006 – 2020. It is envisaged that NATIP will also provide the policy direction for the timber industry to not only remain competitive in a highly globalised timber market, but to move the industry up the value chain and enhance Malaysia's position as a supplier of quality timber and timber products to the world market, ensure synergistic development of the upstream and downstream activities in the timber industry, and increasing its contribution to the Malaysian economy. As such, NATIP has enunciated seven thrusts to enhance the dynamism of the Malaysian timber industry and ensure that the industry remains sustainable and competitive both in the domestic and international markets.

Thrusts of NATIP

Thrust 1: *Industry Structure*

To meet the target of RM 53 billion in annual export earnings in 2020, the current structure of the Malaysian timber industry will be restructured with greater emphasis placed on higher value-added downstream activities. It is envisaged that 60 percent of export earnings valued at RM 31.8 billion will be from activities involving wooden and composite furniture products, panel products and engineered wood products, while the remaining 40 percent or RM 21.2 billion will be from the primary processing of logs, sawntimber and plywood. Priority will also be given to the establishment of timber processing plants, especially in the identified economic development areas, such as the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER), the Eastern Corridor Economic Region (ECER), the Sabah Development Corridor (SDC), and the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy (SCORE). In fact, the establishment of the Malaysian Rubberwood Furniture Industrial Park has been proposed in the ECER.

Under this thrust, the broad policy directions that set the path for sustainable development of the timber industry in the medium (2015) and the long term (2020) for achieving the target of RM 53 billion in export earnings are:

(i) shifting the focus of the timber industry from upstream activities to higher valued-added downstream activities;
(ii) managing the raw materials in a sustainable manner in compliance with the domestic laws and regulations;
(iii) enhancing the Forest Plantation Programme to ensure a sufficient and sustainable supply of raw materials to the timber industry in the long term;
(iv) prioritising the supply of logs to the domestic market, and supplementing the requirements of the timber-based industries through imports of timber;
(v) maximising the use of available timber resources, including wood residues from the forests and activities of the timber industry; as well as alternative materials such as biomass, bio-composite, kenaf, orchards and landscaping timber;
(vi) giving emphasis to downstream activities that are located in the various economic development corridors;
(vii) emphasising on human resource development (HRD), research and development (R&D), state-of-the-art technologies, design and development, branding and Own Design Manufacturing (ODM);
(viii) formulating policies to mandate the use of certified quality timber that are from legal and sustainable sources in government projects, and promoting global recognition of the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS); and

[1] I RM = 0.2857 US $.

(ix) encouraging the consolidation of small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in the timber industry sector, as well as enhancing manufacturing support services and establishing Material City and Home Ideas Centres.

(b) *Thrust 2*: *Supply of Raw Materials*

The future development of the Malaysian timber industry will be critically dependent on the adequate and reliable supply of raw materials at competitive prices as the declining supplies from the natural forests would pose serious problems in the future if Malaysia is to continue to remain as one of the world's leading producers and exporters of tropical timber and timber products.

Hence, to enhance the availability of raw materials to the timber industry, steps will be taken to ensure that the natural forests are managed sustainably according to international agreed criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; encourage the use of alternative raw materials, such as small dimension logs, oil palm and coconut trunks, bamboo and various agricultural residues; import of raw materials and timber product components, including cross-border investments in resource-rich countries; carry out more R&D activities on alternative raw materials, such as oil palm biomass, kenaf, and non-wood composites; and promote greater investment by the private sector in commercial forest plantations development, including the use of marginal land for tree planting. In fact, the Government has targeted the establishment of 375,000 hectares of forest plantations over 15 years from 2006 – 2020 which are expected to yield 75 million m^3 of logs during the period.

The broad policy directions to ensure a steady and predictable flow of timber from natural forests, forest plantations, biomass and composite materials are as follows:

(i) ensuring the supply from the natural forests that are managed sustainably continue to be a major source of raw materials for the timber industry;
(ii) providing better access to financial activities and services that facilitate the import of raw materials and components for the timber industry;
(iii) enhancing closer co-operation among members of the industry to create synergy and strengthen sectoral linkages within and outside the timber industry, both domestically and abroad;
(iv) prioritising R&D activities to develop higher yields from natural forests and forest plantations, as well as the development of biomass and composite materials for commercial application; and
(v) encouraging more active private sector investments and participation in forest plantation programmes, including the production of high quality timber from the natural forests.

(c) *Thrust 3*: *Innovation and Technology*

In the past, the timber industry in Malaysia has always been dependent on foreign technology and machinery and hence very limited indigenous technology has been developed, although the Government has established numerous research institutions and universities to undertake this task.

In order to maintain the share and improve further the contribution of the timber industry to the economy of Malaysia, actions will be taken to move the industry towards the use of innovative and high technology supported by relevant R&D activities, as well as enlarging the pool of knowledge workers and strengthening technological, manufacturing and product linkages. Hence, the broad policy directions under this thrust are:

(i) strengthening the structure of the timber industry to make Malaysia the top supplier of high quality timber and timber products;
(ii) strengthening R&D efforts between research institutions, universities, government agencies and the industry so as to provide continuous improvements on existing and new products, including providing further incentives for the commercialisation of new technology uptake; and
(iii) using alternative energy for the development of the industry such as the use of solar power in kiln drying, and wood and agriculture residues as biofuel, including bioethanol derived from lignocellulosic materials.

(d) *Thrust 4*: *Marketing and Promotion*

Generally, Malaysian timber companies are contract manufacturers for internationally renowned brands. However, with the emergence of low-end, low-wage countries such as Vietnam and China which is likely to make Malaysia less competitive, Malaysia will develop and promote its owned designs and brands for niche timber markets through branding based on quality, design, and value-creation. Furthermore, to enhance its position as a reputable and reliable producer and supplier of quality timber products in the international market, Malaysia will further promote its 'green image' through responsible practices in forestry, trade and environment; and intensify the marketing of potential and new products, including bio-composite products, as well as strengthen promotional efforts to enhance market penetration, especially in newly emerging markets in Eastern Europe and West Asia.

In this context, the broad policy directions to enable the Malaysian timber industry to position itself and further expand its market with sound marketing strategies are:

(i) enhancing the competitiveness of the Malaysian timber and timber products through value creation and increasing its market share in the international market;
(ii) identifying marketing strategies that would promote the strengths of the timber industry;
(iii) ensuring the continued growth and competitiveness of the timber industry, by adding value, developing Own Brand Manufacturing (OBM), promoting the green image, protecting the environment and researching into new products; and
(iv) encouraging the growth of the domestic market through intensive promotional activities as there is still a lack of awareness of the availability of Malaysian timber species and products in the market.

(e) ***Thrust 5***: *Human Capital Development*

One of the key factors in ensuring the competitiveness and sustainability of the Malaysian timber industry is human capital development (HCD). Presently, the timber industry still lacks sufficient supply of local manpower and skilled workers at all levels. For example, there was an estimated increase of 73.2 percent of foreign labour in 2008 as compared to the year 2000. In addition, existing training institutions could only train annually 2,064 workers during the period 2000 – 2020 as compared with the requirement of the industry of 9,810 workers per year up to the year 2020, or only 21 percent of the industry's needs.

As such, to ensure that the timber industry in Malaysia remains highly productive, competitive and sustainable, it is imperative for HCD to focus on, among others, design and branding, especially in the furniture industry; product development and finishing, including prototyping; forest plantations management; and creating a competitive

environment for training and working; as well as effective collaboration between the industry and training institutions. The broad policy directions under this thrust are:

(i) strengthening and expanding the skilled workforce in design and branding, production management, product development, wood finishing technology, and related knowledge in planting, harvesting and processing of new fibre materials, including the manufacturing of bio-composite products;
(ii) emphasising the development of soft and non-technical skills, such as relevant training on marketing, finance, communications, management, negotiation skills and in conflict resolutions; and
(iii) reducing the dependency on foreign workers, encouraging cross-border investments, promoting cluster developments, conducting more research in materials diversification, and adopting and absorbing new technological developments.

(f) *Thrust 6*: *Funding and Incentives*

The majority of companies in the Malaysian timber industry are SMEs and hence requiring financial and infrastructural support to assist them to develop. In this regard, the Government has provided comprehensive packages of fiscal policies in the form of incentives and financial policies which include financing facilities and grants, as well as supporting infrastructure to stimulate the growth of the timber industry.

The Government will regularly review the present assistance programmes to ensure that they encourage companies to shift towards higher value-added manufacturing activities to produce innovative and high-end timber and timber products, for example, by having a more flexible scheme for better access to financing and the support by commercial banks. Notwithstanding this, the Government will continue to provide the necessary funding and incentives, especially to SMEs, to enable a more dynamic development of the timber industry through the following two broad policy directions:

(i) creating a more conducive environment for the development of the timber industry through the provision of funds and incentives; and
(ii) enhancing the participation of SMEs in the timber industry by undertaking awareness raising programmes that further provide information on the availability and access to loans and credit facilities from the government agencies and commercial banks.

(g) *Thrust 7*: *Bumiputera Participation*

Most of the Bumiputera enterprises in the timber industry in Malaysia are SMEs which are fragmented and family-based entities. They are not integrated and lack economies of scale and hence have limited access to finance, and employ simple manufacturing processes.

The Government will continue to guide and strengthen the readiness of Bumiputera entrepreneurs to compete in the long term and to assume a more effective role in the industry through Credible Entrepreneurship Programme which will improve their management and production skills, product and service quality, mill productivity and an understanding of the market. It will also include integrated marketing programmes such as Umbrella Concept and Anchor/Vendor programmes; establishment of central purchasing facilities to enable Bumiputera entrepreneurs to purchase materials at competitive prices; and promotion and marketing of Bumiputera products; as well as encourage their participation in R&D, especially in furniture designs and prototyping. The policy directions that will further establish competitive and sustainable Bumiputera participation in the timber industry are:

(i) emphasising the involvement of Bumiputera participation at all levels of the value chain, especially in downstream activities;
(ii) providing opportunities for Bumiputera entrepreneurs' involvement in state-owned Integrated Timber Complexes;
(iii) encouraging State Governments to assume a more active role in the development of Bumiputera entrepreneurs; and
(iv) emphasising the development of SMEs in the woodcraft and cottage industries which would also include rattan and bamboo.

Conclusions

The formulation of NATIP is to address the challenges faced by the Malaysian timber industry in an increasingly globalised timber market and provide the direction and strategies for the development of the industry up to the year 2020. It addresses concerns regarding the market, technology, raw materials, human capital and other key factors that are crucial to ensure that the industry remains sustainable and competitive in a changing environment.

More specifically, NATIP is envisaged to further promote the industrial development within the timber industry, enhance greater productivity and profitability through technological innovations, human capital development and successful commercialisation of R&D efforts. NATIP is also expected to re-align the current structure of the timber industry to achieve the target of RM 53 billion per year by 2020, through an average annual growth rate of 6.4 percent.

Document Consulted

NATIP – National Timber Industry Policy, 2009-2020. Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities, Malaysia, First Edition 2009.

Thang Hooi Chiew
Former Deputy Director General of Forestry, Peninsular Malaysia

Report from COFO 2009

FAO's Committee on Forestry (COFO) is the Organization's highest statutory body concerned with forestry. It meets every two years, with the aim of identifying emerging policy and technical issues and thus to advise FAO and its member countries on appropriate action. Participation in COFO is open to national forest services, and also to other international organizations and NGOs; the CFA is accredited to COFO and since I live in Rome I have represented the Association at COFO in recent years, with the aim of learning about the emerging issues and advising CFA members. This year's theme for COFO was *Forests in a Changing* World but underlying all discussions

was the specific sub-theme of the post-Kyoto negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009, which will decide the shape of the new international climate change mechanism including the possible introduction of REDD.

The keynote speaker at the 19th Session, held from 16th to 19th March 2009, was Gro Harlem Brundtland. She has been Prime Minister of Norway three times but is best known as the chair of the World Commission on Environment & Development, also known as the Brundtland Commission. It developed the concept of sustainable development and its recommendations led to the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

Dr Brundtland was Secretary General of the World Health Organisation from 1998 to 2003 and in 2007 she was appointed Special Envoy for Climate Change by the UN Secretary General. Her wide-ranging address on *Sustainable forest management and climate change* reflected this new responsibility; while she may have said little that was new she brought together a great many of the disparate issues that are contributing the climate change debate. Regarding the forthcoming inter-governmental meeting of the UNFCC in Copenhagen this December she pointed to four challenges to be resolved at the highest political level:

- clarifying the commitments to reducing emissions by developed economies, noting that presently the Kyoto Protocol only contains concrete obligations for countries which are responsible for 30% of present global emissions;
- identifying the mitigating actions that the developing economies are prepared to make;
- moving ahead on the provision of stable and predictable finance for the mitigation and adaptation needs of developing countries;
- and agreeing on the development and dissemination of appropriate technology

Nearly 18% of global greenhouse gas emissions originate from deforestation and forest degradation – more than the emissions from the entire global transport sector, although much less than the 60% which arise from the energy sector. She also reminded us that the carbon stored in forests is more than that in the atmosphere and that deforestation accounts for 35% of emissions in developing countries and 65% of emissions in the least developed. The Eliasch[2] review concluded that the global economic gain from halving deforestation would be $US3.7 trillion, while the total cost of limiting global warming to 2°C could be reduced by half if forest-related emissions were included in the global climate regime.

Governments agreed at their meeting in Bali in 2007 to include Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)[3] in the post-2012 climate regime and already the UN has established a collaborative programme, UN-REDD, which will support developing countries in designing national strategies to reduce carbon emissions arising from deforestation or forest degradation, and will also establish systems for monitoring and verification. UN-REDD is being led by UNEP, UNDP and FAO and are cooperating with the World Bank which has established a Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and is designing a Forest Investment Programme. She said that REDD could constitute *one of those key bridges that are so urgently needed between developed and developing countries* in the run-up to Copenhagen. But agreement in Copenhagen will not be enough: REDD will require profound institutional change, capacity building and above all political commitment to resist demands for perverse incentives to convert forest land to large-scale agriculture.

Other presentations which I attended included:

- State of the world's forest genetic resources
- The future of forest education
- Fire and climate change
- Impacts of economic turbulence on the forest sector

The world's forest genetic resources. FAO has taken a lead in reporting and advising on forest genetic resources since 1967. Over the past ten years it has held workshops and has prepared 71 national reports for the FAO Information System on Forest Genetic Resources (REFORGEN) which will be combined with further information to prepare the report *State of the world's forest genetic resources* in 2013.

The future of forest education was discussed in a well-attended side meeting. The main issues were based on the conclusions of a workshop that had been held at ICRAF in 2007[4]. Other presentations were made by Frauke Thorade, President of the International Forestry Students Association, and Hosny El Lakany, on progress with the International Partnership for Forestry Education (see http://www.ipfe.info/) The need for forestry education to adapt to changing circumstances has been discussed in most of the international meetings that I have attended over the past forty years or more; there is a good overview of the challenges in Chapter 5 of Commonwealth Forests (http://www.cfa-international.org/CWF/CWF-787.htm) One of the few consoling thoughts that I took from this meeting was that education in the agricultural sector faces similar problems...

Forest fires are another long-running challenge for foresters; when I prepared a history of COFO in 2005 I noted that forest fires had been introduced as a priority item in 1950 and had been included on the agenda ever since! Johann Goldammer of the Global Fire Monitoring Center introduced the latest fire situation; for a sobering update on any given day see the Global Fire Maps at http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/current/globalfire.htm Norah Berrahmouni of the WWF depressed the audience still further with information on the fire situation in the Mediterranean Basin where there are 50,000 fires burning up to 1 million ha yearly. She described the action that is being taken in terms of integrated fire management strategies and policies, capacity building, networking and benefit sharing among the main actors, but at least here in Italy much of the problem arises from arson. Extreme weather associated with climate change is likely to lead to more fires, and more severe fires, which release carbon into the atmosphere, but it was good to note from feedback from the participants that at least in North America and Western Europe prescribed burning is more accepted by the public and is reducing fire risk.

The impact of the current economic turbulence on the forest sector was discussed on the final day. The conclusions were that there is and will be a downturn in demand for industrial roundwood, a reduced willingness to pay for environmental services (possibly including REDD) and less money to pay for sustainable forest management – including protection of

---

[2] http://www.occ.gov.uk/activities/eliasch.htm

[3] For an alternative proposal for REDD see the article by Barry Gardiner in CFA Newsletter #44 of March 2009

[4] See Future forestry education: responding to expanding societal needs, by Temu, A, and Kiwia, A. On-line version at www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/downloads/publications/PDFS/BR08067.PDF

the forest from illegal logging or small-scale encroachment on forest land. At the same time, pressure on forests will increase due to growing rural unemployment and reverse migration from the cities. Unfortunately the global economic downturn has also led to a sharp fall in the price of crude oil with consequent reduction in the price of traded carbon. But on the positive side, the credit squeeze is leading to a reduction in forest clearing for large-scale commercial plantations of palm oil or soya, and also to the closure of inefficient wood processing capacity.

Government intervention may lead, as in the last depression in the 1930s, to increased employment in plantations or forestry and rural infrastructure, or in "green" jobs in renewable energy, or improving energy efficiency. According to a new FAO study[5], forestry is a labour intensive investment with low capital requirements and a strong downstream multiplier effect – for every job created in the forest there could be between 1.5 and 2.5 other new jobs created downstream. In a comprehensive analysis of the potential for the forestry sector to create employment, the study estimates that more than ten million new "green jobs" could be generated by investing in sustainable forest management in such areas as afforestation and reforestation (about half of the potential new jobs), the management of natural forests, urban and peri-urban green spaces, fire protection etc to rebuild natural forestry assets. This investment would not only bring environmental benefits but also contribute to poverty reduction in rural areas and, since forests and trees are stores of carbon, could make a major contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

The topic of climate change dominated COFO2009; it has been on the international forestry agenda for some time now, but the situation is still evolving. The dialogue will continue, at least in the immediate future, at the UNFF (April 2009), the World Forestry Congress in Argentina (October 2009), the UNFCC in Copenhagen (December 2009), the Commonwealth Forestry Conference in Edinburgh (June 2010) and the IUFRO World Congress in Seoul (September 2010).

Jim Ball[6]
Chair, CFA

Two recent publications from FAO

State of the World's Forests, 2009. Published by FAO Rome, and available on-line at www.fao.org/forestry

The theme for the eighth edition of FAO's two-yearly publication *State of the World's Forests* (SOFO) is *Society, forests and forestry: adapting for the future.* As with previous numbers the aims are both to provide data related to the world's forestry sector and to contribute information to the global debate on forests and forestry.

SOFO2009 looks forward, and puts the emphasis more on the demand for forest goods and services and less on the supply side than has been the case in past editions. Part I summarises the outlook for the forestry sector in each of FAO's six Regions of the world, bringing together a number of studies that FAO has carried out in recent years. Not surprisingly, it emerges that there is a strong correlation between economic development and the state of a nation's forests, with those countries with the strongest economic growth having to cope with enormous pressure on their forests – although the study notes that there are many factors affecting forests and it is simplistic to draw easy conclusions or to make direct projections of trends.

Part II considers how forestry may have to adapt, reviewing five aspects of the sector:

- The global outlook for wood product demand to 2030, noting the changing patterns of production, consumption and trade, although the conclusions related to industrial wood demand have to be modified in the short term to take account of the global economic down-turn (see the last bullet below). Whenever economic growth returns, however, it seems that harvesting of natural forests will continue to decline, to be replaced by wood supply from plantations.
- Environmental services, including the evolving market and non-market mechanisms for environmental services, such as the protection of land, water and biological diversity, the provision of carbon storage etc – also negatively affected by the down-turn in the global economy.
- Institutional adaptation, where many government forestry agencies are adapting slowly to changes in communications, globalization and the expectations of society. Now many different institutions are involved in the sector: public forestry services; the private sector (especially in plantations and in processing); civil society (NGOs)); the informal sector (also processing and trade in wood and non-wood products); and international and regional organizations and initiatives.
- Developments in science and technology, which are likely to have a major impact on forestry practices. I was interested to see mention here of "bio-refineries" for the production of a new generation of bio-materials, and of the potential for the production of bio-fuel from cellulose.
- Finally, in a postscript added as SOFO2009 went to press in late 2008, there is a review of the challenges and opportunities for the forestry sector in these economically turbulent times. Inevitably this was out of date by the time SOFO2009 was published in March 2009, but I have updated the conclusions in the account of COFO, also in this edition of the *Newsletter*.

Six annexes provide figures on: the basic data on countries; forest areas and area changes ; forest growing stock, biomass and carbon ; production trade and consumption of woodfuel, roundwood and sawnwood; production trade and consumption of wood-based panels, pulp and paper; and the contribution of the forestry sector to employment and gross domestic product. The tables on production, trade and consumption tables and that on employment and GDP are updated to 2006, the others appeared in previous SOFO.

---

[5] Creating forestry jobs to build a better future. Draft Working Paper of the Forest Economics and Policy Division of FAO Forestry Department. Available in hard copy and on-line from April 2009.

[6] The above are my own personal impressions; for those who would like a more objective report see the Earth Negotiations Bulletin on COFO at http://www.iisd.ca/fao/cof19/

As always, SOFO brings together and analyses global information from a number of sources; for any given country it may not be the most recent data, but overall there is no better global or regional overview of what is happening in the world's forests and forestry sector.

Global review of forest pests and diseases. FAO Forestry Paper #156, 2009, published by FAO Rome.

Pests and diseases of forest trees threaten the success of plantation programmes in many countries and, given the importance of trees and forests both in ameliorating and contributing to climate change, it is surprising that there has until now been no regional or global review of issues related to their occurrence, management or control. FAO, within the context of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA), has attempted to remedy this with the publication of information collected during FRA2005.

I am not competent to provide a technical review of this publication but I prepared this note to bring it to the attention of readers of the Newsletter.

Part I consists of 25 forest pest and disease country profiles; of the ten most forested countries, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and the Russian Federation are represented, but not Australia, Canada, DR Congo or the USA. The aim of Part I is to present a regional view of forest health. Parts II and III, however, are more inclusive, consisting of profiles of some of the globally important trans-boundary forest pest species (Part II), and profiles of the pests associated with some selected forest tree species (Part III).

The Forestry Paper is available at www.fao.org/forestry while the profiles from Part II of the trans-boundary forest pest species are at www.fao.org/forestry/pests which will evidently be updated from time to time. A new assessment of forest health and vitality will be included in FRA2010.

Jim Ball
Chair, CFA

Around the world

Uganda: B.SC. in commercial forestry!

The Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation, Makerere University, under its current three undergraduate degree programs (BSc. Forestry, Bachelor of Community Forestry and BSc. Wood Science and Technology), has continued to produce graduates with sufficient knowledge to address diverse issues in the forest sector. However, the current programmes offered do not strongly address the increasing desire and involvement in "tree planting as a business" that is expressed by both the government, and most importantly the private sector. The increasing involvement in commercial tree planting has created a demand for specialised skills and knowledge. The Department of Forest Management is therefore developing a curriculum for a BSc. Commercial Forestry Degree Program timed at training a cadre of graduates to promote forest plantations as a viable investment in Uganda's forest sector for improved livelihoods, transformation of societies through economic growth and attainment of sustainable development. In so doing, the programme will promote national development through training; research and technology transfer in forest plantations; hence contributing to the mission of the Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation and that of Makerere University. Further, the programme is well suited in fulfilling MDGs 1 & 7. The Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation is well endowed with well trained staff in the different disciplines, who in collaboration with staff from other relevant Faculties will contribute to the smooth implementation of the programme. Further, the faculty has professional and cordial relationships with Forest Research Institutes (e.g. NaFORRI), private commercial tree farmers (individuals and companies), National Forestry Authority, Forest Services Sector Division and the SPGS, which will enhance knowledge sharing as well as fieldbased learning. In addition to the currently available space for teaching and learning (office space, specialised research laboratories, lecture rooms, computer laboratory and library), we are currently discussing with likely partners willing to commit funds for setting up a joint resource centre (located at Makerere University campus) to serve as one-stop reference facility for tree farmers, SPGS and Makerere University community. This facility will greatly enhance the development and dissemination of knowledge in reference to commercial tree farming.

www.sawlog.ug

Apples explain why leaves change colour in autumn

Thank pests for the explosion of colour every autumn. A new study of thousands of breeds of apple trees bolsters a claim that red foliage evolved as a warning signal to insects in search of a winter home. Red-pigmented leaves are a clear sign of health and an indication that a tree has enough energy to fill future leaves with unappetising toxins, according to a theory first proposed by the late English evolutionary biologist, W.D. Hamilton. He noted that red foliage requires the production of new pigments, called anthocyanins. Other researchers suggest that these pigments might protect trees from the damaging effects of sun while their chloroplasts are breaking down. But Hamilton, who died in 2000, argued that photo-protection cannot explain why some trees flush red every autumn, while others don't.

To put Hamilton's claim to the test, Marco Archetti, an

evolutionary biologist at the University of Oxford, compared wild apple trees that evolved in the presence of insects with domestic varieties, bred to produce sweet, large fruit and not to resist pests. "If you take a species with autumn colours and you let it evolve without insects, then this population will no longer need autumn colours," says Archetti.

In support of this hypothesis, Archetti found that just 2.8% of 2170 domesticated varieties of apples in England develop red leaves in the autumn. In Central Asia, where apples first evolved, 62% of wild apple trees turn red, while only two-fifths of domesticated breeds turn red.

Archetti also found that aphids, a common pest of apple trees, tended to avoid the red-leafed trees in an apple orchard. When Archetti moved aphids to various apple trees in another orchard in the late spring, trees that would later turn red-leafed proved far more inhospitable to the insects than trees whose leaves stay green or turn yellow. To make the case for the co-evolution between trees and insects even stronger, Archetti next looked at the prevalence of an aphid-transmitted disease called fire blight. If red leaves served as a warning to disease-carrying insects, he reasoned that varieties more susceptible to fire blight would be under stronger selective pressure to produce red leaves.

Indeed, red-leafed Central Asian breeds of apple trees tended to be far less susceptible than American apple trees, most of which are green-leafed in the autumn. Further, green-leafed American apple trees are even more susceptible to fire blight than the few red-leafed trees in the US.

However, William K Smith, a plant physiologist at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, say it's naïve to expect that a single biological factor would explain something so widespread as red autumn foliage. Some species may use red leaves to protect from light damage, others from insects, and some may do both. "It's probably serving many venues of adaptation, not just one," Smith says. "I get a little impatient when I see people trying to prove one over the other."

www.newscientist.com

Africa: Deforestation 'faster in Africa'

Africa's forests are disappearing faster than those in other parts of the world because of a lack of land ownership, a report says. Less than 2% of Africa's forests are under community control, compared to a third in Latin America and Asia, say the Rights and Resources Initiative. The deforestation rate in Africa is four times the world's average. At the current rate, it will take Congo Basin countries 260 years to reach the level of reform achieved in the Amazon.

Action on land tenure could help to halt deforestation, slow climate change and alleviate poverty, says the report, entitled Tropical Forest Tenure Assessment: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities. The study was presented in Cameroon's capital, Yaounde, at a meeting of forest community representatives from Africa, Latin America and Asia. The authors compared the distribution of land ownership in 39 tropical countries, which represent 96% of global tropical forests. They found that African citizens have far less control over the forests they inhabit than do the peoples of other tropical regions.

Several countries have introduced or amended laws to strengthen community land rights - including Angola, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Sudan and Tanzania. However, the report calls for these nations to "quickly scale up" the process. "Recognising local land rights alone doesn't solve all the problems," said Andy White, coordinator of the Rights and Resources Initiative. Governments need to follow up by supporting local management and enterprises. There are some countries that have recognised local land rights, but the government still controls the forest, and hands out concessions to industrial loggers - leading to more degradation and corruption."

Failure to ensure land rights for indigenous peoples and particularly women, will impede efforts to stop deforestation and mitigate climate change, say the authors. Clearing of land for agriculture, logging, and other extractive industries accounts for as much as one third of some countries' total carbon emissions. Payments for reducing deforestation could be a potential source of income in the region. But without tenure reform, the authors argue, these potential benefits will remain unreachable.

The conference aims to kickstart new initiatives to establish forest tenure rights in west and central Africa, building on recent steps to decentralise governance. Cameroon has begun by negotiating a legally binding bilateral pact, known as a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), with the European Union. The VPA will help ensure that wood products exported from Cameroon to the EU contain no illegally harvested timber and are derived from managed forests that benefit local communities.

"The slowness of reform is suppressing a whole range of opportunities to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods," said Emmanuel Ze Meka, Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO), co-authors of the report. "Africa's forest communities already generate millions of jobs and dollars in domestic and regional trade, and in indigenous livelihoods, but current laws keep some of these activities illegal and also undermine opportunities to improve forest management."

news.bbc.co.uk

USA: Yosemite's giant trees disappear

The oldest and largest trees within California's world famous Yosemite National Park are disappearing. Climate change appears to be a major cause of the loss. The revelation comes from an analysis of data collected over 60 years by forest ecologists. They say one worrying aspect of the decline is that it is happening within one of most protected forests within the US, suggesting that even more large trees may be dying off elsewhere.

James Lutz and Jerry Franklin of the University of Washington, Seattle, US and Jan van Wagtendonk of the

Yosemite Field Station of the US Geological Survey, based in El Portal, California collated data on tree growth within the park gathered from the 1930s onwards. Their key finding is that the density of large diameter trees has fallen by 24% between the 1930s and 1990s, within all types of forest. "These large, old trees have lived centuries and experienced many dry and wet periods," says Lutz. "So it is quite a surprise that recent conditions are such that these long-term survivors have been affected."

Large trees are not only older, but they play a distinct and important role within forest ecosystems. Their canopies help moderate the local forest environment while their understory creates a unique habitat for other plants and animals. Older, larger trees also tend to seed the surrounding area and crucially are able to withstand fires, short term climatic changes and outbreaks of insect pests that can kill or weaken smaller trees. But the study by Lutz's team suggests they are no longer faring well.

In a study published in Forest Ecology and Management, the researchers collated all the data that existed on tree growth with the Yosemite National Park. In particular, this included two comprehensive surveys: one conducted in the mid 1930s and another during the 1990s. "Few studies like this exist elsewhere in the world because of a lack of good measurements from the early 20th Century," says Lutz. Including 21 species of tree recorded by both surveys, the density of large diameter trees fell from 45 trees per hectare to 34 trees, a decline of 24% in just over 60 years. White Firs (*Abies concolor*), Lodgepole Pines (*Pinus contorta*) and Jeffrey Pines (*Pinus jeffreyi*) were affected the most. Smaller size trees were unaffected. "One of the most shocking aspects of these findings is that they apply to Yosemite National Park," says Lutz. "Yosemite is one of the most protected places in the US. If the declines are occurring here, the situation is unlikely to be better in less protected forests."

The cause is difficult to pin down, but "we certainly think that climate is an important driver," says Lutz. Higher temperatures decrease the amount of water available to the trees. The suppression of natural wildfires in the park also allows younger trees and shrubs to grow, increasing the competition for the water that is around. "The decline in large-diameter trees could accelerate as climate in California becomes warmer by mid-century," the researchers warn in the conclusions to their study. The impact of that is unclear. "We know that large trees disproportionately affect the ecosystem," says Lutz. "But what the consequences could be of a decline in average large tree diameter, no-one really knows."

news.bbc.co.uk

Australia: Land clearances turned up the heat on Australian climate

Deforestation by European settlers may be to blame for making Australia's drought longer, hotter and dryer than it would be otherwise. The "big dry", Australia's 11-year drought, has been blamed on greenhouse gases and natural variability. To see if deforestation played a part, Clive McAlpine of the University of Queensland in Brisbane and colleagues used a climate model to simulate Australian conditions from the 1950s to 2003. They then compared the impact of today's fragmented vegetation, obtained from satellite images, with that of 1788, prior to European settlement.

Over much of south-east Australia, where the drought has hit hardest, less that 10 per cent of the original vegetation remains. The team's model showed that this land clearance has increased the length of droughts in the area by one to two weeks per year. In years of extreme drought, the loss of vegetation caused the number of days above 35 °C to increase by six to 18 days, and the number of dry days to increase by five to 15 days (*Geophysical Research Letters*, in press).

"Land clearing may be having a similar impact on the drought as greenhouse gases," says McAlpine. Reforestation could minimise future droughts, he adds. "It's a nice piece of work," says Andy Pitman of the University of New South Wales in Sydney, but he adds that the modelling needs to be confirmed.

www.newscientist.com

Guyana: A profitable rainforest

Almost unusual document landed on your correspondent's desk recently: a financial report from a rainforest. Iwokrama, a 370,000-hectare rainforest in central Guyana, announced that it was in profit. It added, more intriguingly, that rainforests had entered the "global economy".

Iwokrama is part of the largest expanse of undisturbed rainforest in the world, which overlies the Guiana Shield. It has a unique history. In 1989 the president of Guyana had the foresight to give the forest as a gift to the Commonwealth for research into global warming. Today it is administered by an international board of trustees, who have devolved the day-to-day management to the Iwokrama International Centre. It is this centre that has been working to exploit the forest sustainably.

Edward Glover, one of Iwokrama's board of trustees, says that it became clear more than a decade ago that the forest could not rely on donor funding to survive, so it had to look elsewhere for finance. The centre's first job was to identify the forest's assets and to exploit them. It seems to have perfected its art. Today the centre makes money in areas such as ecotourism, timber-extraction, forest-products such as honey and oils, bio-prospecting and forestry research. Its results for 2008 reveal that it made a surplus for the first time that year, with revenues of $2.4m and a profit of $800,000. The previous year it had lost $200,000. Revenues from timber were up by 44%, ecotourism by 26% and training by 22%.

There should be more money to come. Eighteen months

ago, it sold a licence for the measurement and valuation of the forest's "ecosystem services". This is not to say that the forest has actually sold these rights, but that an investment company, Canopy Capital, based in London, has bought the rights to create a financial deal for the forest's services.

Ecosystem services are what a forest provides merely by existing. A standing forest can generate rainfall, prevent flooding, regulate the soil, provide biodiversity and store carbon. These benefits are received by everyone in society, but no one pays for them. Such environmental services are often termed "externalities" because they are not included in the price of the forest. When forests are traded in a traditional way, their price usually depends only on the value of the timber and the land on which it grows. No account is taken of the broader services to society. The result is that forests are being cut down because an incorrect price is put on them.

When forests vanish, people suffer. That is why many believe that there is an urgent need to bring forests onto the global financial balance sheet. Last year Pavan Sukhdev, an economist at Deutsche Bank, reported that the world was losing natural capital worth between $2 trillion and $5 trillion every year as a result of deforestation alone. If money could be made by selling these ecosystem services, then the financial equation for forests would change.

At the moment, nobody wants to give too much detail about what an eventual deal for Iwokrama's ecosystem services might look like, as it is currently being negotiated. Mr Glover says they want to create a new class of asset management, one that includes all of Iwokrama's services. It is not just about carbon emissions trading, he says, "we want something different and imaginative and forward-looking". Rather unusually for a clever financial deal, Hylton Murray-Philipson of Canopy Capital says that when it is completed, they will reveal how they did it so that other people can copy it.

Looking at the value of the carbon sequestration alone, there is a deal to be done. Mr Murray-Philipson asks "why pay BP $100 a tonne to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and bury it when you can do the same with a rainforest for a fraction of a dollar?". He adds that the science of forest carbon sequestration is "definitive" and that standing forests are responding to higher carbon dioxide levels by "bulking up", and are sequestering between one and four tonnes of the gas per hectare per year. Even taking the lower figure, with one billion hectares of forest in the world, if the rights to the sequestration of carbon dioxide are sold for just $10 a tonne—that would generate $10 billion a year.

Iwokrama is making money now, before it has even sold its ecosystem services. It is already part of the global economy. But with sustainable forestry and ecosystem services, the lesson of Iwokrama is that rainforests present an opportunity. For a few bright sparks out there, financial innovation and engineering combined with science will let them generate wealth in a whole new way. There is money in the forest. It is growing on trees.

economist.com

Canada to help pulp firms in tax credit fight

Ottawa will help Canadian pulp producers struggling with a U.S. tax windfall awarded their American rivals, but has not decided yet what form the aid will take, according to Natural Resources Minister Lisa Raitt. Canada also expects the White House will try to end the "black liquor" tax credit for U.S. producers in October, three months earlier than scheduled. But Raitt said Congress might fight that and try to extend it into next year. She said details of the Canadian response were still being worked out, but stressed it would not mirror the U.S. program. "We are looking at all the options. Industry has been very clear it is a situation of seismic proportions," Raitt told the PricewaterhouseCoopers conference of forestry industry executives in Vancouver.

Canadian producers have expressed anger over a new interpretation of U.S. tax law that has allowed U.S. pulp mills to claim millions of dollars in alternative energy tax credits for burning black liquor in their power plants. The material is a byproduct of pulp production that mills have long reused. Under the U.S. law, companies that blend biofuels with fossil fuels and reduce their dependence on fossil fuels are eligible for tax credits.

U.S. pulp makers have recently been adding diesel to black liquor to qualify for the credit, which a congressional analysis said could be worth $3 billion a year for the industry. Canadian pulp firms say allowing the U.S. plants to do that encourages them to overproduce at a time when the market is already weak. Other critics say it is a misuse of program designed to reduce energy consumption.

The tax credit's supporters say it is a needed life-life for an industry struggling with the global recession, including some companies that have pulp operations on both sides of the border. Raitt said the federal government was working with opposition parties and the industry to develop a response and it recognized the need to move quickly because Canadian producers were already feeling the impact. She said Ottawa would make sure its response to the U.S. tax credit does not violate its softwood lumber trade agreement with Washington, which prohibits Canada from directly subsidizing lumber producers.

www.reuters.com

Kenya: Villagers to Test Out UN Carbon Benefits Project

Villagers in western Kenya are the latest participants in a project carried out by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and its partners to calculate how much carbon can be stored in trees and soils when the land is managed in sustainable, climate-friendly ways. The Carbon Benefits Project was launched today in communities in and around Lake Victoria by UNEP and the World Agroforestry Centre, along with a range of other key partners. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the project is already being

carried out in communities in Niger, Nigeria and China, where scientists are developing a system for measuring, monitoring and managing carbon in a diverse range of landscapes.

Under the UN Climate Change Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, developed countries can offset some of their greenhouse gas emissions by paying developing economies for implementing clean and renewable energy projects such as wind, solar and geothermal power. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has noted that by keeping higher levels of carbon in the soil - a process known as "carbon sequestration" - farmers can help reduce carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, enhance the soil's resilience and boost crop yields. However, as UNEP noted, more research is needed to evaluate just how much carbon different farming systems actually lock away. "This key issue must be resolved if farmers, conservationists, communities and land owners are to be paid per tonne of pollution removed from the atmosphere," the agency said in a news release.

As part of the initiative, researchers will work with project managers in all four countries to set up carbon and greenhouse gas prediction systems. "Farming carbon alongside farming crops is just one of the tantalizing prospects emerging as a result of the world's urgent need to combat climate change," said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner. "Some industrialized countries are considering investing tens of billions of dollars in capturing carbon off the smoke stacks of power stations and burying underground. He added that managing the land and its vegetation in more "intelligent and climate-friendly" ways may generate multiple benefits from stabilizing soils, securing water supplies, conserving biodiversity and generating much needed income for poor and low-income communities.

Dennis Garrity, Director-General of the World Agroforestry Centre, emphasized that the knowledge gained from study sites around the world, including Lake Victoria, will help enable some of the world's poorest people - in the most vulnerable places - to obtain the benefits of carbon sequestration.

allafrica.com

Liberia barcodes trees to log profits

Liberia is having its lumber trees tagged electronically as the government rushes to restart an industry overshadowed by market woes. Liberfor, a consortium of European firms and Liberia's Forestry Development Authority, is working overtime to kick-start a national industry previously worth 60% of the country's GDP. Thomas Pichet of SGS, Liberfor's logistics partner, explains: "The timber trade was halted by the UN six years ago after contractors were unable to demonstrate they had paid their taxes." That is after the years of abuse Liberia's forests suffered under former rebel leader Charles Taylor, who funded his civil war effort by pillaging lumber and diamonds.

The country's Finance Minister, Augustine Ngafuan, is certain revenues collected from lumber sales this time around will end up in the right hands. "Our new system tags the trees and monitors their whereabouts from stump to port," she says. "It will deliver 99% of the resulting revenues back to us."

British tracking company Helveta has already tagged 30,000 of a total 200,000 trees set aside for the first wave of exports to EU-approved buyers. Its satellite mapping process works by scanning bar codes stamped on to trees with a PDA, creating an electronic paper trail that can pinpoint any trunk to within 25 metres of its location. It is a process similar to checking out shopping at a supermarket. When a tree is exported, the system uploads the data to its servers in Reading, near London, and invoices the contractor at the port according to the trunk's grade, species, size and quality.

However, the initiative has nearly run out of money before the first tree has been exported. Liberfor's initial investor, USAid, has warned it will not fund the project any further than the $10m (£6.6m) it has already donated. And other international donors, including the World Bank, are also refusing to commit to further financial support.

The teething troubles have meant Liberia has collected none of the $20m (£13.2m) it forecast it would receive from lumber exports in the first year. To pay its set-up costs and become self-sufficient, Liberia needs to sell lumber from half a million hectares of dense and largely inaccessible rainforest. At the same time, it must pay back $630m (£416m) it owes to the International Monetary Fund, while fending off the African Development Bank, with whom it is in arrears.

Speaking on a concession in the equatorial rainforest, Ian Patterson, a 39-year-old British forest manager working with the Liberian logging company LTCC, says global market conditions and bureaucracy have hit his operation hard. "Our firm has already spent a couple of million dollars to get where we are now, and we haven't exported a log yet," he says. "The Liberian government came to meet us to entice us to take a concession here, but the global market for timber is non-existent at the moment."

The electronic tagging system, however, has tightened the process up, Mr Patterson believes. "It's a breath of fresh air using bar codes and GPS to pinpoint our product and leave what we can't export untouched," he says. "Under good market conditions, we could expect to do very well."

Key to reinvigorating the country's logging industry is the creation of up to 40,000 jobs, which will help keep former fighters occupied and crime levels down, Forestry Minister John Woods says. "I can't stress how important it is to keep ex-combatants busy - they make up much of the workforce in this sector," he explains. Tens of thousands of fighters swapped their AK-47s for chainsaws after the war and began illegally lumbering trees, says Derek Charter of Helveta. "Illegal loggers or 'pit-sawers' waste around 70% of each trunk when they try to cut planks from them with chainsaws," he points out. "So the contractors are doing all the hard work, fixing the roads and bridges necessary to move the wood and the pit-sawers are using the same infrastructure to steal it from them."

Pamela White, Mission Director for USAid in Liberia, says logging companies have missed the best opportunity to profit from exports since the UN dropped its sanctions on lumber exports. "Contractors thought the commissioning process would be faster than it was - but they're a good year behind. "I don't think these companies ever realised how complicated it would be to follow all the rules and regulations. "The sad thing is if they had sorted this out a year ago, the opportunity to make a profit on sales was about 100% better then than now. World demand for timber, like everything now, is not good."

Peter Lowe, the Forestry Co-ordinator for the World Bank - which returned to Liberia in 2003 after a 20-year hiatus - says

the Liberian logging system will not be allowed to collapse because of the amount of international goodwill towards the country. "We haven't made the commitment to prop it up. The Liberian government is going to have to work out how to sell this to their own people. "There have been no exports so far because of a failure to implement their forestry reform process fast enough."

Tagging trees by satellite is already operating successfully under Helveta in Indonesia and has helped stop illegal logging in Cameroon, so when the market recovers, Liberia should know exactly where its lumber revenues are coming from.

news.bbc.co.uk

UK: London mayor to allow residents to request the planting of a tree outside their home

Londoners will be able to ask for a tree to be planted in their street, Boris Johnson said as he admitted he would like to go down in history as a mayor who was "friendly to trees". As part of Johnson's manifesto commitment to plant 10,000 trees during his four-year term, 1,500 are already being planted in the capital. With his second year in office now under way, Johnson has launched a Street Trees website that will allow half a million residents in 40 "priority" areas across London to request a tree outside their own home.

Johnson announced the initiative in a radio interview; "The idea of this is to allow the councils to know exactly where there is enthusiasm for street trees so the councils can apply to the funding we are giving them for more trees," he said.

Johnson is financing the scheme by using some of the savings made from scrapping the Londoner newspaper, which was introduced by his Labour predecessor, Ken Livingstone, and has been routinely described by Johnson as "communist propaganda". Pressed on how he wanted to define his mayoralty in years to come, Johnson said: "I would not be ashamed of going down in history as a mayor who was friendly to trees, friendly to bicycles, an enthusiast of electric vehicles, a new generation of the Routemaster bus fleet, and who finally solved the problems of London's aviation policy in one way or another."

Open to anyone living in priority areas across 32 boroughs, the bids will be passed to borough councils who, as a requirement for street tree funding applications, will be asked "where practicable" to plant their allocation of trees in areas where residents most want them. The mayor's street tree programme is managed by the Forestry Commission, working in partnership with the environmental charity Groundwork, and is an expansion of its existing London tree and woodland grant scheme.

A charity promoting tree-planting in streets, Trees for Cities, is running a campaign to encourage Londoners to donate £3 to ensure 37,000 street trees are planted across the capital on top of Johnson's pledge of 10,000.

www.guardian.co.uk

Indonesia: Palm oil industry drives deforestation

The palm oil industry loves to tout its green credentials, mostly on the back of its biofuels burning cleaner than gasoline. But the industry struggled at a biofuels conference Wednesday to defend itself amid recent studies by scientists showing that a majority of palm oil plantations started in Indonesia and Malaysia in the past two decades replaced tropical forests that were destroyed to make way for planting.

Even the sale of palm oil that meets certain environmental standards is falling short of expectations, according to a recent study by the environmental group World Wildlife Fund. It found only 1 percent of palm oil certified as sustainable was being sold. Certifiable oil must meet safeguards including assurances it comes from plantations that did not destroy rainforests. "This sluggish demand from palm oil buyers... could undermine the success of sustainability efforts and threatens the remaining natural tropical forests of Southeast Asia, as well as other forests where oil palm is set to expand, such as the Amazon," the WWF said in a statement.

Rosediania Suharto of the Indonesian Palm Oil Commission complained at the biofuels conference that it was difficult for many smaller companies to meet the 139 criteria required for their palm oil to be considered sustainable. Those that did are finding buyers unwilling to pay the extra 15 percent or $40- to $50-a-ton for it. "Certified buyers are complaining because buyers said they don't want to buy the expensive oil. China has said it won't buy this expensive oil," Suharto told the two-day meeting. "If there is no demand, there can be no production."

Palm oil can be found in half of supermarket products from cosmetics to ice cream, according to the industry, and demand has risen sharply in China, India and the United States due to its health benefits. The industry is expected to grow as countries mandate the use of biofuels as part of a cleaner energy mix. But as its profile has risen so has the controversy surrounding the methods used to farm palm oil. Plantation companies in Indonesia and Malaysia--which produce 87 percent of all palm oil--have come under fire for fuelling deforestation that contributes to the demise of animals like orangutans and Sumatran elephants.

Indonesia is also planning to build half its future plantations on carbon-rich peat land--the draining and burning of which have contributed to the country being the world's third-largest greenhouse gas emitter, according to Wetlands International. These destructive practices have called into question the green credentials of palm oil and other biofuels, with a University of Minnesota last year found that converting forest and grasslands to plantations resulted in 17 to 423 times more carbon than the annual savings from replacing fossil fuels.

www.mysinchew.com

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.

The CFA supports the professional development of those working with trees and forests by promoting the conservation and sustainable management of the world's forests and the contribution they make to peoples' livelihoods.

The CFA is managed on behalf of the membership by the Governing Council, which is composed of representatives from all countries who have members. It is run on a day-to-day basis by a small UK-based Secretariat consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Technical Director, Membership Secretary and Finance Manager. The Secretariat is advised by committees for Finance and General Purposes, and Publications. The Governing Council appoints one member from each region, the Regional Coordinators, to work closely with the Secretariat in the Executive Committee to implement the plans of the CFA in accordance with the overall objectives.

Join the CFA

What you get

Membership of the CFA entitles you to all of the benefits of the Association, including receipt of the CFA Newsletter and the International Forestry Review (hard copy and online access – see below for details). For more details of membership benefits visit our website at www.cfa-international.org

How you can join the CFA

There are several ways you can join:

- via telephone at + 44 (0)1588 672868
- or our website at www.cfa-international.org
- or by contacting our office at: CFA, The Crib, Dinchope, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 9JJ, UK

Annual subscription rates

Student	Standard*		£10
	Plus		£25
Ordinary	Standard*	Developing country	£10
		Developed country	£50
	Plus	Developing country	£25
		Developed country	£65
Institution		Developing country	£180
		Developed country	£250
National Forestry Association		Developing country	£25
		Developed country	£100

*All membership categories include both hard copy and online access to the International Forestry Review except 'Standard' subscriptions which do not include a hard copy.
Reduced price membership is available to organisations participating in the Program for Enhancement of Research Information (PERI) administered by the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP). Visit www.cfa-international.org for more details.

For more information on the CFA visit our website at www.cfa-international.org