

# CFA Newsletter



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## Getting REDD+ Right for Women: An analysis of the barriers and opportunities for women's participation in the REDD+ sector in Asia



Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Plus (REDD+) has been highly promoted as an effective means to reduce carbon emission. It also represents the frontier of forest financing for sustainable forest management. If properly designed and implemented, REDD+ will be able to reduce carbon emissions whilst also delivering important co-benefits such as tenure rights, improved governance, biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction. Nevertheless, concerns from civil societies and other stakeholders have been leveled due to insufficient recognition of rights of forest communities, particularly

indigenous people and women over forest resources, and limited participation of those marginalized groups in REDD+ negotiations. Notably, the fact that forests have been effectively managed by women and indigenous groups throughout the world has only been weakly acknowledged in these discussions.

A study entitled *Getting REDD+ Right for Women: An analysis of the barriers and opportunities for women's participation in the REDD+ sector in Asia* conducted by WOCAN and funded by USAID examines the extent to which REDD+ readiness and PES projects contribute to women's empowerment and gender

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integration.<sup>1</sup> It analyzes how different roles and status of women and men within the community, political sphere, workplace and households affect the achievement of sustainable results for REDD+ projects. It also examines how the anticipated results of REDD+ projects affect men and women differently. The authors conducted in-country consultations in Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal and Cambodia, and desk studies for India, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea. Some REDD+ and PES pilot projects that were visited in the selected countries include: Oddar Meanchey REDD+ project (OM-REDD) in Cambodia; Ulu Masen REDD+ in Aceh, Indonesia; UN-REDD and USAID PES projects in Vietnam; and NORAD REDD+ and PES pilot projects in Nepal. Interviews were conducted with various stakeholders engaged in REDD+ project development and implementation as well as representatives of international organizations.

## Findings

In general, the study finds that institutions or implementing partners in the regions have not systematically incorporated gender considerations within their REDD+ policies, plans and projects. Although all of the countries assessed in the study have ratified CEDAW (Convention to End Discrimination against Women), none of the national policies or projects have identified the Convention as a binding agreement to safeguard women's rights in REDD+ programs. In addition, there is no evidence that REDD+ roadmaps in the assessed countries recognize gender-differentiated roles and responsibilities in forest management or address potential gendered impacts of the initiative. The study also found no gender-based targeting of REDD+ activities existing in the assessed projects.

### *Women's Land Rights and Land Tenure*

It has been acknowledged that clear and secure tenure over forestlands and clarification on what groups have the right to access benefits from carbon are a necessary precondition for successful implementation of REDD+. The recognition of women's rights to access forestlands and resources and forest carbon is critical to enable women to access revenues sharing mechanisms of REDD+. Furthermore, women with stronger property rights over forests will have stronger bargaining power in the household decision-making, and are therefore less likely to become economically vulnerable. In most of countries assessed in the study, however, clear forest tenure arrangement can hardly be found. Communities' forest tenure rights are often ill-defined in the statutory laws and weakly enforced. Women's rights to land and forest resources have not been part of REDD+ discussions at the international, national and local levels. In this situation, women can be displaced or denied access to forests under REDD+ initiatives.

### *Participation and Representation in the Decision Making*

Women's participation and representation in the REDD+ decision making processes could ensure women's needs and perspectives will be considered in REDD+ policies, and increase

women's confidence and opportunities to assume leadership roles in REDD+ processes. Nonetheless, consultations on REDD+ policies and projects have been marked by the absence of women's representatives. Indeed, REDD+ projects assessed in this study reinforce gender inequality as they fail to acknowledge women as equal partners in the design, consultation and decision-making. Women's heavy work burdens and socio-cultural factors have kept them politically and culturally marginalized from REDD+ decision making structures at the local level. Women's limited capacities and knowledge on REDD+ has restricted their roles in decision making processes at all levels.

### *Benefit Sharing*

If designed and done right, benefit sharing can be an avenue for affected communities, including women, to be economically and politically empowered. Unfortunately, the study finds that women have been minimally involved in the discussions to develop benefit sharing systems and are not considered as a distinct beneficiary of REDD+ initiatives. Because of their weaker rights over forestlands and trees, REDD+ initiatives would unlikely bring benefits to women. Limited discussion occur on how benefits are actually distributed within communities, and the gendered nature of impacts in terms of economic opportunities, empowerment and vulnerability. This is based on a misleading assumption that transferring benefits to community groups will automatically trickle down among equitably to community members. It neglects power relations dynamics embedded in local cultural and social structures, and the fact that most of village level forest institutions are dominated by men.

## Ways forward

The authors identify several recommendations to ensure the adoption of a gender perspective in REDD+ projects and policies development: *1)* incorporate gender mainstreaming tools in REDD+ policies and programs; *second*, develop land tenure policies that officially recognize women's rights over forest products and forest carbon. *2)* develop mechanisms of benefit distribution that recognize and equitably reward women and men's contributions to REDD+ activities to ensure that women get equal access to the benefit. Gender audit should also be conducted periodically to ensure that REDD+ revenue are being used for women empowerment activities. *3)* develop measures to support increasing levels of women's participation in development and implementation REDD+ policies, such as mandating percentage of women representatives to participate in all phases of REDD processes. *4)* capacity building for women is a must to enable them to meaningfully participate in REDD+ decision making. It includes trainings for relevant skills and access to knowledge and information on REDD+. Gender awareness should also be targeted for men and women to nurture enabling environments for women's leadership. Finally, promote technologies of renewable energy and agroforestry to meet the needs of women for fuel wood and fodder resources to strengthen their climate change resilience and reduce their workloads.

**Jeannette D. Gurung**

*Executive Director*

*Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN)*

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<sup>1</sup> Gurung, J, K. Giri and A. Setyowati, 2011, *Getting REDD+ Right for Women: An analysis of the barriers and opportunities for women's participation in the REDD+ sector in Asia*, USAID. [www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/cross-cutting\\_programs/wid/pubs/Gender\\_REDD+\\_Asia\\_Regional\\_Analysis.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/pubs/Gender_REDD+_Asia_Regional_Analysis.pdf) - 2011-09-14

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# Association news

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## Queen presents Queen's Award for Forestry



The most recent recipient of the CFA Queen's Award for Forestry, Professor Jolanda Roux, was presented with her award by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth on 13 December 2011. The award aims to recognise outstanding international contributions to forestry and since its inception Professor Roux is the first woman amongst its nine recipients. She has described the meeting as "an incredible experience that in hindsight feels slightly unreal. It is not something that I ever imagined would happen to me and I was completely bowled over, firstly by receipt of this prestigious award, and then when I received a phone call to let me know that

Queen Elizabeth had invited me to the Palace for an audience with her!" She further described the trip to the palace as "passing in a blur". She continued "When Jim Ball and I arrived at the palace, it was the time of the Changing of the Guard and there were hundreds of people crowding around the front gates to get photographs of this event. We had to report to a specific gate at the palace where our names were checked on a list and we were then escorted into the Palace grounds, past the changing guards and into the inner courtyard of the palace." From there, we were taken to the reception area where we were met by a smart young soldier, the only one in the Palace allowed to wear a kilt because he was from a Scottish regiment. He escorted us into the Palace where we waited together with others, including a British General and the High Commissioners of Thailand and Mozambique who also had their private audiences with the Queen." They all arrived in carriages drawn by beautiful horses, with footmen and women. When our turn approached, we were introduced to one of Her Majesty's aides who took us to a second waiting room, where he explained the exact protocol to us. Shortly afterwards, I was called up to wait in front of two very big, closed doors. These were opened by Palace staff at which point we entered and I was announced to the Queen, who was standing in the middle of this beautiful room. After being announced, I was able to walk forward and shake her hand. After a short meeting Her Majesty then invited Jim Ball and I further into the room, where we sat down and had ten minutes of discussion with Her." When asked what she spoke to Her Majesty about, Jolanda laughs and says she "spoke about what I do, tree health in general, the Queen's interest in trees, the CFA, and we even shared a joke or two" Jolanda added, "She was graceful, charming, amazingly well informed and sincerely interested in our work on trees and especially tree health".

## The Young Forester Award 2012

The CFA is pleased to announce the launch of the **Young Forester Award 2012**. Applications are invited from students and young professionals below the age of 35 years on 30 June 2012 who are nationals of Commonwealth countries. Please note that as part of the CFA's continuing support to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), for the 2012 Young Forester Award we particularly encourage applications from foresters from SIDS within the Commonwealth. In addition we encourage applications from women, those with disabilities, and nationals of developing countries.

Anyone who wishes to apply for the **Young Forester Award** should complete the Application Form on our website. The Selection Committee will discuss placement options with short-listed applicants who will then be asked to write up to 500 words on what they want to achieve on the placement. Applications should be sent via email to [cfa@cfa-international.org](mailto:cfa@cfa-international.org). The closing date for applications is 30th April 2012.

Take a look at our 'Winners' stories' on our website to see the value of the **Young Forester Award**.

## CFA joins the world of social networking

Now that our new website is up and running we've decided to extend our cyber-reach into the world of social networking. . . .in other words we have set up a Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn group. This means that we now have additional means of

informing members and anyone else interested in forestry matters of CFA activities and new papers produced in the International Forestry Review. For those of you interested in keeping up to date with happenings and discussions via these sites please sign up and get involved!

## CFA Trustee awarded OBE

Peter Latham, a CFA Trustee, and the Chairman of leading timber merchants James Latham plc and PEFC UK, has been awarded an OBE in the New Years Honours List. Recognised for services to the UK wood industry, Peter Latham has spent over 20 years dedicated to sustainable timber sourcing and forest management.



Throughout his long career in the timber industry, Peter Latham has demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainable forest management by advocating that the UK timber industry should commit to only sourcing legal and sustainable timber products and he has long understood that forests contain some of the most valuable and bio-diverse ecosystems on the planet. He has constantly advocated that if forests are to continue to deliver the full range of benefits that people and nature rely on, they need to be conserved and managed properly.

Under his personal direction, James Latham plc developed an industry-leading responsible procurement policy to ensure that they only purchase timber from legal and sustainable sources. James Latham plc was also an early adopter of timber

certification and was one of the first to implement both FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) chain of custody certification.

Peter Latham's contribution to the development of PEFC UK has been huge. Real progress can be measured in terms of demand for chain of custody certification. When he took up his position on the PEFC UK Board, less than 100 companies were certified and now the number stands at over 1,300. The effect of this is that UK consumers are now able to purchase an increasing range of timber and paper products bearing the PEFC logo as an assurance of legal and sustainable sourcing.

Peter Latham has also generously given his time and experience to support both public and private sector measures to ensure that Britain leads the way in responsible timber procurement. He helped develop and implement the UK Government's timber procurement policy – CPET (Central Point of Expertise on Timber) and has led several DFID-funded timber trade delegations to Africa and East Asia, to better understand the issues surrounding illegally logged timber, the environmental damage it causes and its impact on developing nation's economies and governance.

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**This article is a revised version of the press release kindly provided by PEFC**

## Calling young authors

The CFA runs a scheme entitled the **Young Scientist Publication Award** which is designed to help promote the careers of young forest scientists and managers through publication in the International Forestry Review. Manuscripts are invited from authors under 30 years of age who have not published previously in a peer-reviewed journal.

A maximum of four Awards are given yearly and the winning papers will be published in IFR. The winners will be provided with a free subscription to the CFA (which includes receipt of the IFR) for 3 years.

Criteria for judging the winners of the Awards will include quality of science and originality. For more information visit our website at [www.cfa-international.org](http://www.cfa-international.org).

## Vijay Krishnarayan appointed Director of the Commonwealth Foundation

Vijay Krishnarayan has recently been appointed Director of the Commonwealth Foundation. He has supported civil society organisations in the United Kingdom, Caribbean and the wider Commonwealth over the last 25 years and has a special interest in the relationship between development and the environment. Before



joining the Commonwealth Foundation in 2006, he spent over a decade in the Caribbean, most notably as Managing Partner for the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), one of the region's sustainable development think tanks (see [www.canari.org/default.asp](http://www.canari.org/default.asp))

We have worked with Vijay for the past six years in his previous role as Deputy Director of the Commonwealth Foundation and look forward to continuing to interact with him to develop the role of forestry within the Commonwealth.

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## Forest Scenes

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### PhD study looks at lives of expatriate foresters

***In the summer of 2011, Jennifer Gold completed her Ph.D. thesis entitled, 'British Decolonisation, "Manpower Resource Debates" and the Politics of Scientific Governance in the Long Sixties', at the University of Cambridge. Her thesis focused on the lives of expatriate foresters who worked in Britain's Colonial Forest Service. She provides an outline of her thesis below:***

The 1960s are often viewed as a period of profound change in British society: from protest movements and fashion to Britain's declining international influence. My thesis concerned the relationship between two transformations occurring this time: the end of empire and the growing conviction that highly skilled manpower (and scientists in particular) constituted a primary source of national wealth.

Decolonisation coincided with a period in which science was positioned as the fulcrum of a modern technocratic Britain and the international mobility of scientists became politically charged. In particular, there was popular hysteria after US immigration data appeared to reveal a mass exodus of British scientists to North America. The "brain drain", as this trend became known, reflected a shift in the way skilled emigration was understood (and, for the most part, continues to be viewed to this day) – as a critical loss for the national economy.

My research concerned debates surrounding the post-imperial careers of scientists who served in Britain's HM Overseas Civil Service (HMOCS) as a way of shedding new light on manpower resource concerns at this time. I focused on the lives of members of the Colonial Forest Service (CFS) – the branch of HMOCS responsible for the scientific management and utilisation of crown colony timber reserves. Their oral history testimony, coupled with archival research, contributed to a number of key findings:

**The anxieties of the British government:** Decolonisation in the late 1950s and 1960s spelt the inevitable, if not always immediate, end to CFS employment for expatriate foresters. The British government grew increasingly concerned in this period that serving British scientists (particularly those holding research or specialist posts) would be "poached" by international aid organisations. It was felt that this threatened Britain's ability to staff both its remaining colonies and bilateral aid programme.

I looked at the particularly fraught relations between the government and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations over this issue. The postwar period had brought CFS officers into close contact with FAO personnel through conferences and technical assistance visits. There was considerable concern among Whitehall officials that this exposed British officers to FAO's recruitment networks and Whitehall made a series of official complaints to FAO over apparent instances of poaching.

In reality, however, archival material and oral testimony indicate that the government blew out of all proportion a small number of incidents where FAO staff sent approach letters to serving British officers. It was apparent that many of FAO's approach letters had in fact been prompted by forestry officers themselves making tentative inquiries as their job security became increasingly uncertain. Whitehall's response, however, was symptomatic of growing anxieties over Britain's ability to retain scientists and assert international influence.

**A useful means of allaying public concerns over the brain drain:** As fears of a scientific brain drain told hold in the 1960s, the Ministry of Overseas Development became concerned with dispelling any notion that the UK's expanding overseas technical assistance programme was exacerbating the brain drain. Former HMOCS scientists were carefully positioned in government reports and pamphlets as a pool of suitably

qualified manpower whose sudden availability following decolonisation reduced the need to deplete the existing stock of scientists working in Britain.

**The varied experience of resettlement:** There was a prevailing tendency among both politicians and the media at the time to homogenise the scientific community as a quantifiable and scarce national resource. Returning CFS officers entering the UK labour market in the 1960s, however, had very diverse experiences. Those who had been involved in general forest management while in the CFS tended to have greater difficulty finding new employment than those who had held specialist or research posts.

This varied experience was not unique to foresters. The third quarter of the twentieth century had seen increasing specialisation across a range of established professions. Both the *Lancet* and *British Medical Journal* carried articles that detailed the difficulties experienced by returning general duty medical officers in contrast to specialists. Even among specialists, some skills were in greater demand than others.

Some former CFS members, alongside their counterparts from other scientific branches of HMOCS, recognised a distinct contrast between their own experiences and the prevailing rhetoric over shortages of scientists. As one former member of the Colonial Chemical Service wrote in the journal *Chemistry in Britain* in 1965:

it seems particularly ironical that, at a time when concern is being expressed over the so-called 'brain drain', and efforts are being made to persuade British scientists to return to the U.K. from North America, many highly competent scientists, who have spent several years abroad in the service of the Government, should find themselves virtually unemployable when they endeavour to return to Britain.<sup>1</sup>

Overall, these findings powerfully demonstrate that while the so-called brain drain of British scientists to North America dominated headlines in the 1960s, manpower resource concerns were pervasive at this time and distilled wider anxieties over the state of the nation.

**Note of thanks:** I am very grateful for the advice and assistance I received from members of the forestry community during the course of my research. This includes Alan Pottinger (CFA), Jeffrey Burley and Roger Mills (Oxford University), and Catherine Oldham (Forestry Commission). I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to the former members of the CFS (many of whom are still members of this Association) who participated in this study either by interview or correspondence. Their generosity in sharing memories and personal papers made this study possible: **Jennifer Gold**.

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<sup>1</sup> "Ex-colonial", 'Correspondence: Employment of Ex-colonials', *Chemistry in Britain*, 1(1965), 273.

## Timeline of events in the forestry and related sectors

The idea for this timeline grew out of an account I wrote in 2004 of the history of the Committee on Forestry, the two-yearly meeting of the member countries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). My study included a timeline of events in the forestry and related fields since FAO was established in 1945; it was well received by readers.

The present chronology of events in forestry and related sectors has been prepared as a contribution to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Its aim is to act as a source of information on the dates of significant events not only in the management and creation of forests but also in their utilisation, and especially in the international conventions and agreements that arose from the meeting in Rio. I am encouraged to offer it to a wider public by the strong interest it aroused in various colleagues to whom I sent the first draft to request their own inputs.

The timeline is offered in digital form on the website of the Commonwealth Forestry Association for the use of individuals, who may download it and add to (or subtract from) it to make their own personal chronology. Readers are, however, encouraged to send in their own additions or subtractions, or amendments, to the author, who will revise it at the end of Rio+20.

The version that is now offered is largely my own, although with several additions from others, and the events I finally selected are those that I think significant. I fear that there are no criteria for their selection beyond my own judgement; at first I thought that I would include only those where I could ascribe a definite date, but this would have omitted several of the early ones.

My chief source was my own recollections and my secondary sources the inputs of others. Recognising that I, and even my colleagues, may have fallible memories, I have checked them as far as possible using the invaluable and gratefully acknowledged resource of Wikipedia. In checking the sources I confess to spending sometimes quite a lot of time chasing wild geese: I learned, for example, about the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, one of the world's oldest works of literature – see the second entry, c. 2,700 years BP, courtesy of John Innes – as well as the inventors and purpose of the world's first chain saw (see 1926) who were two 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish doctors, who used it for medical "excisions" on their patients. If this timeline starts other readers on similar irrelevant but interesting literature searches then it will have achieved its other purpose, of arousing interest outside the topic.

I have attempted no analysis and drawn no conclusions. The timeline is a work of information only. I realise that it is short in some fields, especially logging and utilisation – I cannot, for example, find a date for the invention or patenting of oriented strand board (OSB), nor for kiln drying of timber.

As well as the incomparable Wikipedia, I gratefully acknowledge significant inputs from the following: Hosny El Lakany, Julian Evans, John Hudson, Juergen Huss, John Innes, Wulf Killmann, Roger Mills, Bob Newman, John Palmer, Peter Savill, Adrian Whiteman and Peter Wood.

**Jim Ball**

*President, CFA*

*(For more information, and to download the timeline, visit our website at [www.cfa-international.org/forestry\\_timeline.php](http://www.cfa-international.org/forestry_timeline.php))*

# From discord to accord: a decade's work building consensus on sustainable forest management

The recent release of the third edition of the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) provides an opportunity to reflect on the development of sustainable forest management certification in the UK. The revised UKWAS standard has been endorsed by PEFC and FSC's approval is imminent. None of this seems very remarkable and it is certainly nothing very controversial receiving only scant mention in the trade media. And it is precisely the technical, rather than political, nature of today's UKWAS process that makes it interesting for it is a far cry from the highly charged atmosphere within which the first edition of the UKWAS standard was developed.

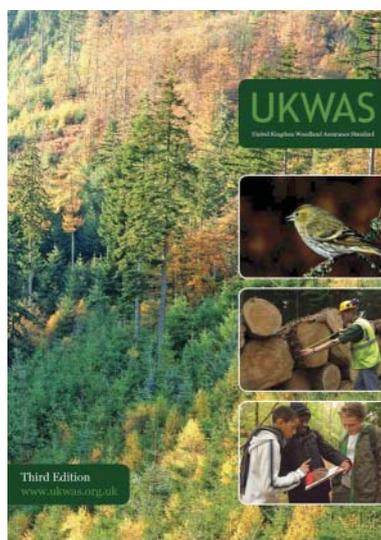
So, how was past discord transformed into the present day's accord?

In post-WW1 Britain, forest expansion had been identified as a strategic national priority. A heavy reliance on timber imports disrupted by wartime naval blockade had led to drastic measures being adopted to supply timber from homegrown sources. For a nation reliant on coal, wooden pit props were essential to the war effort and by 1918 little more than 5% of Britain remained as woodland. This prompted the establishment of a Forestry Commission, with a remit to establish a strategic timber reserve to guard against future crises, and encouragement for private land owners to undertake afforestation.

A second world war just over 20 years later saw further depletion of Britain's timber reserves and the new strategic reserve was of course too young to be of much help. Expansion resumed apace in the post-war years with great interest from private investors as well as the Forestry Commission.

By the 1970s and 1980s, however, the UK forestry sector found itself in the public spotlight for all the wrong reasons. Public concern, championed by NGOs and much reported in the media, centered primarily on the nature of this rapid expansion. On the face of it, expansion was of course a good thing but, if one chose to dig a little deeper, a multitude of conflicting objectives was revealed. The expansion was largely taking place on the land available at the time, mainly upland semi-natural habitats, whilst existing semi-natural woods were often modified into plantation-style woodlands. In both, there was a strong emphasis on commercial timber production hence the choice of high yielding, often exotic, species. Critics argued that this new style of forestry was compromising biodiversity and transforming cherished landscapes; many agreed and by the end of the 1980s, debate on forestry matters was characterized by polarity.

In the 1990s, much work was done to counter this polarity by building bridges and seeking consensus on a common agenda: in 1996, a UK Forestry Accord was agreed between business and environmental and social NGOs on a set of objectives and principles for responsible forestry; in 1998, European forestry ministers agreed pan-European operational level guidelines



for sustainable forest management and the UK Government launched its UK Forestry Standard setting out how to achieve sustainable forest management in practice.

This period also saw rising consumer concern about the environmental impacts of forest management across the world and a demand for assurance that timber products were sourced from well managed forests. There was much debate on how best to achieve this in the UK context. Initially there was considerable disagreement; some advocated reliance on the governmental controls already in place and others championed a new process known as forest certification involving independent verification against a published certification standard defining sustainable forest management.

The debate was heated and highly charged but, in time, the UK's forestry, environmental and social communities chose to work together to develop an independent 'audit protocol' or certification standard. The Forestry Commission played an invaluable role as a facilitator and the stakeholders agreed that ownership of any certification standard must rest with the stakeholders and that all decisions must be based on consensus. The concept developed was for an independent certification standard for use in others' certification programmes. In 1997 work began to develop a standard that would reflect the requirements of the governmental UK Forestry Standard and through this the guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in the UK had already started developing a certification standard and this work informed the development of the independent standard so that it would be conformant with FSC's principles and criteria for forest stewardship. The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) was finally agreed, approved by FSC as conformant with its principles and criteria and launched in 1999.

The launch of the UKWAS was a landmark event for UK forestry and cemented a strong partnership between the organizations and individuals involved. Rather than work within the constraints of a single certification scheme, the UK's forestry sector and its stakeholders had chosen to develop and publish an independent certification standard as the best way to define appropriate and effective woodland management in the UK context. Agreement was achieved through a sense of common purpose and the sheer hard work of those involved and it put the UK at the forefront of the global certification movement.

In addition to the FSC's approval, the UKWAS was endorsed by PEFC in 2002 so allowing UK woodlands to be dual-certified to the two leading global certification schemes. This is a testament to the vision underpinning the unique UKWAS approach in which a single national standard can form the central component of several certification schemes. The working relationships between the UKWAS steering group and FSC UK and PEFC UK are set out in concordats clarifying each party's role and responsibilities.

These two leading global schemes provide a way for the UK forestry sector to assure buyers and users that its wood and wood products come from sustainably managed woodlands whilst providing enterprises with the maximum possible flexibility to meet their customers' needs at least cost. The latest figures show that 50% of the UK's woodland area and an estimated 85% of harvested timber is certified through one or both of these schemes. Certification is now an established part of the UK forestry scene and contributes to raising the standards of woodland management.

This success is a testament to what hard work, partnership working and good will can do to overcome polarity. Another

is that the UKWAS model continues to attract international interest; in recent years we have welcomed international visitors, including from China, wishing to learn whether our experience might be helpful to them in formulating their own national processes.



**Peter Wilson FICFor**  
Executive Chair, UK Woodland Assurance Standard

## Cause or effect: what lies behind declining funds for forestry R&D in Australia?\*



**T**he provision of research and development (R&D) to the Australian forest and wood products sector faces a number of challenges, which, ultimately, all revolve around a lack of money.

While this may be a statement of the obvious, the real question is whether this is a cause or an effect?

Over the last 25 years, there has been a significant decline in real expenditure in R&D. Every four to five years, Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA) – and its predecessor – has funded a survey of R&D expenditure with the most recent survey undertaken for the 2010/11 financial year. This survey shows a substantial decline in the number of people undertaking R&D. Excluding the university sector, the number of research scientists has reduced from 331 in 1985 to 132.

The survey shows that there has been an extremely sharp decline in R&D expenditure and capacity in the sector over the last three years with the number of scientists falling by 119 (or 47%).

These trends are alarming but not unique to this sector (or this country) and are also being played out in other primary and manufacturing industries.

\* This is an update of an article that originally appeared in the Spring 2011 issue of Australian Forest Grower.

What we are seeing is a convergence of larger market forces and public policy decisions that have not yet culminated.

There are many contributing factors to this situation. At a macroeconomic level, the political and economic importance of primary and manufacturing industries are in decline and thus attract less government attention, especially when there are more pressing political or budgetary issues to be resolved.

At a microeconomic level, expenditure on R&D can be considered an investment or an expense (whether by industry or government) and thus is exposed to short term acts of expediency if funding cuts are required.

### Measuring returns

For R&D to be an investment, it needs to have measurable returns. FWPA and the other rural research and development corporations (RDCs) have adopted a methodology to determine the benefits-to-cost assessments (BCA) of our research portfolios. On average, the BCA has been estimated to be approximately 10:1 over a 20 year period. Sounds like a good investment, but like any economic model, you need to understand the fine print of the underlying assumptions.

Interestingly, the Productivity Commission recently undertook a review of the RDC funding model and concluded that if the calculated returns are indeed this good, then the private sector should be willing to stump up the cash and the Federal Government should reduce its funds accordingly.

In simple terms, the benefits from investing in R&D are either the creation of innovation and/or risk mitigation – with these benefits not being mutually exclusive.

Measuring the benefits of innovation can be relatively easier after the fact, although it can be difficult to unpack all the contributing factors as change is rarely driven by one simple eureka moment. Trying to assess the worthiness of innovation before its adoption is difficult as someone's good idea is another person's 'blue-sky.'

Measuring the benefits of risk mitigation also has its difficulties as it requires consideration of the counterfactual ('what would have happened if...'). While some R&D should be viewed as an insurance policy, the effective pricing is limited by a lack of actuarial data; for example, what is the probability of a biosecurity event occurring?

As any venture capitalist will confirm, the investment dollars are always available if you can deliver the perfect pitch. This brings us back to the question of whether the funding shortage is a cause or an effect.

Governments often use industry co-investment as a means of cost sharing and as a proxy for the importance of the R&D.

In recent years, many researchers have developed a narrow disciplinary focus and are unable to articulate the benefits from their activities to industry or, even worse, have developed a reputation of playing the 'Chicken Little' line one time too often.

On the flip side, industry and government leaders have insufficient time or inclination to engage in the research findings (or proposals), or they are only interested in R&D that will solve their problems of today – but this would more appropriately be described as technology trouble shooting rather than R&D.

By its nature, R&D investment is a long term endeavour, and more commonly incremental, building upon the results and findings of previous endeavours. The perceived failure of R&D to solve today's immediate problems only reinforces the view that longer R&D investments don't pay off.

In going forward, the challenge is twofold: industry executives need to think about the appropriate level of investment in R&D for both innovation and risk mitigation; and R&D providers need to engage with industry more closely to help identify and solve the problems of tomorrow.

The national research, development and extension (RD&E) strategy for the forest and wood products sector is part of an

industry-government initiative to consider the future. This will include attempts to answer what are the research priorities, what is an appropriate level of funding and what are the organisational structures that can deliver R&D for the sector. This is not an easy task, but it is fundamental to rebuilding the business case for R&D in the sector.

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**Ric Sinclair**

*Managing Director, Forest and Wood Products Australia Limited*

## News from Guyana

In my last report (CFA Newsletter number 55, December 2011, page 7) I noted that discussion had been re-opened on the failed log export policy which came into effect in January 2009. All national policies favour in-country processing, but exports of unprocessed logs were 37 per cent of total log production during the period 2009 – September 2011. Three prime timbers for flooring and furniture comprised over 66 per cent of the total of 253,000 m<sup>3</sup> of logs of 89 species, all gone to China and India for value-addition. The top six species make up over 75 per cent, and the top twenty timbers made up over 97 per cent, of the exported volume, so the remaining 69 timbers comprised less than 3 per cent of the total exported. The claim by the big log exporters that they have to export prime timbers in order to persuade the market to accept lesser used species is thus not correct. And those big log exporters also hold foreign direct investment tax concessions for processing in Guyana and so should not be exporting logs anyway.

I have just shown that log exporting is indeed hugely profitable<sup>1</sup>. Exactly who is making the big money is difficult to estimate because of secrecy over shipping costs and doubts about the accuracy of Customs declarations and bills of lading. Documentation to circumvent or defraud the US Lacey Act controls against import of illegally produced timber, and next year's European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR), is easily purchased

in Guyana; as in Peru<sup>2</sup>. New or tighter regulations by the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) and the Customs and Trade Administration of the Guyana Revenue Authority involve only partly-computerised bureaucracy mixed with hand-completed and typed forms. The additional formalities add almost nothing to international security or the prevention of illegal logging and trade but do expand opportunities for petty corruption. For legitimate traders, these formalities add unpredictable time for document processing before shipment, plus the time and cost to make missing government staff 're-appear' to give their signatures to documents. Operators and shippers known to be close to the apex of power in government are not subject to checks by junior government staff.

In addition to the Efeca study on the defective Guyana Legality Assurance System in May 2011, GFA Consulting Group carried out a scoping mission<sup>3</sup> on the GFC proposal for independent forest monitoring (IFM). This mission was restricted by the TORs being a sub-set of those proposed by Global Witness in 2005<sup>4</sup>. GFA failed to notice that the GFC was imposing

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2012/features/in-the-diaspora/02/06/the-rule-of-law-%e2%80%93-what-guyana-loses-through-export-of-timber-logs-to-asia/>

<sup>2</sup> Sears, R.R., and M. Pinedo-Vasquez. 2011. Forest Policy Reform and the Organization of Logging in Peruvian Amazonia. *Development and Change* 42(2): 609–631.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Independent\\_Forest\\_Monitoring\\_in\\_Guyana\\_Scoping\\_Report.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Independent_Forest_Monitoring_in_Guyana_Scoping_Report.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Ensuring/docs/ifm\\_tool\\_english.pdf](http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Ensuring/docs/ifm_tool_english.pdf)

penalties on forest producers which greatly exceed the legal limit allowed by the Forests Act 1953/1997 for minor administrative mistakes. GFA also failed to notice that the GFC was sometimes making reference to the Forests Act 2009 which for legal reasons is not yet law (and should not become valid law, being a highly defective item of legislation, especially by giving the GFC large discretionary powers for making administrative decisions with no guiding criteria and no appeals process). As the GFC fails to prosecute any alleged forest offences in open court, the defendants cannot challenge the GFC through legal cross-examination. GFA did notice that the GFC was applying laws and regulations selectively, with the GFC explaining that it had 'policy directives' to exempt (politically favoured) clients from application of law. Exactly who provided these 'policy directives', with what legal authority to circumvent law, was left unstated.

Similar problems are linked to the new 65-page GFC Code of Practice for Wood Processing Facilities for Guyana (Sawmills and Lumberyards, January 2012)<sup>5</sup>. This Code has been developed since 2008 with funds from the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and technical support from the US Forest Service. The long consultation period extends until the end of February 2012. The Code is generally written clearly but is remarkably directive even in matters which are essentially commercial and technical decisions for the private sector millers and yard operators. It is sometimes unclear how this Code relates to the normative mandate of the GFC, given the near-absence of direct references to legislation and national policies.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_for\\_Wood\\_Processing\\_Ver\\_2.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Code_of_Practice_for_Wood_Processing_Ver_2.pdf) and [http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Reference\\_Guide\\_for\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_for\\_Wood\\_Processing\\_Ver\\_2.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Reference_Guide_for_Code_of_Practice_for_Wood_Processing_Ver_2.pdf)

More worryingly, the introduction<sup>6</sup> states that 'It is the intention that all sawmilling and lumberyard operations will show progress towards compliance to this document which will be legally binding for all new operations, whilst selected elements will be made mandatory for existing licensees with full implementation within a stated time frames'. Reasonable objections to such government intervention in commercial decisions include:

1. no parallel process to prevent or discourage effectively the current export of prime commercial timbers for processing overseas;
2. a justified belief that this bureaucracy will be applied selectively and not equitably;
3. the failure of the government investment support body (GO-Invest) to implement equitably its claimed industry support programme for the forest sector, such that politically favoured enterprises receive support and others do not;
4. in spite of the long period of development, there are incoherences in the Code. For example, if one aim is to foster the best practices 'that will realize the maximum value from processing logs', it is unclear why profiled lumber (dressed planks) must be cut in one-foot lengths (section 5.6, page 47). There is no evidence that the consumer or end user is so precise and anyway page 11 has extolled the use of random lengths and widths.

**Janette Bulkan**

*CFA Governing Council*

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Introduction\\_of\\_the\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_for\\_Wood\\_Processing\\_for\\_Guyana.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Introduction_of_the_Code_of_Practice_for_Wood_Processing_for_Guyana.pdf)

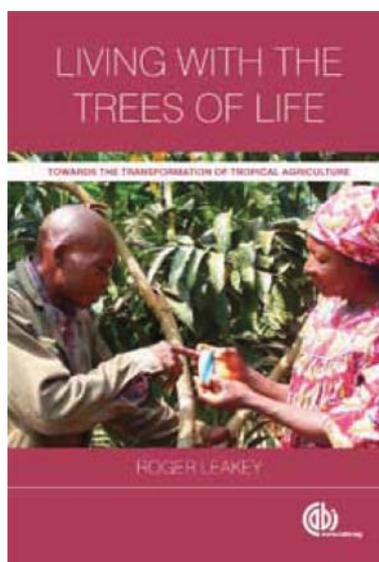
## Publications

### Living with the Trees of Life

#### **Towards the Transformation of Tropical Agriculture**

**Roger Leakey**, James Cook University, Cairns, Australia

Based on the career of Roger Leakey, the former Director of Research at the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry, this book presents the experiences of real life situations in rural villages of remote and distant places. Living with the Trees of Life demonstrates how the multi-disciplinary science of agroforestry, which embraces biology, genetics, ecology, agronomy, horticulture, forestry, soil science, food science,



and the social sciences, can offer hope from the doom and gloom often emanating from the tropics. Written in an accessible and engaging style that will appeal to both a professional and general readership, this book takes a more positive approach to the issues facing agriculture and highlights an innovative approach to resolving the big issues of poverty, malnutrition, hunger and environmental degradation including climate change.

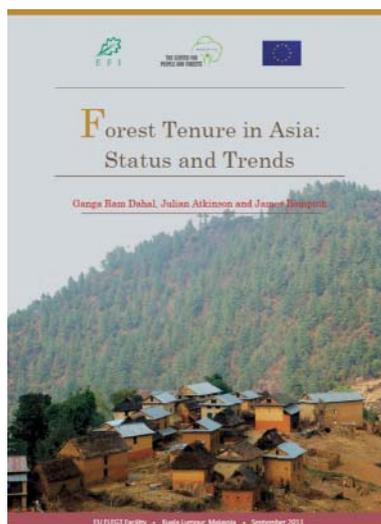
**July 2012 / c.200 pages / HB / 978 1 78064 099 0 £49.95 / US\$99.95 / €60**

**July 2012 / c.200 pages / PB / 978 1 78064 098 3 £25 / US\$47.50 / €32.50**

# Forest tenure in Asia: status and trends

**Ganga Ram Dabam, Julia Atkinson and James Bampton**, RECOFTC

While Asia's rapid growth has lifted millions out of poverty, persistent pockets still remain in areas beyond the embrace of development. Some 450 million people in Asia-Pacific live in and around forests, depending on them for subsistence, shelter and a way of life, which has been indigenous to their societies for generations. However, their status remains largely unacknowledged as governments retain administrative control over two-thirds



of forestland in Asia. This publication finds that lack of political will and a strong preference for the expansion of industrial concessions (both for logging natural forests and agro-industrial plantations) and protected areas are limiting the scope of forest tenure reform in some countries, emphasizing that tenure security is a strong incentive that motivates the protection or destruction of forests.

The report can be downloaded from the RECOFTC website at [www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Forest-Tenure-in-Asia-Status-and-Trends.php](http://www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Forest-Tenure-in-Asia-Status-and-Trends.php)

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## Review

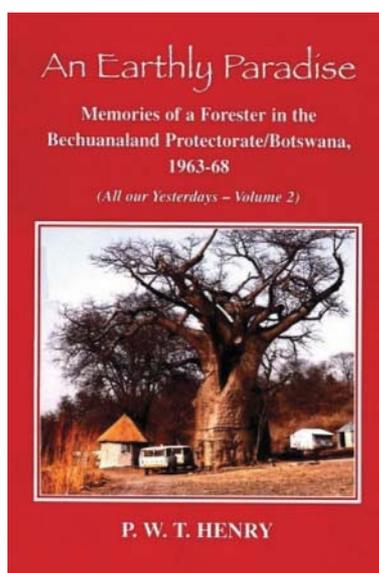
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### An Earthly Paradise: Memories of a forester in the Bechuanaland Protectorate/Botswana, 1963–68 (All our yesterdays Volume 2)

**PWT Henry**

ISBN 978-0-9565901-1-4. 114 pages.  
Published by the author, 2011 and available from PWT Henry, Tre-Athan, 79, Newton-Nottage Road, Porthcawl, CF36 5RR, UK  
Price GBP 8.00

Volume 1 of Mr Henry's forestry memories covered his first posting overseas and described some of his experiences in western Nigeria where he served from 1950 to 1962, covering the period before and after independence. The author's second book is devoted to his next overseas posting from 1963–68 – to "the earthly paradise" of the protectorate of Bechuanaland, later the nation of Botswana. As in Nigeria his service covers the pre- and post-colonial periods. Indeed, his five years coincide with a number of momentous happenings in southern Africa starting with Prime Minister MacMillan's seminal "wind of change" speech in the Union of South Africa in 1960, Nelson Mandela's imprisonment in 1963 and the declaration of UDI in Rhodesia in 1965. Solidarity among the countries still under white minority control was still firmly in place and, as an official,



the author is occasionally caught up in, for example, moves to prevent terrorists/"refugees" passing to and from the independent African countries to the north. The British South Africa Police still carried that name and were active throughout the region. By contrast, the author later acts as an official in national elections in independent Botswana.

For the whole of his service in the country Mr Henry was posted to the paradise of the book's title, Kasane in Chobe District. He obviously enjoyed the time he spent on vegetation surveys, (indeed an valuable part of the book is his enumeration report on Chobe District, included as an appendix). As with his first book this one offers a personal archive of social conditions and land use management at a crucial time in African history. The author's day to day experiences

(he was the sole professionally qualified forester in the country for much of the time) show him as a Colonial official quietly getting on with his job. His frequent confrontations with big game animals add a note of excitement and he also includes many graphic character sketches of the people he met and worked with, officials, locals, settlers, expatriates. The story also

gives an interesting sidelight on changing colonial forest policy. Thus, it starts by addressing the need for a permanent estate of government-owned forest reserves, develops a programme of plantations for production of fuel wood (mostly of eucalypts) and seeks to reconcile competing land uses, not least increasingly well-funded conservation and tourism.

Increasing national wealth derived from diamond mining affected all aspects of government and before his retirement the author played a key role in preparing an up to date forest policy for Botswana and ensured that his successor was experienced and well trained. One is left feeling that he, like foresters in many other parts of the world, could not always convince politicians of the importance of forests to the nation. But his

time in Botswana ends shortly after independence, and he admits to having hoped for another tour of duty.

The book is a handsome slim paperback, sporting a colour picture of a fine Baobab tree on the front cover. It contains four maps and plans, 32 of the author's monochrome snapshots and 15 colour pictures. There is a short bibliography of nine references (though not all text references seem to be included in the bibliography) and a worthwhile four page index.

**Peter Wood**

*Vice President, CFA*

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## Around the World

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### Australia: Tas premier rejects Mansell forestry plan

A plan hatched by Aboriginal activist Michael Mansell and logging groups for indigenous ownership of Tasmania's protected forests has been rejected by Premier Lara Giddings. Mr Mansell dramatically entered the state's forestry debate on Thursday, saying he has a verbal agreement with Forestry Tasmania (FT) and the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (FIAT) for areas to be protected under the industry's peace deal to be owned by an Aboriginal land council.

The revelation of an unsigned memorandum of understanding between the strange bedfellows immediately drew suspicion from Greens leader Bob Brown, while Ms Giddings said the fragile intergovernmental agreement (IGA) on forestry could be derailed. "We're not interested in alternative ways of dealing with these issues," Ms Giddings said. "At the moment we want to remain focused on the IGA. Those forestry workers who are suffering as we speak, they don't want us derailed onto other issues at this point when we need to keep very much focused on the future of the forestry industry and reserves."

Under Mr Mansell's plan, the land council would own the protected forests and receive \$7 million from the federal government to manage them. That money would be spent creating jobs for Aboriginal people and on hiring expertise from an organisation like Forestry Tasmania. Senator Brown said the plan was designed to keep Forestry Tasmania in control of the forests, which environmentalists want managed as national parks.

"What I think is pretty cruel about this is it has covertly tried to enlist the Aboriginal community," Senator Brown said. Mr

Mansell said he still needed to speak with environmental groups and it was time Aboriginal groups became part of the IGA process. "This is a win-win for everybody," he said. "If the federal government thinks they are going to settle the forest dispute with an IGA, I think it's not going to work. I think they need a new dimension and I think we're it."

FT and FIAT confirmed they had been in discussions with Mr Mansell but both were at pains to point out the move would need government support. FT managing director Bob Gordon denied the document was designed to undermine the IGA. "It is in fact an acknowledgement that Forestry Tasmania expects that there will be further reserves," he said in a statement.

Mr Mansell said he wasn't being used by the industry, but conceded there was something in the deal for them. "I think it gives credibility to an industry that has exploited the timber," he said. "Obviously it would promote their brand nationally and internationally."

The move came a day after an independent report recommending which forests be protected was handed to government. Ms Giddings said mediator Bill Kelty had been approached to return to the IGA process. "We're all tired of the war in the forests," she said. "We're talking about a 30-year dispute here and all we're asking for is a few more months to be able to come to a resolution."

[ninemsn.com.au](http://ninemsn.com.au)

## USA: Rival birds could be killed under spotted owl rescue plan

The Obama administration is going forward with a plan to protect the endangered northern spotted owl that includes removing or killing rival barred owls. In its latest attempt to save the imperiled owl, the Department of the Interior plan would designate habitat considered critical in Washington, Oregon and California. It would allow logging in the areas to reduce the risk of forest fires and to create jobs.

The spotted owl has seen its numbers decline about 40 percent in 25 years. The greatest threats to the species are habitat loss and competition from barred owls, which are extending their range westward from the eastern half of the United States and Canada.

The draft plan is “a science-based approach to forestry that restores the health of our lands and wildlife and supports jobs and revenue for local communities,” Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said in a statement this week. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering “combinations of both lethal and non-lethal” methods to remove the barred owl, the statement said. They include capturing and relocating them or placing them in permanent captivity.

The spotted owl was designated as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 1990. The move led to logging

cutbacks on national forests and other federal lands in western Washington, Oregon and California.

Salazar’s announcement was accompanied by a presidential memorandum that calls on the Department of the Interior to direct forest industries on how logging can be carried out in habitat areas, while at the same time preserving the largest possible areas from loggers.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is under a court order to redesignate critical habitat by November 15. The public comment period lasts for 90 days. The Washington Forest Protection Association, an industry group, said it backed the Service’s taking seriously the impact of the barred owl on the spotted owl’s survival and the need for hands-on forest management.

But the current proposal would take 1.27 million acres of forest out of production, representing more than 15,000 jobs across the three states, the association said in a statement. “With the presence of the barred owl, scientists say that setting aside even more land will do little to help the spotted owl thrive, and may make matters worse by making even more room for the barred owl to flourish,” said Mark Doumit, the association’s executive director.

reuters.com

## Brazil: GEF grant to help Brazil protect an additional 13.5 million hectares in the Amazon

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved today a US\$ 15.9 million Global Environment Facility grant for the Second Phase of the Amazon Region Protected Area Program, to be implemented by the Government of Brazil and the World Bank. Thirteen and a half million hectares of additional new protected areas will be created in the next four years. According to the World Bank, the grant will also help consolidate 32 million hectares of existing areas.

With an area of 4.1 million km<sup>2</sup>, the Brazilian Amazon is the largest continuous rainforest in the world, providing essential global environmental benefits, specifically in terms of biodiversity, carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation. It is also home to 24 million people, who have lower than average income and live in less urbanized conditions than the rest of the country.

Due to Brazil’s clean energy matrix, carbon emissions from land use change and deforestation represent 45 percent of the

country’s total annual emissions. Multiple strategies have been implemented to counter the destruction of the forest and the establishment of protected areas has proved to be a very efficient one.

During its first phase, the ARPA Program created 24 million hectares of protected areas and consolidated 8.5 million hectares. It is estimated that the recent expansion of protected areas in the Brazilian Amazon reduced the region’s deforestation by 37 percent between 2004 and 2006.

A recent study by the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Amazon Environmental Research Institute and World Wildlife Fund estimates that 13 protected areas created under ARPA from 2003 to 2007 will contribute to offset greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 430 million tons of carbon by 2050.

finchannel.com

## Tanzania: Researchers to study Rondo forest species

The government is planning to dispatch researchers to study the effects of *Maesopsis eminii*, the invasive plant species threatening to turn extinct East Africa's biggest coastal forest located in Lindi Region. The study would help to solve the spread of the invasive species from Rondo forest reserve to other areas with similar geographical features.

Director of Forestry and Beekeeping in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism Dr Felician Kilahama told The Guardian in an exclusive interview that the invasive species was introduced in the reserves long time ago from Bukoba and Uganda to breed an alternative species instead of relying on only a few strains. Apparently poor management of the species allowed their turning into killers of the natural forest, he said.

"Due to the vagaries of nature, scientists believe that in forestry, it is necessary to have several types of species, rather than relying on a single species, but the problem I see here is that there was poor management of the species," Dr Kilahama said. The government's decision comes few days after this paper reported on the swift mushrooming of the invasive plant species following a survey in the area with Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) researchers through a project known as Forest Justice in Tanzania.

Dr Dos Santos Silayo, senior lecturer, Department of Forest Engineering, Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), said intentional introduction of alien plants in Tanzania is not a new phenomenon. He cited the case of East Usambara Mountains where he said the activity can be traced back to the early 1890's, when a small botanical garden was opened at Amani.

The botanical garden became the basis of the 'Biological-Agricultural Institute of Amani', which was formally established in 1902, he said. During this period, many exotic trees and crops were introduced to Amani by Germans, who were interested in the area's economic development; especially in the export of agricultural goods to their country, he said. The Royal Botanic

Garden of Berlin provided 859 specimens of commercially important tropical plants to Amani Botanical Garden, he said.

Dr Silayo, who has conducted a number of researches in areas of forest operations management, bio-energy, climate change and REDD, said that there is no shortcut solution to the problem due to the character of the species itself. "For example, the plant produces many seeds which can remain dormant in the soil for a few months, making control difficult. Seedlings are shade tolerant so can grow in undisturbed forest making it difficult to eradicate," he said. However, he suggested that trees may be killed using chemicals (herbicides), although no control methods have been outlined.

Any attempt to eradicate a tree should be taken with care because it may lead to more opening of forests which may fuel re-occupation by the same species. The most efficient way is to exercise natural control by avoiding opening up of forests especially through intensive harvesting for timber and fuel wood. Commenting on the budget, Dr Kilahama admitted that it is not sufficient to manage the forest activities, adding that the situation does not only affect the forestry sector.

"The government is aware of the problem that is why it has increased the forestry department budget from the previous 8bn/- to 26bn/- this financial year," he said, adding: "I am very optimistic that with the increase, the Tanzania Forest Service has a big opportunity to improve management of the sector," he said.

On participation of communities living near the forest reserves, he said, the government would want to see their full participation in protection and conservation activities, saying it was one of the areas to be addressed by TFS. The invasive species have dominated part of the central portion of the forest reserve, engulfing about 90 percent of it and expanding to either side of the forest.

ippmedia.com

## Canada: Soaring B.C. raw log exports to China raw deal for forestry workers

Great news for B.C.'s forests industry, according to the provincial government: softwood lumber exports to China last year were up 60 per cent. Bad news for B.C.'s forestry workers: the provincial government's gushing press release fails to mention that raw log exports to China were up 160 per cent.

More than 70 B.C. mills have closed since 2000. Some 10,000 permanent forests industry jobs have vanished since 1996. For every job opening in the B.C. forests industry, there are 34 unemployed people, compared to four unemployed people for every opening across all B.C. job sectors, BC Stats reports. "Our sales to China continue to be phenomenal and a testament to the enormous amount of hard work that has gone into developing the market for wood in China," crows Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation, in the press release.

Softwood lumber exports to China topped \$1 billion last year for the first time, the press release says in its first line. What's missing is the fact that the same BC Stats report from which the lumber figures are drawn reveals log exports to China last year were \$305 million, far more than double the \$118 million from 2010. "If we think that our economic future lies in a foot race to China with the lowest-added-value product that we can ship, we're playing a fool's game," says forestry researcher Ben Parfitt of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. "We could be shipping far higher-value products to China. There's actually market demand in China. If we get somewhat more sophisticated about what we choose to manufacture, we can participate in that market."

This province's captains of industry, of course, are no fools. In the third quarter of last year, the most recent for which data

have been released, raw log sales revenue for Western Forest Products skyrocketed 98 per cent over the same period in 2010, with a 68 per cent increase in volume of logs sold. However, Vancouver wood-industry consultant Peter Woodbridge believes raw log exports will plummet over the next five to 10 years, as trade relationships strengthen between B.C. and China. The massive growth in softwood lumber exports to China represents a foot in the door, Woodbridge says. "We can wean them onto our value-added products. We're better at that sawmilling business than they are."

That may be, but when an industry makes more than \$300 million a year selling a product that requires relatively little infrastructure to produce, there's a strong incentive to continue selling it. The companies make the money, China gets the jobs. It's win-win for the trading partners, and lose-lose for out-of-work British Columbians and the rest of us paying through Employment Insurance for the disappearance of their jobs.

theprovince.com

## Chile: Forest fires in Chile stoke tensions over indigenous land rights

**E**scalating tensions between the Mapuche people and Chile's government following a spate of devastating forest fires reveal the high cost of policies that champion multinational corporations by subordinating environmental protection to market growth. The fires have thrown into stark relief the consequences of a strategy that has made Chile a rising star in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, yet has made few concessions to indigenous rights and remains deaf to warnings about forestry practices.

The OECD – which is seeking to expand its reach in Latin America and sees Chile as a model for Brazil's potential membership – has itself come under pressure to develop more rigorous guidelines on how multinationals should behave towards indigenous peoples. Relations between Chile's government and the Mapuche worsened dramatically after ministers suggested indigenous activists were behind the fires that ravaged about 500 sq km of commercial forestry and parkland in the country this month. The fires damaged commercial tree plantations in the regions of Bío Bío and La Araucanía and parts of Chile's foremost tourist attraction, the Torres del Paine national park in Patagonia. One blaze near Carahue, south of Santiago, claimed the lives of seven firefighters.

Chile's president Sebastián Piñera caused outrage among NGOs and social groups by invoking anti-terrorism laws to pursue the arsonists he claimed were responsible, reviving their controversial use against the Mapuche – who have resorted to increasingly desperate tactics in a long struggle to recover ancestral lands from forestry companies. A declaration by Chilean NGOs and leaders of social groups expressed outrage at the use of anti-terror laws and said the fires called into serious question the industrial monocrop cultivation employed by forestry companies. Legal scholars have argued that the misguided prosecution of the Mapuche under anti-terror legislation has significantly eroded the rule of law in the country. Mapuche activists blame the fires on the introduction by forestry companies of non-native eucalyptus and pine, which have worsened the seasonal drought.

Alfredo Seguel of the Konapewman Mapuche Association wrote on the Servindi blog that the fires coincided with a serious infestation of the Sirex wood wasp. It releases a toxin that kills

pine, which the forestry industry had been trying in vain to keep under wraps to avoid rattling overseas markets. The introduction of non-native species is a major threat to biodiversity in Latin America, and disease has been a key limiting factor in the cultivation of other plantation crops. Seguel suggested that it was no coincidence the fires had occurred where the Sirex infestation is most severe and "even if there is no collusion, should alert insurance companies about how the disaster benefits the timber companies so that they and any decent public authority investigate".

Commercial forestry – which today controls 3m hectares cultivated with non-native exotics – has been at the heart of the model of diversifying exports in Chile, originally fashioned by Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship. The industry has driven state efforts to nurture the emergence of the country's own multinationals and is among the principal reasons why Chile was welcomed into the OECD fold. Pinochet opened indigenous lands to privatisation, unleashing a bitter dispute between the 600,000-strong Mapuche and the state. The failure to resolve this exposes a blind spot in the country's redemocratisation.

To tick the OECD's boxes, Chile's government made environmental regulation the centrepiece of key reforms that responded to the organisation's agenda. As early as 2005 the OECD itself was warning Chile that little attention had been given to the environmental impact of tree planting and the risk this posed of epidemics. Despite significant reform, Chile's environmental regime has been criticised for remaining disproportionately pro-market (pdf) by contrast with other countries.

The OECD itself has come under pressure to beef up protections for indigenous people. Last year James Anaya, the UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, called on it to issue more specific guidance on indigenous rights for multinational corporations.

Updated OECD guidelines now say enterprises may need to consider applying additional standards to respect human rights when dealing with groups such as indigenous people, commit multinationals to ensuring such stakeholders are included in decision-making that affects their communities, and reiterate International Labour Organisation recommendations on equal opportunities. However, these remain far from amounting to

the comprehensive policies on indigenous peoples articulated by development bodies such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

Marie-France Houde, senior economist in the OECD investment division, told the Guardian: “We have now turned our attention to the implementation of the revised guidelines, which is expected to include some further work on the engagement with stakeholders, including indigenous peoples.”

There are good reasons for Chile to resolve its disputes with the Mapuche. Global warming will have a major impact on the austral forests, and climate change negotiations have emphasised the need to strengthen the rights of indigenous forest dwellers and clarify who possesses the rights to forest carbon.

[guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk)

## China: 300M year-old forest unearthed

**R**esearchers have discovered a 300-million-year-old tropical forest, which was preserved in ash when a volcano erupted in what is today northern China. University of Pennsylvania paleobotanist Hermann Pfefferkorn and colleagues presented a reconstruction of this fossilized forest, lending insight into the ecology and climate of its time. Pfefferkorn, a professor in Penn’s Department of Earth and Environmental Science, collaborated on the work with three Chinese colleagues: Jun Wang of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Yi Zhang of Shenyang Normal University and Zhuo Feng of Yunnan University.

The study site, located near Wuda, China, is unique as it gives a snapshot of a moment in time. Because volcanic ash covered a large expanse of forest over the course of only a few days, the plants were preserved as they fell, in many cases in the exact locations where they grew. “It’s marvelously preserved. We can stand there and find a branch with the leaves attached, and then we find the next branch and the next branch and the next branch. And then we find the stump from the same tree. That’s really exciting,” said Pfefferkorn.

Due to nearby coal mining activities unearthing large tracts of rock, the size of the researchers’ study plots is also unusual.

They were able to examine a total of 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> of the ash layer in three different sites located near one another—an area considered large enough to meaningfully characterize the local paleoecology. The fact that the coal beds exist is a legacy of the ancient forests, which were peat-depositing tropical forests. The peat beds, pressurized over time, transformed into the coal deposits.

The scientists were able to date the ash layer to approximately 298 million years ago. That falls at the beginning of a geologic period called the Permian, during which Earth’s continental plates were still moving toward each other to form the supercontinent Pangea. North America and Europe were fused together, and China existed as two smaller continents. All overlapped the equator and thus had tropical climates. At that time, Earth’s climate was comparable to what it is today, making it of interest to researchers like Pfefferkorn who look at ancient climate patterns to help understand contemporary climate variations.

[zeenews.india.com](http://zeenews.india.com)

## Europe: EU seeks tighter CO<sub>2</sub> grip on farms, forests -draft

**T**he EU forestry and farming sectors will have to monitor and report from 2013 changes to land use that could affect greenhouse gas emissions, as part of the bloc’s measures to curb climate change, under a draft law seen by Reuters. The proposal, expected to be published officially next week, does not go as far as setting firm targets for limiting land-use change.

EU farmers voiced major concerns about the plan, while environmentalists said it would be a step in the right direction, especially because it did not rely on the European Union’s Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) to tackle greenhouse gases generated by land-use change. Years of talks within the European Union and at international climate change conferences have struggled to deliver detail on how to protect forested land, which is valued as a sink for carbon emissions.

The EU needs to prevent loss of forests as part of its commitments to the U.N. process on tackling climate change. It also

has an overall goal of cutting carbon by 20 percent by 2020. One of the EU’s prime tools for tackling emissions from industry and power generation is the ETS, and the bloc had debated whether land use, land use change and forestry (known by the acronym LULUCF) should be covered by the scheme.

Instead, the draft proposes that member states draw up accounts on afforestation, reforestation, deforestation, forest management, crop land management and grazing land management connected to carbon, methane and nitrous oxide emissions. Member states are also required to submit action plans to limit or reduce emissions, and the Commission may issue recommendations “with a view to enhance member states’ efforts”. “Member states shall take due account of the Commission’s findings,” it adds.

Non-governmental organisation FERN, which tracks EU policies especially on forests, welcomed the “stand-alone” approach. “It’s much better than a link to the ETS, which was set

up to deal with fossil fuel. Its accounting requirements, therefore, would never have been suitable,” said Jutta Kill, carbon trading and climate change campaigner at FERN. As a “one-way road”, fossil fuels, which only generate carbon, required very different rules from the “two-way road” of land and forestry, which absorb as well as add to emissions, she said.

Kill said the EU plans went further than the U.N.’s accounting rules by focusing on concrete action. New Zealand, for instance, has gone as far as setting firm targets in its attempts to control changes to forest land, although analysts have said it remains to be seen whether this has done anything beyond generating windfall profits for the plantation sector.

The EU agricultural lobby Copa-Cogeca took the uncertainties surrounding land-use carbon accounting as an argument

against the EU plan. “Copa-Cogeca has major concerns about the proposal. In particular, accounting for forest and agricultural soils should all remain voluntary due to the significant uncertainties linked to monitoring,” it said in a statement.

Europe’s paper and pulp sector, which had a turnover of 80 billion euros (\$106 billion) in 2010, described the draft Commission proposal as a positive first step. “It’s good that there will be mandatory forestry accounting,” said Marco Mensink, deputy director general of the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI). The second step is the member states action plans. We will closely follow these as it is the plans that will impact our sector.”

**Reuters.com**

## India: Tribal districts show heavy forest degradation

India’s forest cover decreased by 367 square kilometers between 2007 and 2009, and it was primarily tribal and hilly regions that were to blame, according to the biennial forest survey released last week by the Ministry of Environment and Forest. The report showed some areas of progress. Among the 15 states that increased their forest cover in the period are Orissa and Rajasthan. In Punjab, the nation’s grain bowl, enhanced plantation activities and an increase in agro-forestry practices contributed to the highest gain in forest cover with 100 square kilometers.

But those gains were outdone by large-scale de-forestation elsewhere. The state that really jumps out in the report is the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, which lost a whopping 281 square kilometers of forest cover, contributing 76.5% of the net decline in forest cover nationally.

The report attributes the drastic loss of forest cover in states such as Andhra Pradesh to harvesting of Eucalyptus trees in forests and felling of trees in encroached areas. After releasing the report, Secretary of Environment and Forests T. Chatterjee said Naxals – left-wing, Maoist militants that are active across several Indian states – are responsible for the felling of trees and heavy deforestation, according to local news reports.

But the forest report itself didn’t specifically single out Naxals. And another top environment ministry official contradicted Mr. Chatterjee, saying Naxals didn’t play a major role in deforestation. “Most of the Naxals from Andhra Pradesh had moved to Chhatisgarh before the period assessed in the report,” said P.J. Dilip Kumar, Director General of Forests in the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Instead, Mr. Kumar said, new

regulations that protect forest-dwellers’ rights may have encouraged more tribal populations to occupy forested areas between 2007 and 2009 and contributed to de-forestation.

The Forest Rights Act of 2006 primarily protects the rights of forest-dwelling communities to occupy land in forests for habitation or cultivation. Many environmentalists have argued that the law facilitates deforestation, while tribal rights activists have argued that it provides necessary protection to traditional forest dwellers. Mr. Kumar attributed 80% of the deforestation to occupation of land near forests and irrigational plantation, while industries and other factors were responsible for 20% of the reduced forest cover.

Tribal districts showed a 679 square kilometer loss in forest cover. Most of the north-eastern Indian states, which have hilly terrain and are inhabited by many tribal groups, showed significant reduction in forest cover. These are areas where shifting cultivation, a practice where plots of fertile land are cultivated and then abandoned, is commonly practiced. The communities clear additional land as they move from one area to the next.

While this year’s forest report paints a dire picture, things could yet improve, authorities say. “The loss in forest cover due to shifting cultivation or even the drastic reduction in the Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh is not permanent,” said A.K. Wahl, Director General of Forest Survey of India. He said some damaged forest areas can recuperate before the next assessment two years from now.

**blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime**

## Indonesia’s moratorium will not significantly reduce emissions, but has other benefits, finds analysis

Indonesia’s moratorium on new forest concessions alone “does not significantly contribute” to its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 26 percent from a projected 2020 baseline, concludes a new analysis by the World Resources Institute (WRI). However the study says the moratorium does support the target in the long-term by

creating a window for enacting governance reform needed to stop destructive business-as-usual approaches to forest management.

“Although there are 43.3 million hectares of primary forests and peat lands and significant carbon stocks within the boundaries of the indicative moratorium map, the questionable status

of secondary forests, the exemption of existing concessions, and the limited enforcement of the moratorium boundaries may result in gains being negated by other land-use emissions,” states the analysis, which was authored by WRI’s Kremen Austin, Stuart Sheppard, and Fred Stolle. “Nonetheless, long-term positive impacts can still be achieved if significant governance reforms are accomplished during the moratorium period.”

Indonesia’s moratorium on new plantations and logging concessions in primary forests areas and peatlands was implemented in May 2011 under its climate action plan, which aims to substantially reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and degradation of peatlands and forests. But the moratorium was substantially weaker than expected, with many exemptions, including a free pass to convert secondary forests and loopholes for mining and energy development. Environmentalists immediately expressed disappointment with the moratorium and raised a number of concerns, some of which are now seconded by the working paper from WRI.

*Indonesia’s moratorium on new forest concessions: key findings and next steps* reports that some “3.5 million ha of primary and peat forests inside the moratorium boundaries are not protected”. Conversion of this land could release 14.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide. It notes that since much of the area covered by the moratorium was already legally conserved, the government’s plan only increases the forest and peatland acreage under protected by 11.3 million ha — 26 percent of the total moratorium area. Another 15.6 million ha of the moratorium area includes secondary forest, which isn’t explicitly protected, potentially putting it in limbo. Finally the report cites research showing that the moratorium isn’t being respected — more than 100 new clearings were detected in off-limits areas during the initiative’s first three months.

Still the working paper finds reason for hope. It says that despite its weaknesses, the moratorium “pauses” some business-as-usual patterns that have destroyed vast tracts of Indonesian forest over the past half-century. Opportunities for improvement during that window include fostering transparency in land use;

governance reform, including processes for allocating forestry permits; strengthening monitoring and law enforcement; boosting coordination between ministries; establishing performance-based metrics; and encouraging a shift toward low carbon development.

“The moratorium creates incentives for increased productivity and the use of low carbon degraded land, rather than forests or peat lands, as a viable alternative for agricultural and forest plantation expansion,” said WRI. “Any agricultural expansion should be confined to those deforested, non-peat lands and implemented in a manner that fully respects the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.”

Already there are signs of change. Last year, Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, head of the Indonesian President’s REDD+ Task Force, said the government would immediately work to implement a decade-old law that requires recognition of adat or customary rights. The effort will include developing a land tenure map so government agencies can better understand how communities are using land and delineating the legal status of the Indonesia’s forest area, which could help keep more forest standings. At the same time, PT SMART announced it will no longer convert land with more than 35 tons of carbon for plantations, becoming the first palm oil major in Indonesia to agree to such restrictions. Finally, WRI and local partners are developing a near-real-time forest monitoring tool that uses satellite imagery to detect deforestation, creating what could become a powerful tool for law enforcement, provided there is sufficient political will to crack down on business-as-usual.

But for all the positives, the question of political will remains critical. To date, the push to break from the business-as-usual course in the forestry sector has been supported by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who has said he wants his legacy to his grandchildren to be Indonesia’s forests. Once SBY leaves office, it’s unknown whether his successor will share his zeal.

**mongabay.com**

## Indonesia: Kalimantan’s forests are doing OK – NGO

**T**he Heart of Borneo is doing well, despite the usual threats from extractive activities and fires, according to environmental activists. The famed forested area spans 22 million hectares in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia on Kalimantan Island, also known as Borneo.

Adam Tomasek, the leader of the Heart of Borneo Initiative, said on Thursday that deforestation and forest degradation remained a serious issue in Indonesia and Kalimantan. “This is not at all to say that the threats from forest conversion, deforestation and forest degradation in the area have disappeared. They are still real threats,” he told *The Jakarta Post* on Thursday. In a recently released report, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Indonesia said that most types of forest in the Heart of Borneo were in good or very good condition, although several areas were under threat from businesses.

Illegal logging, an excessive rate of legal timber extraction, forest fires, mining and excessive wildlife hunting posed

additional threats, the report said. However, Tomasek said that political commitments to conserve and to develop the area in a sustainable way had been made over the past five years, such as by the issuance of Presidential Regulation No. 3/2012 on Spatial Planning in Kalimantan. “It was the first time that the government developed a special plan for the whole of Kalimantan, and not just for one province or district. This was one spatial plan for the entire island,” Tomasek said.

A working group comprising the Coordinating Economic Minister and the Agriculture, Defense, Environment, Foreign, Forestry, Home and Public Works Ministers was given a mandate to realize the Heart of Borneo Declaration, which Indonesia signed in 2007. “With commitments at both the national and district level, we are starting to see that the issue of illegal logging in some parts, but not all parts, of the Heart of Borneo has disappeared,” Tomasek said before adding a somber assessment. “Without provincial and district engagement, I don’t think

we'll see much progress." Under the spatial planning regulation signed on Jan. 5, the government will allocate 45 percent of Kalimantan to serve as the "lungs of the world".

Separately, Indonesian Environmental Forum (Wahli) executive director Berry Nahdian Furqon warned that the spatial regulation might trigger new conflicts due to its centralized approach. "The government did not make a comprehensive study. Neither did it consult with the local people," Berry said, adding that regulation provided no specific information on the government's proposed spatial plans or conservation programs. Moreover, Berry said, many conservation areas in Kalimantan were no longer forested areas. "Only forests in the Meratus mountains in South Kalimantan are still well conserved while the rest have overlapping land use with industrial activities, such as palm oil plantations and mining," he said.

Tomasek said the report analyzed the environmental health of the area by evaluating progress against 13 key targets using more than 50 indicators. "What we found is that the Heart of Borneo is doing quite well," he said. "It's a huge area, very remote, very diverse in terms of its forest types, fresh water ecosystem and peatlands and biodiversity," he said.

The Heart of Borneo comprised some of Kalimantan's best remaining lowland forests, Tomasek said. "The lowland tropical rain forest is extremely important, as it is a biodiverse area where you can find more species per meter than any other ecosystem," he said.

**thejakartapost.com**

## Pacific Islands: Book on forests of Pacific Islands published

**T**he Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) said here Monday that a landmark book on the forests of the Pacific Islands is now available online. The publication, titled "Foundation for a Sustainable Future", was produced by the SPC Land Resources Division (LRD) to commemorate the International Year of Forests in 2011, which can now be viewed at this link: <http://goo.gl/mD6gw>.

It features chapters from SPC member countries and territories and aims to provide information on the value of Pacific Island forests and the issues and challenges faced by island communities in managing this natural resource in a sustainable manner.

According to the SPC, the Pacific forestry book provides description of: forest areas, ownership rights and their management; socio-economic benefits of forests; existing and emerging threats to forests from increasing populations, invasive species

and climate change; a look to the future: balancing competing socio-economic and environmental factors, and sustainable forest management (SFM).

During the book launch at the Regional Forestry Technical Meeting in September 2011 in Fiji's western tourist city of Nadi, the book was described as a concerted effort to inform people of the importance of forests and trees to Pacific Island communities. "In small island states and territories, forests and trees have long been the primary resource from which our people have sought to meet their practical, cultural and spiritual needs for thousands of years," said Kanawi Poutu, Managing Director of the Papua New Guinea Forest Authority, adding "the forests of our island states, regardless of their size and scale, have long been supermarkets for their daily livelihoods."

**english.peopledaily.com.cn**

## Brazil's forests at risk under new proposed law

**J**ust three months before world leaders gather in Rio to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Earth Summit, Brazil's forest laws remain at the centre of a drawn out controversy. The government of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff is trying to get through Congress a new Forest Code which environmental protection organisations have already slammed as a major blow to the country's efforts to halt deforestation.

Now the farming lobby is working to get legislators to water down the text even more. Agriculture Minister Mendes Ribeiro has stressed that, while "it is not perfect," the proposed new code remains "the best possible" right now.

The government is trying to get its allies in the lower house of the Brazilian Congress to support, unchanged, a bill that the Senate already passed in December. However, things do not look easy. The fear of a legislative defeat led Marco Maia, the

speaker of the lower house of the Brazilian Congress, to postpone the vote on the bill, which had originally been scheduled for last Tuesday. He hopes to secure a deal by then.

Legislators of the so-called farming block — which represents the interests of large landowners — are trying to remove from the text the requirement that farmers reforest areas that were illegally destroyed. The government is also facing rebellion from its main ally, the centrist Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), whose legislators recently complained in a manifesto about the "unfair and unequal treatment" they get from Rousseff. Environmental organisations are alarmed about the government-sponsored bill. They say that the proposed new code would lead to an increase in the destruction of the Amazon rainforest and grant an "amnesty" to those who illegally engaged in deforestation.

About 1,000 protesters, a mix of environmental activists and small farmers, gathered in Brasilia last Wednesday to demand that Rousseff veto the new code if it makes it through Congress.

The controversy caught up with UN Under-Secretary General Sha Zukang, responsible for the upcoming UN Conference on Sustainable Development (known as Rio+20), as he visited Brazil last week. Sha is busy organising the summit, which is expected to bring together in Rio the leaders of around 100

countries from June 20-22. "This forest belongs to Brazil. That's very clear. Of course, Brazil is a part of the world," the Chinese diplomat told a press conference on Tuesday. Brazil, whose economy ranks in the world's top ten, is a global leader in climate protection and has committed to drastically reducing its carbon dioxide emissions and reducing deforestation by 80 per cent by 2020.

[main.omanobserver.om](http://main.omanobserver.om)

## Cameroon government cracks down on illegal logging

**T**he government of Cameroon has intensified a crackdown on illegal loggers in a measure aimed at conserving the country's forest resources and combating the effects of climate change. Philip Ngole Ngwese, the country's minister of forestry and wildlife, recently announced the suspension of licenses for 27 companies that had failed to comply with legislation governing activities in the forest sector. "This decision forbids these companies from undertaking activities relating to forest exploitation, transport and export of logs and processed timber products," Ngole Ngwese said in a statement. "The decision is putting some order into forest exploitation in the country, to ensure forest resource sustainability, governance and to protect the environment from the effects of climate change," the statement said.

Illegal logging is seen as contributing to the alarming rate of deforestation in Cameroon, which officials say is making the country increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, in part by contributing to changing rainfall patterns in the region. The west central African nation's forest constitutes a significant portion of the Congo Basin, the world's largest continuous forest ecosystem after the Amazon Basin. Almost half of Cameroon is forested, with woodland stretching through six of the ten regions. But more than 13 percent of Cameroon's forest cover was lost between 1990 and 2005 due to commercial logging, agriculture and the search for fuel, according to the World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

The director of forestry in the forestry and wildlife ministry, Samuel Ebia Ndongo, said it was imperative for the government to take more aggressive action because many companies with timber licenses had refused to respect the law and had engaged in illegal harvesting and other violations. "(Illegal logging) is a contributing factor to deforestation and climate change as well as loss of biodiversity. Illegal logging leads to conflict over land resources, the disempowerment of local and indigenous communities, corruption and armed conflicts as well as results in loss of revenue by the state and the local communities," Ebia Ndongo said.

Environmental experts say that deforestation accounts for as much as 20 percent of the world's annual greenhouse gas emissions and constitutes the largest source of emissions in the developing world. Ebia Ndongo said this was the reason behind a push to include the United Nations programme aimed at Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) in developing countries in any new international agreement on climate change. Ebia Ndongo said that the government had previously set up programmes to combat illegal deforestation and had been at the centre of important initiatives for the long-term management of forests and ecosystems within the Congo Basin.

Under the Central African Forest Commission, a trilateral agreement was established among Cameroon, Gabon and Congo to protect 14.6 million hectares (36 million acres) of forest in the region. Cameroon has also formed the Sangha Tri-National Conservation Area with Congo and the Central African Republic. "All these efforts were geared towards the sustainable management of forests and to fight against climate change," Ebia Ndongo explained. Cameroon has also signed international conventions and agreements related to the protection of forest resources. Under a Voluntary Partnership Agreement for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade signed with the European Union, Cameroon has pledged to remove illegally logged wood from its supply chain to EU countries.

Statistics from the trade and industry ministry show that Cameroon exports 60 percent of its raw timber to China, and 80 percent of its processed timber to EU countries. Despite these measures, abuses in Cameroon's forest exploitation sector have continued unabated, officials said. Jules Pauline Essono, director of Centre de Promotion de Bois, one of the companies which has lost its licence, blamed the sector's poor record on government corruption. "There are lots of administrative bottlenecks, and the procedure of even obtaining a licence is fraught with bribery and discrimination," Essono said.

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