

CFA Newsletter



No.55

December 2011

ISSN 1750-6417

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Around the World

Hands across the Forest: **strengthening the contribution** **of stakeholders to forestry** **development across West Africa**



CFA Newsletter

is the newsletter of the Commonwealth Forestry Association

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The views expressed are not necessarily those of the CFA.

In West Africa, land areas acquired by Government for forest conservation are designated as forest reserves. They are managed by appropriate Government agencies (usually the Forestry Department) on behalf of the public. In most cases, Government's right to manage these forest reserves implies an expropriation of forest-dwelling communities who are the traditional land owners, and whose livelihoods depend on the forests.

Many important decisions on the forests are taken by government officials

without reference to the communities. The communities are even marginalized with respect to resource access. Even though the need for collaborative forest management and community-based natural resource management has been recognised in many West-African countries, the government has continued to exclusively manage the forest estates. Building a virile forestry sector requires active multi-stakeholder participation and contribution, hence, it is necessary to advocate for their involvement in forest management at all levels in Nigerian

forestry sector. This involvement and engagement of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) is critical for establishing a sustainable forestry management framework at the local and national level.

With support from the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) and the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Forestry Association (CFA) in collaboration with the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria organised a three-day workshop in Nigeria between 6th and 8th September, 2011.

The workshop served as a platform for cohesive deliberations between different stakeholders in West-Africa including, representatives from various forestry associations in West Africa, academic scholars from Universities, forestry students, and NGOs.

Objectives

The aim of the workshop was to strengthen the network of forestry associations in West Africa and facilitate their roles in promoting sustainable forest management in the region.

The workshop had the following objectives:

- facilitate a synergy of stakeholders who will set the agenda for networking among forestry associations, civil societies and community-based organisations;
- map out strategies for advocacy that can influence Government policies and foster the adoption of best practices in forest management across West Africa;
- recognise and promote the role of forestry students as the next generation of people who will be driving forward and delivering change in the future; and
- inaugurate a Commonwealth Forestry Association Network, Nigeria.

Participants

The workshop enlisted the participation of academic scholars from different universities, forestry students, and NGOs from Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso. Organizations represented include, the Forests and Forest Products Society (FFPS), Nigeria; Brong Ahafo Research and Education Centre, Ghana; Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); Forestry Associations of Nigeria (FAN); CarbonSink Development Initiatives Nigeria; Department of Forest Resources Management University of Ibadan, Nigeria; Department of Forestry and Wood Technology, Federal University of Technology Akure, Nigeria; Department of Forestry and Wildlife University of Agriculture Makurdi, Nigeria; Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN); International Forestry Students Association (IFSA); Federal Department of Forestry Abuja Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Environment, Abuja Nigeria; and ODEEN Consult, Nigeria.

Overview of sessions

The keynote address was presented by Simon Shomkegh, who described the importance of “*Enhancing the Capacity of NGOs and CBOs for Sustainable Forest Management Advocacy in West Africa*”. He stressed the need for effective collaboration among NGOs and CBOs and their needs for stability in technical and operational capacities because this is critical for the success of *Sustainable Forest Management Advocacy in West Africa*.

He further highlighted recommendations on how to realize the potentials of forests and sustainable forest management for a sustainable development.

After the opening ceremony, the technical sessions featuring paper presentations and discussions took place at the Conference Hall of the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology within the University. Paper titles cut across major issues in relation to the theme of the workshop. Later in the afternoon, participants were divided into three thematic working groups as follows; WG 1: Strategies for influencing Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in West Africa, WG 2: Promotion of the Role of Forestry Students as new generation leaders, WG 3: Promotion of Networking among Forestry Associations in West Africa.

The workshop consisted of paper presentations, working group discussions, and field trips. These were structured to cover three main sub-themes: (i) Strategies for influencing Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in West Africa; (ii) Promotion of the Role of Forestry Students as new generation leaders; and (iii) Promotion of Networking among Forestry Associations in West Africa.

The sub-themes provided a platform for exchanging ideas and information on the current state and future directions of SFM in West Africa.



Field trip

Workshop participants embarked on a field trip to Queen's Plot within Akure Forest Reserve in Ondo State. The Queen's Plot is a Strict Nature Reserve located within a degraded forest reserve. This was held as an integral part of the workshop to further expose the participants to the state of forest reserves and the need for a strengthened network of forestry professionals that will promote and influence community-based forest management. The trip also served as a basis for objective discussions on the fate and challenges of forest management in a West-African context, while fostering a more informal networking and communication among participants.

Final Resolutions:

In conclusion of the workshop, the following resolutions were made towards bolstering the position and roles of Forestry Associations in the forestry sector across West Africa.



We are **convinced** that strategies for advocacy can influence Government Policy and law and thereafter foster the adoption of best practices in Forest Management in West African Countries; promotion of forestry students as the next generation of West Africans who will be driving forward and delivering change in the future; and promotion of Networking among Forestry Associations and allied Associations in West Africa.

We **appreciate** the bold initiatives taken by Forest and Forest Products Society (FFPS); Forestry Associations of Nigeria (FAN); Department of Forest Resources Management, University

of Ibadan, Nigeria; Department of Forestry and Wood Technology, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria; Department of Forestry and Wildlife, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Nigeria; Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN); Carbon Sink Development Initiatives; International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA)-Nigeria; Federal Department of Forestry, Abuja; Federal Ministry of Environment, Abuja, Nigeria; Brong Awaso Research and Education, Centre, Ghana; CIFOR; O'DEEN Consultants, on the vision to position forestry in West Africa as a very relevant profession in knowledge-based societies and in countries with emerging economy.

We **recognize** that our respective Governments are sincerely committed to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals that are aimed at increasing forest estate, forest resources, biodiversity; reducing de-reservation, deforestation; and enhancing the prospects for environmental sustainability.

We **uphold** these laudable goals and renew the commitment of the West African Scientific Community and in particular the forest scientists, researchers and scholars to support our countries in West Africa to meet these initiatives and more specifically those related to achieving environmental sustainability.

We **believe** that we have a very unique opportunity by bridging the dialogue between policy-makers, law makers and the West African scientists to provide the best of our ability reliable sources and authoritative data that could assist decision makers on the best practices that we have objectively and scientifically tested and documented.

Tololupe Daramola
CFA Governing Council

Association news

Would you like to sponsor a young CFA member in 2012?

One of our main objectives is to support the development of the next generation of foresters and we do this mainly through our awards, The Young Forester Award, the Young Scientist Publication Award and the CFA Young Scientist Research Award. However, we also want to encourage young foresters to join us but are aware that this is difficult for some to find the funds to pay for an annual membership. People like Shiva. . .



I am Shiva Pokhrel, a Nepali student of Forestry and Natural Resources Conservation studying at HNBGU Uttarakhand, India. Conservation of natural resources and sustainable development are the need of the present world, so I selected my career in forestry to gain the knowledge that can fulfill this need. I want

to be a member of an organization where I can gain the various knowledge that are taking place in international level. When I opened the link of the CFA I came to know many things about world forest news, youth activities and the different awards that your organization provides. I felt that I wanted to be member of the CFA so that I can link with the people from different part of the world and can share and gain the various knowledge related with forestry.

One of our members has been kind enough to pay for Shiva's membership for three years (£15 per year) which will mean that he will be able to receive the CFA Newsletter, gain access to the International Forestry Review and participate in CFA activities.

If you would like to help support young foresters like Shiva who would like to join the CFA but are unable to for financial reasons then please get in touch with us at cfa@cfa-international.org

CFA supports young Iwokrama staff member to attend training course in the UK



In September of this year I was fortunate enough to receive funding from the CFA to attend the 4th Annual Darwin Scholarship Programme: Monitoring and Communicating Biodiversity organised by the Field Studies Council (FSC) in the UK.

The aims of the workshop were to:

- * Strengthen the exploration and observational competencies of young field scientists
- * Provide a context for field observations; national biodiversity databases & recording
- * Enhance the ability of scientists to communicate with a variety of groups
- * Develop resources and materials to promote exploration and observation

The programme was organised around a variety of lectures, excursions, field trips and workshops. Participants were given many opportunities to share their ideas and expertise with each other. Each evening participants took turns in presentations of their organization and their work.

The course was of tremendous benefit to me as I was exposed to various ways of communicating Biodiversity to different audiences. In my job I am involved in school outreach programmes, exhibitions and media programmes where communicating biodiversity is very important. Also Iwokrama is a model for the world and I would be using my knowledge gained to communicate this in a positive way here locally and on our website internationally. I am also involved with managing maintaining the Archives for Iwokrama. I was exposed to databases where we can record biodiversity information. This is very useful and will be looking into how I record the information on biodiversity we already have in a more details.

As for the monitoring aspect of the programme, I thought I was a bird specialist, until I went to the UK and discovered you have so many birds that I have never seen or heard. I learned also that your mammals are so different from our South American Mammals.

All in all, the international experience was a first for me and it was very enlightening. I want to say a big thank you to CFA for helping me to attend this workshop.

Smantha Joseph

Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development, Guyana

The IFR online moves to Ingenta

Over the past six months we have been working with *Ingenta*, global leaders in online journal publication, to upgrade online access to the IFR and we are pleased to be able to invite you to register for use of the new system.

If you haven't already registered to use our new service then please send an email to cfa@cfa-international.org and we will arrange it for you.

Forest Scenes

Tribute to the late Prof Wangari Maathai

The life and times of the late Prof. Wangari Maathai comprise two major phases. The first is a story of simple village women with whom she planted trees across the country. The second involves leaders of this world who sought counsel and feted her brilliance and commitment in environmental conservation. Born in 1940, Prof Wangari Maathai has achieved a lot in her life.

Her efforts in forest conservation were recognised all over the world culminating to her award of the Nobel Peace prize in 2004, the first ever African woman to receive this honour. In Kenya Prof. Maathai will forever be remembered for the way she solely led the fight for preservation of Nairobi's Uhuru Park when the then government of President Daniel arap Moi wanted to put up a 60-storey building in 1989 on this public open space.



She would later lead a similar fight to protect the excision of the dense Karura Forest, which located along Kiambu Road on the outskirts of Nairobi.

Prof. Maathai had a lot of passion for natural forests and was among the first to visualise the negative effects of environmental degradation in Kenya. One notable quote she used to refer to is, “Nature is so unforgiving, if you destroy nature, it will equally destroy you.” True to her words, Kenya is now experiencing some of the negative effects of climate change due to continued environmental destruction. Prof Maathai used the Green Belt Movement (GBM), which she started in 1977, as the vehicle for tree planting at the grass root level.

The values and virtues of Prof. Wangari Maathai were evident during her burial ceremony. She chose to be cremated in a simple casket made of bamboo and water hyacinth. True to the end, she was against the idea of burying bodies with wooden caskets since this increases the large scale cutting of trees. The funeral ceremony took place in the Freedom Corner at Uhuru Park, a place synonymous with her struggle with the Moi government. The body was later cremated at the Kariokor crematorium. Her remains will be interred in the democratic space of the Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environment (WMI). During her life Prof. Maathai demonstrated how environmental conflicts escalate global conflicts and how wise use of the same can promote World peace. Kenya has witnessed several cases of conflicts arising from natural resource use.

Some of the recent examples are the conflicts in Mau conservation areas and those between pastoralists and farmers in Mai Mahiu, Nakuru County. As a way of contributing to peaceful coexistence among communities, GBM has spearheaded peace

talks focusing on the use of joint forest resources in conflict resolution. The concept has further been developed into WMI, which is a joint venture between the University of Nairobi and GBM.

WMI aims at developing transformative leaders and change agents with a multidisciplinary practical knowledge on resource economy, policy, legal pluralism, community mobilisation skills and appropriate participatory approaches. These are required to assist communities in sustainable utilisation of resources as well as to develop policy and generate research data that would guide integrated environmental management. Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), WMI, University of Nairobi and University of Copenhagen have collaborated in a joint proposal that has received funding from Danida.

The project, called “Stabilising Kenya by solving natural resource conflict” aims at using forestry related issues in Mau conservancy as the springboard to solving community conflicts within the region. The region was severely affected by the 2007 post election violence and so the joint use of innovative natural resources will to promote cohesion among the communities. KEFRI shares in the values of the late Prof Wangari Maathai and through this project will contribute towards sustainable natural resource use and enhanced peace within the area.

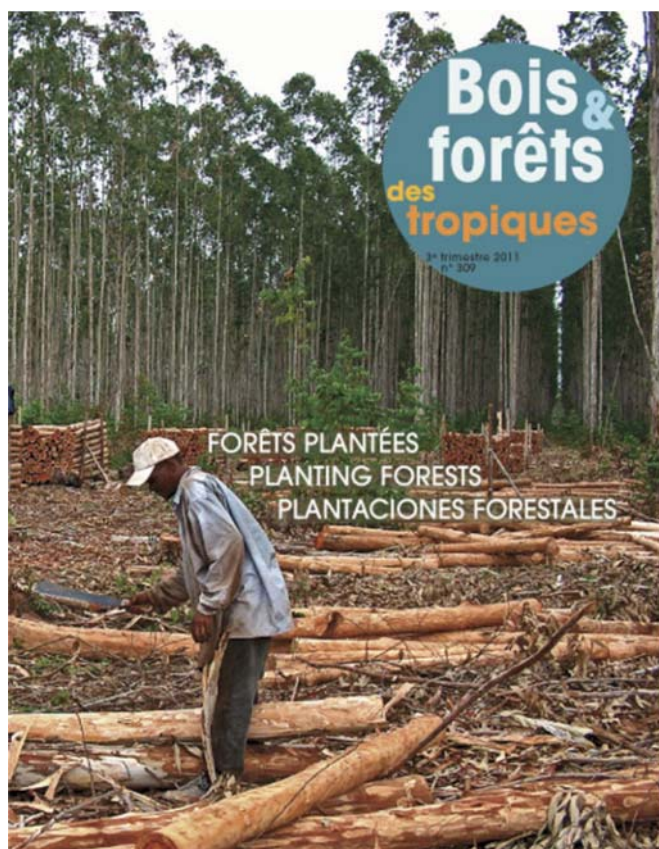
Though Prof Maathai is gone, there are concerted efforts to ensure that her work on environment protection and tree planting continues. One such initiative which was started a day before her cremation calls upon institutions, organisations and individuals to plant 71 trees equivalent to her years and commit to take care of them. The initiative spearheaded by Green Africa Foundation, UNEP and Kenya Forestry Service seeks to ensure that Prof. Wangari’s life that represented Green in totality, will be preserved in three fold; treating people kindly through good ethics, working towards good health, peace and improved livelihood for the community and promoting sound environmental conservation. The initiative that promote establishment of “The Wangari Green Corner (WGC)” which is the area occupied by the 71 trees has received widespread support from many quarters. It is expected that 79,000 individuals and organisations will participate.

This will contribute to increased forest cover in the country, which will in turn mitigate against the effects of climate change and increase biomass resource which is the main energy source for Kenyans, with 5.6 million households using firewood every day. The only way we can honor Prof. Maathai is planting trees and promoting the values she stood for. This will in turn contribute to a better environment, health and livelihoods for communities, in addition to enhanced peaceful coexistence among them. That way we will ensure that her memory lives on and contributes to a better world.

Joram Kagombe, Principal Scientist, Kenya Forestry
Research Institute

Stephen Mwangi, Communications and Public Relations
Officer, Kenya Forestry Research Institute

Bois et Forêts des Tropiques (*Tropical Forests and Forest Products*)



Affectionately known as “BFT”, this renowned French language periodical has been a regular and welcome contributor to wise tropical forestry since its inception in 1947. Indeed it is difficult to imagine world forestry literature today being without it. It is probably closer to our own *International Forestry Review* than to any other leading international journal although it has its own individual character, both multilingual and francophone, uniquely tropics-wide.

The magazine is published quarterly in both hard copy and electronic versions and is entirely devoted to forest sciences in the widest sense in the hot parts of the world. Each issue has invited papers on a major theme as well as original articles on a range of subjects which are written in French, English or Spanish. All papers are accompanied by a summary in all three languages. They cover forests and the forest sector as well as multi-purpose land management, environmental concerns and matters of moment such as climate change.

BFT is produced to the highest standards, extremely well illustrated and carefully and well edited. To any IFR reader who is not familiar with what many consider our “sister” journal I commend a look at their website bft.cirad.fr.

Peter Wood

CFA Vice President & CFA Trustee

News from Guyana

Since the middle of 2011 several documents have been issued on the forest sector in Guyana. The US Agency for International Development distributed in August the report by the Efeca consultancy on the Guyana national Legality Assurance System, undertaken in March¹. The report was officially handed over to the junior Minister for Forestry in October². The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) registered several disagreements with statements in the report but gave few or no reasons for dispute, and has not evidently taken up the re-design offered by Efeca. The GFC has not posted the Efeca report on its website nor engaged in public discussion. The Efeca re-design conforms to the general principles of legality verification systems now being associated with the voluntary partnership agreements of the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan. Adopting the re-design would have allowed the GFC to register real

forward movement on one of the progress indicators in the Norway-Guyana Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of November 2009³.

The GFC issued in June a draft REDD-plus Governance Development Plan⁴ as required by the Norway-Guyana MoU, and a little later issued drafts of revisions⁵ of the National Forest Policy 1997 and the National Forest (action) Plan 2001.

The conversion yield from log to sawn lumber is generally low in Guyana, from both chainsaw milling and unmodernised fixed sawmills. The GFC generally uses a 40 per cent conversion in its statistics. Yields of up to 70 per cent have been demonstrated with mobile, thin-kerf, high-strain bandmills. Tests have shown that taper sawing for grade would give more saleable

¹ <http://www.kaieteurnewsonline.com/2011/03/18/guyana-reviews-system-to-ensure-that-logging-meets-international-standards/>

² http://www.guyanachronicleonline.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33951:forestry-legality-assurance-system-report-handed-over-to-agri-minister&catid=4:top-story&Itemid=8

³ <http://www.lcds.gov.gy/images/stories/Documents/MOU.pdf> and <http://www.lcds.gov.gy/images/stories/Documents/JCN%20March%2031%2c%202011.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.lcds.gov.gy/images/stories/Documents/RGDP%20%20June%202011.pdf>

⁵ http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Guyana's_National_Forest_Policy_Statement_2011.pdf and http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Guyana's_National_Forest_Plan_2011.pdf

and higher value sawnwood volume than the traditional through-and-through sawing. The GFC has not used annual mill licence conditions to force modernization. Instead, it has been giving slide shows of better mill practices and lumber yard standards. Currently, ITTO is funding development of a national standard for best practice in mills and lumber yards⁶, and stakeholder discussions are continuing slowly.

Opposition to change seems to stem from two sources. Firstly, the proposed technical standard is not associated with a fiscal incentive package from the national investment support agency GO-Invest. Secondly, there is justifiable suspicion that the GFC will operate selectively any new regulations, as it does now. Even if there was political will, the ability to over-turn long-standing regulatory capture⁷ (corruption) is limited when the Government admits it but does nothing about it⁸. The suspicion is enhanced when the largest concession holder, the Malaysian-owned Barama with 1.61 million ha, is not held to its vague promises of inward investment, is exempt from or pays only minimal export taxes, and re-negotiation of its special area fees and royalty rates in its 1991 foreign direct investment

arrangement with the Government of Guyana⁹ continues to be in secret. Barama is the only producer of plywood in Guyana, has enjoyed generous FDI tax incentives and lax accounting since 1991¹⁰, and has been reducing its plywood production since 2000 to only 13 per cent of the installed capacity (108,000 m³) in 2010.

There is no space in this quarter's report to cover the re-opening of discussion on the failed log export policy. All policies favour in-country processing, but exports of unprocessed logs were 83 per cent of total log production in the first quarter and 56 per cent for the first half-year in 2011. With only 7 out of 26 long-term large-scale logging concessions in current production, it is not surprising that the construction industry is experiencing a shortage of domestic lumber. Policy is clearly not working when a country with more than 75 per cent cover of natural tropical rainforest and a national forest service for over 85 years restarts imports of lumber.

Janette Bulkan

CFA Governing Council

⁶ http://www.forestry.gov.gy/Downloads/Wood_processing_standards.pdf

⁷ State or regulatory capture occurs when a government regulatory agency which is supposed to be acting in the public interest becomes dominated by the vested interests of the existing incumbents in the industry that it oversees.

⁸ http://www.guyanachronicleonline.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35072:pppc-executive-member-and-campaign-representative-robert-persaud-denounces-opposition-claims-of-corruption&catid=4:top-story&Itemid=8 and <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2011/11/08/pppc-denounces-opposition-claims-of-corruption/>

⁹ http://www.guyanachronicleonline.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=26803:government-mulling-changes-to-baramas-investment-agreement&catid=2:news&Itemid=3 and http://www.guyanachronicleonline.com/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=34921:barama-lauds-govt-for-investment-policies-&catid=4:top-story&Itemid=8

¹⁰ Guyana – Stabroek News Business Page, 02 June 2007 – ‘Barama and the law’ by independent accountant Chris Ram. No URL – falls in a six-months’ gap in the electronic archives of Stabroek News.

Is wood the new gold?

While the economies of the UK and most of the developed world are stagnating and growth in the BRIC tigers is slowing, the price of wood fibre is steadily rising and this increase is likely to gain momentum as global energy producers look to secure supply agreements for the next 10 years. And it's the Government's drive to encourage power generation from renewable resources through the financial incentives of 'renewable obligation certificates' that is the impetus for this. Currently in the UK, a total of 58 wood burning biomass plants either already exist, have been granted planning or are awaiting approval. These range from the small scale to the enormous 400MW plants.

This comes after a decade of investment in the UK wood processing industries, increasing domestic sawmilling and board production capacity. British wood fibre production is projected to increase to 20 million tonnes per annum up to 2019 and then start decreasing (Wood fibre availability and demand in Britain 2007–2025 – John Clegg Consulting 2010). This is forecast to meet demand up to 2012 at which point demand is expected to double to 50 million tonnes per annum in the following five years. Much of this extra demand will be met by imports, particularly to supply contracts from the very largest scale power plant operations. However this drive to renewable energy

is taking place throughout Europe and other parts of the world so there will be global demand pressures on fibre supply. The 35 or so smaller scale plants sized 35–50 MW will look to the UK forests for supply and up to 2.7m tonnes per annum could be taken away from existing processing industries. The Government's renewable heat incentive, announced in March will add further to this demand.

In the UK, growing demand for wood chips is already exerting an upward cost pressure on manufacturers of panels such as MDF, OSB and chipboard, also they are also being hit by rising costs of the other main ingredient, resin. Demand for OSB and MDF in the UK was roughly the same in 2010 as it was in 2007 at 1.760 million cubic metres but the price of standard MDF has risen 50% from early 2009, and 11% so far in 2011. Both the UK Wood Panel Industries Federation and user industries such as furniture are linking this to the Government's renewable energy policy and call for changes.

For growers, a rise in prices is clearly a welcome relief from this time a year or two ago when costs of the first thinning were not being recovered by fibre sales. The wood processing industry is arguing that the diversion of raw material away from processors to burning for energy defies logic and will hit employment in the processing sector. They suggest that there

should be a 'hierarchy of use' principle. Wood products should be reused and recycled before being turned into fuel.

Forest products' ability to store carbon should remain bound for the entire service life. After wood-products have been used, they should, where possible be re-used and recycled, then eventually burnt, when the stored CO₂ returns to the atmosphere. The 'hierarchy of use' principle would help rationalise the use of wood and define preferred options, i.e. using and recycling wood and only burning as a last resort. If more and more wood and forest residues go directly to energy plants we are wastefully minimising the carbon cycle of wood.

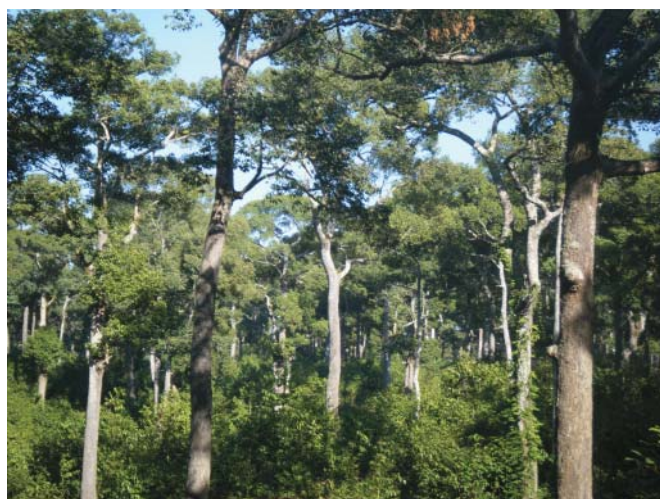
The global drive for renewable and domestically produced sources of energy has had unintended consequences in the agricultural sector, with land diverted away from food production, leading to rising cereal prices. The scale of the rush to burn wood for power and heat generation is going to have unwelcome consequences for the wood processing and using industries in the UK.

Perhaps wood is not the new gold but the new oil!

Peter Latham

CFA Governing Council and Trustee

The current state of forestry in Bangladesh



High forest of dipterocarps

Background

Bangladesh is situated in north eastern part of South Asia and lies in the active delta of three major rivers viz Padma, Meghna and Jamuna and their numerous tributaries. The country covers an area of 147,570 sq.km and bounded by India from the west, north and most of east. Myanmar lies on the southeastern edge and Bay of Bengal on the south.

Forestry is considered as a sub-sector of Agriculture in Bangladesh. The Forests Department controls an area of about 1.60 million hectares. Out of this forestland, 0.20 million hectares fall under artificial coastal plantation established in the coastal region. In addition, about 0.77 million hectares of land has tree coverage in the homestead and marginal unused fallow land throughout the country. The district administrations in Sylhet, Chittagong and Chittagong hill districts control 0.67 million ha. of Unclassified State Forests.

Forest Type & Composition

Depending on their location, nature and type of management the forests of Bangladesh can be grouped into the broad categories listed below:

Natural Mangrove Forests

The largest single tract of natural mangrove forest is the Sundarban. It consists of a total of 601,700 hectare which is 4.07% of total land mass of the country and 40% of total forest land. The 139,700 ha forest land of the Sundarban harbours 334 species of trees, shrubs and epiphytes and 375 species of wild animals.

Mangrove Plantations

Mangrove afforestation along the entire southern coastal frontier is an innovation of foresters. During 1960–61, the Government undertook an afforestation programme along the shore land of coastal districts. This initiative gained momentum from 1980–81 with the aid of development partners and afforestation programs now extends to over 136,000 ha.

Tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen forests

Tropical evergreen and semi evergreen forests are extended over Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Sylhet totaling an area of 670,000 ha which is 4.54% of total landmass of the country and 44% of national forest land. Depending on topography, soil and climate, these areas are categorized as tropical wet evergreen forests and tropical semi-evergreen forests.

These forests were brought under the plantation programme in 1871. At present, plantation activities are being conducted under development projects. Some valuable plantation species are Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Gamar (*Gmelina arborea*), Mehogani (*Swietenia spp*), Chapalish (*Artocarpus chaplasha*), Jarul (*Legarstromia speciosa*), Koroi (*Albizzia spp*), Chikrassi (*Chikrassia tabularis*), Pynkado (*Xylia dolabriformis*), Kadam (*Anthocephalus cadamba*), Telsur (*Hopea odorata*) etc.

Tropical moist deciduous forests

The Central and northern districts are bestowed with tropical moist deciduous forests, intermingled with the neighbouring settlements and fragmented into smaller patches. Sal (*Shorea robusta*) is the main species there with other associates like Koroi (*Albizzia procera*), Azuli (*Dillenia pentagyna*), Sonalu (*Cassia fistula*), Bohera (*Terminalia belerica*), Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*), Kanchan (*Baubinia acuminata*), Jarul (*Lagerstroemia speciosa*), Jam (*Syzygium spp*) etc.



Fragmentation of habitat through road development

Village forests

Tree coverage in village forests is 0.77M ha hectare which acts as the source of a significant portion of national demand of forest produces. The latest inventory conducted in 2005–2007 exhibits that almost 50% of total gross volume are available in this village forests.

Social forestry

Social Forestry programmes have been initiated with a view to meet the forest product requirements of local populations and to reverse the process of ecological and climatic degradation through proper soil and water conservation and to improve the socio economic condition of the rural people.

For the last three decades there has been a gradual shift in the forest management approach adapted by Forest Department from its traditional custodian role to a more participatory approach. Accordingly the provision of people's participation in protecting the natural forest and afforesting the degraded and encroached forest land with benefit sharing mechanism has been developed and people's participation has been ensured. A Protected Areas Co-management model has been introduced recently.

Tree volume

The latest inventory also exhibits that the total gross volume is 212 million m³ and the total commercial volume is 150 million m³ (excluding the volume of mangrove plantation). Almost 50% of the total gross volume, and more than 50% of the total commercial volume, can be found in villages. Approximately one-third of the gross volume, and less than 30% of the commercial volume, is found in Forests.

Governance

Responsibility for forestry was passed to the Bangladesh Forest Department, under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. The Forest Department has multi-dimensional functions of forest resource conservation and management, protection and management of biodiversity and watersheds along with economic and

ecological development of the country. At present there are 10167 posts, with Chief Conservator of Forests as the head of the Department.

Education and Training

The Education and Training wing in the Forest Department has the following five institutions under this wing:

- Forest Academy, Chittagong
- Forestry Science and Technology Institute, Sylhet
- Forestry Science and Technology Institute, Rajshahi
- Forestry Science and Technology Institute, Chittagong
- The Forest Development and Training Centre, Kaptai

Moreover, the Forestry curriculum has been introduced in the following public Universities, since late 1970s.

- Institute of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Chittagong University, Chittagong
- Forestry and Wood Technology Discipline, Khulna University, Khulna
- Department of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, Sylhet University, Sylhet

Forestry's contribution

The Forestry sub sector contributes little over 1.5% of the total GDP of Bangladesh but this does not reflect the real contribution of the forestry sector. The rural population uses fuel wood and other minor forest products which are not counted in the GDP. Social Forestry contributes significantly in poverty reduction. This sector has considerable contribution to the poverty reduction in the country especially through the social forestry programme. Under the social forestry programme about Tk. 1530.00 million was distributed among 88 thousand no. of participants as part of their benefit share and a fund of Tk 290.00 million has been created as Tree Farming Fund (TFF) for subsequent plantation.

About 2% of the total manpower of the country is engaged in the forestry sector. Many people actually benefited directly from forestry-related activities e.g. in the wood based industry, saw milling, furniture making, establishing private nursery, logging, extraction and in the afforestation programs. Besides this in Sundarban 0.5 million people are dependant on the mangrove forest for their livelihood (e.g mawali, bawali, fisherman etc). Forests supplies bamboo, rattan, murta, golpata, honey, herbal species etc. Forest supplies bamboo for industries (paper mills) and for rural construction. Mangrove forests of Bangladesh are a home of estuarine fishes, shrimps and crabs. There are about 10,000 m tons of fish is collected from the Sundarbans reserved forest annually.

The coastal mangrove forests (Sundarbans, coastal plantation) plays an important role in the reclamation of land, protection of coastal habitats from cyclones and tidal surges and to uplift the socio-economic conditions of coastal people. Bangladesh is well known to be the pioneer of innovative coastal afforestation technology in the world which was started in the late sixties. The trees and plants in general affect the hydrological cycle by intercepting precipitation by canopy, reduce runoff, and increase infiltration of water.

Challenges for the forestry sector

The biggest challenge for the forestry sector is to sustain environmental services of forests while meeting demand of future timber, fuel wood, fiber and myriads of other forest produce for an ever increasing population in the face of rapidly shrinking forest areas. This calls for horizontal as well vertical expansion for forestry sector in Bangladesh. The current inadequate human resources and logistics and knowledge management capacity of Forest Department has to improved substantially

to address the needed intervention in the forestry sector to meet the growing demand of the nation. This will also call for updating the forest act and policy and other rules & regulation to meet the demand of the present and future generations.

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The changing role of forestry in conservation and development: why trees are good for Malawi



*Remnants of Montane Rain Forest (with Roan in foreground),
Nyika Plateau
Courtesy of Jerry Kent*

The following is a summary of the talk given at the annual lecture evening of the Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust at the Royal Geographic Society, London, on 8 November 2011, as indicated in CFA Newsletter No. 54. (pages 13–14). The talk and paper gave a historical overview of forestry in Malawi and the special issues of the Nyika Plateau. The meeting, the talk and the published paper sought to raise funds to contribute to the conservation of the Nyika National Park and the Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve in northern Malawi.

The area, together with a small portion of adjacent Zambia, has a combined area of 4000 km² and will be combined in a Trans Frontier Conservation Area (19,281 km²) in a project to be financed by the World Bank, the Norwegian Government, Peace Parks Foundation and the two national Governments.

Both areas are of great ecological value. The Nyika National Park displays a unique highland ecosystem of grasslands and montane rainforests, above the malarial belt, and it has particular importance as a huge ground water reservoir for northern Malawi and eastern Zambia. Indeed “Nyika” means locally “where the water comes from”. Tree biodiversity on the Nyika is

interesting with *Ocotea usambarensis* on the east, *Entandrophragma* and *Mitragyna* on the west and *Juniperus procera* areas that could be expanded by management. The Vwaza Marsh consists of lower-lying wet and wooded lands supporting a considerable density of large game animals.

The Nyika National Park was sparsely settled and used by Phoka people who engaged in gathering, bee-keeping and occasional herding and hunting for domestic use. In the 1970s a large park extension programme was approved which entailed resettling the population at much lower elevation and exposed them to malaria with huge mortality. More than 20 years later this process is being reversed but on the interests of “conservation” (actually misguided “preservation”). Cases of encroachment are common and requests for land from the reserved areas are numerous. The rate of illegal harvesting of forest resources and wildlife is also increasing.



*Brachystegia Woodland at Vwaza Marsh – showing elephant
damage in the foreground.
Courtesy Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust*

For 50 years there has been considerable controversy about the value and use of some 500 hectares of Mexican pine plantation (*Pinus patula*) that were established on the Nyika. Recently the Government of Malawi awarded a commercial logging concession to a Malawian company that has already extracted a substantial quantity of timber. The UK and Malawi Trusts are pleased to have been promised funds for 5 years to

develop a tree nursery for indigenous species at Chilinda to replace at least part of the exotic pine plantation with endemic species.

Although the Nyika and Vwaza ecosystems are well represented elsewhere, their socioeconomic and environmental importance for the region require intensified application of integrated planning, management and harvesting of resources. There are good opportunities for significant contributions to the wealth and welfare of local populations. The existing policy and legislation provides for this although it has yet to be fully implemented. Agreements with local communities on access, use and profit-sharing are still to be developed fully although the USAID-supported COMPASSII project has a Resource Use

Agreement with local people and that has designated two-thirds of the Nyika Park as an apiary for the production of honey and wax. When the Nyika Trans Frontier Conservation Area is fully established it is intended that it should be a sustainable model for future development.

The full paper of this talk (18 pages) is well illustrated with colour photographs and is available for £7.50 (including p and p) from Tom Lupton, Chairman of the Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust, at The Cottage, 72 North Street, Biddenden, Kent TN27 8AS. E mail: tomlupton@btinternet.com

Jeff Burley
CFA Vice-President

Publications

Tree species maps for European forests

G. J. Nabuurs, D. J. Brus, G. M. Hengeveld, D. J. J. Walvoort, P. W. Goedbart, A. H. Heidema, K. Gunia

In cooperation with EFI, Alterra / Wageningen University and Research Centre has released a **set of 1×1 km tree species maps** showing the distribution of 20 tree species over Europe (Brus et al. 2011).

Basic dendrometric data were gathered for 260,000 national forest inventory plot locations from 17 countries (Nabuurs 2009). In areas with national forest inventory data, area proportions covered by the 20 species were obtained by compositional

kriging. For the rest of Europe a multinomial logistic regression model was fitted to ICP-level-I plots using various abiotic factors as predictors (soil, biogeographical zones, bioindicators derived from temperature and precipitation data). The regression results were iteratively scaled to fit NUTS-II forest inventory statistics and the European Forest Map (Tröltzsch et al. 2009, Schuck et al. 2002). The predictions for the twenty tree species were validated using 230 plot data separated from the calibration. For more details please refer to Brus et al. 2011. Figure 1 demonstrates the aggregated results. Underlying GIS data are available for download from EFI website after short registration.

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

Prepared by Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN) and the United States Forest Service. Free download at www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/pubs/Gender_REDD+_Asia_Regional_Analysis.pdf

The initial purpose of this assessment was to identify good practices, lessons learned and key entry points for increasing women's participation in and benefit from REDD+ activities, as well as opportunities to advance gender equality through this sector. It aimed to provide recommendations on how future REDD+ initiatives in Asia can successfully integrate gender into REDD+ projects to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of USAID's REDD+ work and so that USAID assistance makes the optimal contribution to gender equality.

This assessment finds that women have not been systematically identified as stakeholders in REDD+ initiatives and, consequently, have not been involved in related discussions and activities. Additionally, gender issues have not been specifically identified by key actors as having any relevance to the sector. Therefore the focus of this assessment shifted to identifying the constraints to and opportunities for women's participation in REDD+ initiatives, particularly as country REDD+ readiness plans are being developed, as well as revealing the potential impacts of gender relations on REDD+ initiatives and vice versa.

This assessment reviews both community-based approaches and commercial forestry approaches in four Asian countries—Cambodia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Nepal—and reviews the issues in these countries as well as in the Mekong, insular Southeast Asia, and South Asia sub-regions.

Around the World

Asia-Pacific: Locals ‘can play key role in helping forests recover’

Involving local groups has been a key factor in halting the loss of forest cover in the Asia-Pacific region, a UN study has concluded. The report found that low-cost projects offered communities an incentive to protect the habitats in return for job opportunities and income sources. Such schemes also enhanced ecosystems, restored biodiversity and increase carbon storage, the authors added.

Despite the threats from illegal deforestation, forest fires and climate change, the Forest Beneath the Grass report – produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) – said the region had “not only stopped the drastic decline in forest cover of the 1990s”, but had actually increased tree cover over the past decade. “The Asia-Pacific region has accomplished this feat of reversing the trend of forest loss faster than any other region in history,” said Eduardo Rojas, assistant director-general of the FAO’s Forestry Department.

The report credited “assisted natural regeneration” (ANR) projects as one of the key factors in turning the net loss of tree cover into an annual net gain. ANR is a forest restoration and rehabilitation technique that converts grass dominated areas into productive forests, based on the natural process of plant succession, encouraging the regeneration and growth of indigenous tree species.

One of the most invasive grass species is *Imperata cylindrica*, also known as blady grass. Native to the region, it thrives on disturbed soil – such as roadsides and felled forests. Once established, it quickly forms a monoculture and suppresses other species from becoming established.

As opposed to more resource-intensive programmes, such as agro-forestry schemes or large-scale plantation projects, the authors highlighted how ANR schemes were relatively passive and cheap, allowing local communities to become actively

involved. They added that while the vast grasslands provided grazing sites for cattle and roofing material, there were relatively few other benefits when the potential productivity of the area was taken into account.

The scheme follows a number of stages, including:

- site selection,
- modifications to encourage growth of preferred species,
- possible supplementary planting,
- site protection and monitoring.

“The success of ANR is dependent on the effective involvement of local residents in its implementation,” explained FAO senior forestry officer Patrick Durst, who presented the report’s findings at a news conference in Beijing. “It is important that local communities are given incentives and ultimately benefit from [the] programmes.”

The benefits come in a number of guises, such as a diversity in harvestable crops, cost-effective land management, hunting grounds, and improved ecological services.

According to the FAO’s Global Forest Resources Assessment, the region recorded an average annual net gain of 1.5m hectares of tree cover over the past decade. However, deforestation remains a global concern, with 13m hectares – with a large volume being primary, natural forests – being lost each year over the same period.

Mr Rojas observed: “The rate of deforestation is still very high in many countries and the area of primary forest – forests undisturbed by human activity – continues to decrease. “Countries must further strengthen their efforts to better conserve and manage them.”

news.bbc.co.uk

Australia: Fire in rainforest – anathema or saviour?

Claims emanating from Far North Queensland warn that World Heritage listed rainforest is dying.

A former forestry worker says large tracts of North Queensland rainforest have been reduced to “wasteland” – and he’s blaming the failure of authorities to act.

Laurence May says he’s witnessed dramatic changes in the rainforest in the past four decades.

He claims rampant infestation by lawyer vine after two, successive severe tropical cyclones is strangling canopy trees and preventing regeneration. Controversially, he says the only way to stop it – is to burn it. “The forest back then in ‘74 when I started were open forests, beautiful underneath, a little bit of

lawyer vine but not too bad. Just in those 30 or 40 years, it is just impenetrable now and it’s unacceptable,” he says.

Laurence May claims a ‘mindset’ by authorities against traditional burning in rainforest has prevented further scientific research despite the concept being adopted in other forest and land management. He’s called on those authorities to urgently task CSIRO with further analysis of the charcoal deposits found in abundance on the floor of rainforests right across North Queensland.

“If you’ve seen forests that were previously managed by Aboriginal people and you see the big trees and the clean state that it’s in, you realise that these were the forests that the old

timers were talking about when they looked at climatic rainforests. They're not talking about the rubbish that's around now, it's just a jungle of rubbish now."

So have environmental managers got it wrong? Charlie McKillop put that very question to the Wet Tropics Management Authority executive director Andrew McLean. He says North Queensland has one of the best managed pieces of tropical rainforest in the world. He says burning protected rainforest is prohibited by law and that's for good reason because unlike

other forest types, rainforest is extremely sensitive to fire. "So if we burn rainforest in an attempt to eradicate a weed or achieve some other management goal, we will quite likely kill that stand of rainforest and it's likely to be replaced with other types of forest," he says. I wouldn't be going out there with a drip torch lighting up great chunks of forest based on what are, with great respect, anecdotal observations."

www.abc.net.au

Australia: Forestry sell off clears debts

Most of the state's softwood plantations have been sold to help cash-strapped Forestry Tasmania pay off debt.

Sydney company New Forests bought 46,000 hectares from the state-owned company and its joint venture partner GMO Renewable Resources for \$156 million. It amounts to more than half of Tasmania's entire softwood plantations.

Forestry Tasmania's chairman Adrian Kloeden says the sale will erase the company's debt. "We would not have completed this transaction if the price had not achieved the reserve set by the board." He says softwood plantations are not a core business. "We only resolved to sell when we had achieved a satisfactory price, a price that met the external advice that we received." "Let's bear in mind, there's a joint venture here that met the price expectations of a global leader in investing in these forests."

Forestry Tasmania used a government business scrutiny hearing to announce the sale. The Forests Minister Bryan Green says the sale will help the company restructure as the forest peace deal to end almost all native forest logging in Tasmania is

implemented. "The price of this transaction is \$156 million which is consistent with the fair value range appraised by independent experts."

Mr Green says Treasury has ticked off on the deal, which was quietly instigated by the Forestry Tasmania board in May. "This company is looking towards the future." The trees have been sold but Forestry Tasmania will still own the land.

The Opposition's Peter Gutwein accused the State Government of flogging off assets to stay in power. Mr Gutwein says it is proof the Government will do anything to implement the forest peace agreement. "I don't think you have to be a rocket scientist to join the dots to understand that you've got a company that you've driven into the ground because of your involvement in the IGA and now you tell us that you've flogged off an asset." Mr Green says it was the board's decision to sell off the plantations.

New Forests will take over management of the softwood estate as soon as next month.

www.abc.net.au

Brazil: New weapon launched in fight against deforestation

Brazil is putting itself at the forefront of efforts to better track deforestation and the threat posed by climate change as delegates prepare to meet in South Africa for a key summit on global warming. Recent studies suggest more frequent and severe droughts threaten to turn the Amazon rainforest from a sponge that absorbs carbon emissions into a dangerous source of the gases, accelerating global warming. Drought, deforestation and logging cause more than two percent of global carbon emissions in the Amazon. Until now, much of it went undetected as it was protected by the forest's giant canopy.

Now the South American country's space agency INPE is close to launching a satellite with NASA that will provide a close-up look at how deforestation is affecting the Amazon and other ecosystems around the globe. The planned satellite – Global Terrestrial Ecosystems Observatory (GTEO) – can monitor global vegetation productivity through an infrared camera that will separate data with unprecedented precision. This

technological breakthrough, which will cost US\$250 million, will help scientists predict the reactions of carbon cycles and ecosystems to different climate conditions. The GTEO, expected to be launched in 2016, will provide specific information about the type of vegetation that is growing in previously cleared land.

The head of Brazil's space agency, Gilberto Camara, said the new tool will help focus efforts on reviving damaged ecosystems. "We want to do more than just see if there are trees or shrubs or cleared land – that is what we do now with remote sensing. We want to have more detailed measurements of how the trees are growing, whether they are under stress, whether they are in trauma and what is the response of the vegetation under various conditions of change," he said.

Big fires, set by farmers to clear land for agriculture, are the main cause of deforestation. But they continue to set smaller fires to maintain their plots and the damage is often hidden from satellite imaging because they burn under the tree canopy.

Mr Camara said he believes more information on forest clearing is vital to putting the brakes on deforestation.

The widespread droughts last decade renewed concerns that the two intense dry spells fit predictions by some climate models that the forest will face greater weather extremes this century. More intense droughts will make it more vulnerable to fires, which in turn could damage its ability to recover. Under the more extreme scenarios, large parts of the forest could turn into a savannah-like ecosystem by the middle of the century with much lower levels of animal and plant biodiversity.

Mr Astrini warned that there is no use in investing in more advanced deforestation monitoring if the Brazilian Senate presses ahead with a new controversial land reform bill recently

approved by the Congress. "There are also two studies, one carried out by USP (Sao Paulo University) and one by the University of Brasilia that indicate the increase of up to 40 percent in the deforestation rates by 2020 with this new (forest) bill that has been ratified. Therefore this bill puts at stake Brazil's image and the positions and commitments the country has agreed to internationally," he said.

Many critics warn that the overhaul of Brazil's law – which would give amnesties for illegal tree-felling in recent decades – is a surrender to farming interests and would set back recent progress in protecting the Amazon.

www.3news.co.nz

Brazil faces \$100 billion hit if forest farming bill fails, Senator says

Brazil would lose about \$100 billion in agricultural output if the senate rejects legislation that forgives farmers for illegally clearing protected rainforest, said Senator Katia Abreu. Failure to approve the bill would force farmers to reforest about 70 million hectares (173 million acres) of land currently under coffee, oranges and other commodities, said Abreu, 49, who is president of the Brazilian Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock. "We would have a brutal reduction in the country's food production," she said in an interview at Bloomberg's headquarters in New York on Nov. 1. "The legal uncertainty we are living in is deeply worrying."

The Senate vote, scheduled for this month, comes as deforestation increases in the world's biggest rain forest amid surging demand for agricultural and wood exports, according to the National Institute for Space Research. Environmental campaigners say the amnesty may encourage farmers to flout regulations that limit deforestation.

The bill will update the 1965 Forest Code, which requires farmers to keep a certain percentage of their land as forest. That percentage varies from 80 percent in parts of the Amazon to 20 percent in the swampy Pantanal region in western Brazil. The new legislation would make the current percentages law,

eliminating the risk that they may be changed by presidential decree.

Since the 1960s, farmers have helped transform Brazil from a food importer to one of the world's largest exporters of soft commodities, and they should be allowed to remain competitive, Abreu said. Brazil is now the world's top producer and exporter of coffee and sugar cane, the biggest beef exporter, the largest producer of oranges and the second-largest producer of soy after the U.S. Much of that expansion has been made possible by cutting down the rain forest, not always legally. The proposed bill would grant farmers amnesty and exempt them from being required to replant areas illegally deforested before 2009. That is fair because many farmers complied with the limits on deforestation, only to see those restrictions then tightened by decree, making them outlaws, Abreu said.

The legislation was approved by the lower house in a 410–63 vote on May 24. Since then, the bill has been altered to address concerns expressed by President Dilma Rousseff, said Abreu, a member of the Social Democratic Party who represents the state of Tocantins. She expects a vote by Nov. 23.

www.bloomberg.com

Congo-Brazzaville: Congo Launches Large-Scale Tree-Planting Programme

The Republic of Congo has embarked on a vast tree-planting programme to guard against the twin scourges of deforestation and soil degradation that plague many African states. The country is one of ten central African nations that make up the Congo basin, which holds the world's second largest tropical rain forest after the Amazon Basin in South America. The region has been hit hard by the pressures of deforestation, as limited access to electricity forces people to cut down trees to serve their heating and lighting needs, with coal fueled stoves still dominant in food preparation.

Congo's 1.83 billion euro (\$2.5 billion) plan calls for one million hectares of trees (almost 2.5 million acres) to be planted within ten years and should, according to the forest ministry, create 50,000 new jobs. The initiative comes from a country that has in the past been tipped as a continental leader in environmental conservation. Congo's President Denis Sassou Nguesso was in 2009 named the African Union's lead climate change spokesman ahead of the much-hyped Copenhagen climate talks that ultimately failed to produce a breakthrough deal.

The Republic of Congo, whose territory is between 60 and 65 percent forest, also has the lowest deforestation rate (0.07 percent per year) of the ten Congo basin states.

The problem is far more acute in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, where UN's environment programme (UNEP) says deforestation is intensifying due to growing energy demand. But at the launch of the programme on Monday, where volunteers – and the president – planted 160,000 trees, Congolese officials said they wanted to take preventive measures to guard against depletion of the country's natural resources. The

aim of the tree-planting plan “is to relieve pressure exercised by mankind on natural forests by reducing deforestation and the degradation of the soil,” Minister of Forestry Economy Henri Djombo said at the event in Yie, 60 kilometres (37 miles) north of the capital.

The Brazzaville government will contribute 300 million euro to the project, while donor nations and other organisations have been asked for 1.5 billion euros.

allafrica.com

DRC: The Future of the Forests in Poetry competition closes with great success

The The Future of Forests in Poetry contest organized by Greenpeace Africa in Democratic Republic of Congo, was a great triumph and united many Congolese citizens for a good cause.

2600 poems were written by Congolese youths on the future of their forests, sending strong messages to governments, policy makers, and donors about how important it is to safeguard these forests! Special prizes were awarded to the seven top entrants from both Oshwe and Kinshasa. The highlights of this great event were immortalized in pictures, with beautiful photographs and a video documentary that will be launched at COP 17 later this month.

Greenpeace launched the contest to raise awareness and mobilize young Congolese to fight to preserve their forests. Open to everyone from 14–21 years old, this competition was held in Oshwe in Bandundu Province from 30 September to 12 October and in Kinshasa from 15 to 26 October. Young people in other provinces also participated via e-mail. As a huge reservoir of carbon and biodiversity, the role of the intact forests of the DRC in slowing down global climate change is well established.

Negotiations on climate change at the first African COP, to be held in Durban, South Africa will focus on the fight against deforestation. It is hoped that the importance of forests in the Congo Basin, which is home to over 60% of the population, will be taken into account.

Through these poems, Congolese youth expressed the thoughts of more than 40 million Congolese who wish to protect their forests – 40 million people who depend on these resources for their survival. “We need urgent action to protect these forests, not to do so would jeopardize not only the future of these communities but also our own lives, says Loan Tran Thanh, Regional Director of Greenpeace Africa in DRC.

The 2600 poems received are real cries from the heart of youths who see the future of the forest and by extension, their future, being jeopardized by unsustainable forest management. The time for talk has passed. Governments, policy makers, donors – industrial logging is unable to ensure the development of a country. You need to act now to stop the deforestation that is growing daily!

allafrica.com

Global forestry loss is not as great as first feared, UN study confirms

The rate of global deforestation, mainly the conversion of tropical forests to agricultural land, averaged 14.5 million hectares a year between 1990 and 2005, according to a satellite-based survey released today by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The findings of the global remote sensing survey show that the world's total forest area in 2005 was 3.69 billion hectares, or 30 per cent of the global land area. Worldwide, the net loss of forest area between 1990 and 2005 was not as great as previously believed, since gains in forest areas are larger than previously estimated, according to the survey.

The net loss — when losses of forest cover are partially offset by afforestation or natural expansion — totalled 72.9 million hectares, or 32 percent less than the previous figure of 107.4

million hectares. In other words, the planet lost an average of 4.9 million hectares of forest per year, or nearly 10 hectares of forest per minute over the 15-year period.

The new data also show that the net loss of forests accelerated, increasing from 4.1 million hectares per year between 1990 and 2000 to 6.4 million hectares between 2000 and 2005.

The figures are based on the most comprehensive use yet of high-resolution satellite data to provide a sample of forests worldwide. They differ from previous findings of the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment last year, which were based on a compilation of country reports that used a wide variety of sources.

www.enn.com/ecosystems

Global: Leading southern NGOs slam Durban proposal to create new forest carbon market

Recent collapses in carbon markets and widespread opposition from forest peoples and non-governmental organisations have not stopped governments gathered in Durban from trying to build momentum for the creation of a new forest carbon market as part of the response to deforestation and climate change.

The Accra Caucus on Forests and Climate Change, a coalition of around 100 civil society and indigenous peoples organisations from 38 countries, called on governments in Durban to reject forest carbon trading after a new draft decision related to REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) specifically included “market-based” sources of financing, which opens the door for a forest carbon market – allowing developed countries to ‘offset’ emissions reductions.

“By selling carbon offsets from our forests, we would be abandoning the solution to the climate crisis”, said Cecile Ndjebet, President of the African Women’s Network for Community Management of Forests. “Developed countries have the historical responsibility for climate change and trading carbon forest offsets would shift the burden to developing countries, and would prolong the heavy polluting industries that created the problem.”

At the same time, existing carbon markets are in a state of crisis. The carbon price in Europe is at its lowest in almost 3 years, and credits traded in the Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol are unable to cover basic project costs, having fallen to an all time low. “We’ve seen financial markets crash in recent years, and a forest carbon market would also be volatile and liable to boom and bust. Still rich governments insist this is the best way to finance forests” said Nat Dyer of Rainforest Foundation UK. “Forest carbon markets are an extremely inefficient way to get money to where it’s really needed. The largest part is captured by carbon traders and by expensive external consultants.”

“Any decision in Durban that opens the door to the use of offset trading to fund forests would be a disaster for the climate, the forests and the people who depend on them,” said Belen Paez of Fundacion Pachamama in Ecuador. “Agreeing to fund forests from carbon trading gives the illusion there is money being offered for forest protection, when what is really needed is predictable and sustainable investment to combat the drivers of deforestation.”

www.fern.org

Guyana: What’s happened to Guyana’s rainforest deal with Norway?

Guyanese president Bharrat Jagdeo was once the posterboy for an international community eager to play up its dedication to climate change. The West was finally engaging with developing nations like his – tucked into a corner of the Amazon jungle between Brazil, Venezuela and Suriname – by handing over millions of dollars in exchange for the maintenance of vast tracts of primary rainforest. Jagdeo was even nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. As his presidency comes to end, however, so does his image as the forward-thinking saviour of rainforest-rich developing countries. His government offers nothing but a veneer of hope, according to analysts of Guyana’s groundbreaking deal with Norway signed exactly two years ago.

The deal stipulated that Norway would pay Guyana – based on results – up to \$250m over five years to cut down deforestation and thus avoid carbon dioxide emissions. In return, Norway would build up its carbon credit stockpiles and hopefully hit its self-imposed 2030 carbon neutral target while at the same time pumping its enormous gas and oil reserves, as well as continuing the use of cars, factories and power plants which release the carbon dioxide locked up in the oil and gas.

Guyana would use the funds for projects aimed at curbing deforestation and carbon dioxide emission, including solar panels for indigenous communities, sea defences and flood-resistant crops. The \$70m so far pledged by Norway has yet to materialise in the Latin American nation. The World Bank, awaiting the okay

from Norwegian authorities, is holding onto it. Jagdeo puts the delay down to the lack of a simple mechanism for moving the money in a new and untested scheme – a bureaucratic glitch rather than any reflection on Guyana’s progress.

‘That is absolute nonsense,’ said John Palmer, a Senior Associate at the Forest Management Trust in Florida. ‘The main reason is that [they] are utterly incapable of writing the simplest project proposal is because they’ve never had to do it. Jagdeo anticipated that the Norwegians would simply give him a bag of money.’ The money is being channelled through a REDD+ fund (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) and Guyana is seen as a test case for the initiative. ‘REDD as a model will continue to evolve in spite of the carbon cowboys in Guyana,’ said Palmer. ‘I think it has a great future.’

Palmer cites Norwegian money that has gone into a similar programme in Indonesia as more positive. Unlike Guyana, Indonesia has one of the fastest deforestation rates in the world making it the world’s third largest carbon dioxide emitter after the United States and China. This makes it a perfect candidate for a REDD scheme and Norway has committed \$1 billion to it over the next few years.

Speaking to *The Ecologist* in a restaurant in Guyana’s capital Georgetown, Jagdeo admitted there were problems: ‘There’s a difficulty in being the first. We are trying to create a model built on replicability . . . so we can’t cut corners. . . This is still the most cost-effective abatement solution for climate change.’

Vemund Olsen is a Policy Adviser with Rainforest Foundation Norway, who became interested in Guyana when the Norwegian government began to negotiate their agreement with the Anglophone South American nation. 'We have a number of concerns about how the initiative is playing out – whether Guyana is taking the necessary steps to prevent the increase in deforestation,' he said. The Norwegian government does not have a permanent base in Guyana and so is forced to rely on third parties. 'We're not convinced by the actual happenings on the ground and it seems that Norway is very dependent on the use of international consultants to verify what is actually happening because they don't have any eyes and ears on the ground that they can trust,' Olsen said.

To claim the funds, Guyana must demonstrate that it has cut deforestation from a baseline 0.45 per cent rate. However, a report carried out by New Zealand-based Pöry earlier this year concluded that actual deforestation between 1990 and 2009 was in fact at 0.02 per cent. The same report claimed that deforestation over the first year of the Norway agreement had trebled to 0.06 per cent. Using such a high baseline allows Guyana to actually increase deforestation while still receiving the funds. 'In some ways the Norwegians have been a bit naïve,' said David Young of Global Witness. 'The system that Norway has come up with is predicated on a best-guess of what the deforestation rate might be,' he added. 'They could have been more on the ball and more prepared.'

Guyana is around the size of the UK yet holds under a million people, many of whom live on its Caribbean coast. There are no white sandy beaches though as the Essequibo and

Demerara Rivers pour silt from the country's deep Amazon interior into coastal waters. Over 80 per cent of Guyana is covered by rainforest. No paved roads link its major towns to the capital, making it difficult to effectively govern.

Jagdeo claims this is to the government's advantage. 'The terrain makes it easier to control movements,' he said, adding that authorities have set up choke points across the few unpaved roads and rivers that loggers bring their wares down.

Adding to the environmental problems, Guyana is currently undergoing a goldrush, as the global economic crisis pushes investors towards the precious metal resulting in record high prices. This is damaging the rainforest as people from all over the region bring in dredgers to seek their fortune. Mining of gold and bauxite, as well as production of sugar and timber, drive the country's economy. The government has recently invited oil companies to explore both on- and off-shore fields, in a demonstration of a seeming dichotomy for developing countries in balancing their environment with economic expansion.

'We're seeing a strong increase in mining in the country,' added Olsen, 'I am yet to see any concrete action by the Guyanese government to make sure that does not lead to increased deforestation in the long term.' Jagdeo sees no dichotomy. 'We want to keep 99.5 per cent of the forest and develop just 0.5 per cent. If done well, we could expand mining, selectively logging one or two trees per hectare.' The president claims to have replanting plans in place.

www.girish-gupta.com (edited from an article originally published in the Ecologist)

Mozambique: Timber companies lose their licences

The National Directorate of Land and Forests, part of the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture, has cancelled the licences of 16 Mozambican and foreign timber companies who were caught attempting to export illegally logs, ivory and other natural resources, the export of which is forbidden or restricted. According to a report in the Beira daily paper, "Diario de Mocambique", these companies were involved, between December 2010 and July of this year, in attempts to export to China no less than 807 containers full of logs, mostly of precious hardwoods that can only be exported legally, if they have undergone processing in Mozambique.

Also found in some of the containers were parts of protected animals – including 126 elephant tusks, necklaces and bracelets made of ivory, and rhinoceros horns.

There were three separate seizures. Thus in the northern port of Pemba, in December 2010, six companies were caught trying to export 195 containers of logs, amounting to 3,097 cubic metres of wood. In Maputo, an attempt to export 49 containers belong to two companies was aborted, while by far the largest seizure occurred at the northern port of Nacala in July, where 563 containers full of almost 8,000 cubic metres of logs from first class species of hardwoods were discovered, on their way to China.

Eight companies (Casa Bonita, Zhen Long, Mozambique Trading, Yihou, Tong Fa, Chanate, Senyu and Verdura), several of which are owned by Chinese citizens, were involved in the Nacala fraud, and were accused of making false declarations about the quantity and quality of the wood they intended to export.

An investigation by the Mozambican Tax Authority (AT) found that they only declared a little more than 5,000 cubic metres of wood, and claimed it had an FOB value of 10.4 million meticaís (about 385,000 US dollars). But the AT calculated the real value of the wood at more than four times this amount – 43.86 million meticaís.

In addition to losing their licences, the 16 companies must pay fines amounting to 9.9 million meticaís (about 367,000 US dollars). All the logs, ivory and other goods in the containers are forfeit to the state. Over 3,000 cubic metres of this wood has already been sold at public auction, raising revenue of around 34 million meticaís for the public treasury.

allafrica.com

Nigeria ranked worst in the world for deforestation

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) has ranked Nigeria as the worst country in the world in terms of deforestation. However, the Institute also stressed that there was still hope for the country, if it starts paying urgent and serious attention to nature. The Project Director, IITA, Mr. John Peacock, explained that over 90 per cent of Nigeria's forest has been lost as a result of deforestation.

Peacock, who spoke at the official launch of the Nigerian Field Society Young Explorers (NFSYE) in Ibadan, added that as a result of this huge destruction of the nation's forest, it would require a lot of work on the part of the young generation to bring back the forest.

"Today's event is about the children identifying and appreciating the values of nature so that they will not grow up to cut trees and shoot birds. Nigeria has a dubious position of being last but there is no reason why it should not be first," he said. "Like the President has said about changing this country by empowering the youth, we have the youth here today because they are part and parcel of the future of this country," he added.

According to him, IITA has started a reforestation programme in Nigeria and said that the children in Ibadan had been instrumental in planting trees.

He also stressed the need to empower youth in the country maintaining that involving the younger generation in nature would bring about job creation and over all development in the country. He noted that cutting down forest not only causes global warming and climate change but affects farming activities in the country.

"What IITA is doing is trying to encourage farmers to adopt the high yield varieties and at the same time advising them not to cut down trees so that Nigeria does not lose valuable and medicinal plants," he said. "If you cut your trees down, the planet will die. Trees are like skins and we know that if you in a fire and you lose about 70 per cent of your skin you will die. The forest is the skin of the planet earth," he added.

www.thisdaylive.com

Pakistan: Govt breaks all records, sells one acre of forest for Rs9

Members of the Sindh Assembly were stunned to hear that the government had auctioned off thousands of acres of forest land for Rs9. Its market value would be at least Rs100,000. The forest department sold around 13,183 acres in the Mirpur Mathelo Guddu Barrage afforestation division. This earned it Rs131,000, said minister for forests, Syed Ali Nawaz Shah Rizvi, during the question-answer session.

An incredulous Arif Mustafa Jatui of the National Peoples Party called it a scam. "How did you award the auction and fix the price for one acre at Rs9 only?" he asked. With a hint of sarcasm in his voice, he said, "I want to buy the same land for Rs200,000 per acre. Can you give it to me?"

This confused the minister who later defended himself by saying he would order an inquiry. Responding to a query from MPA Heer Ismail Soho who wanted to know about encroachments on forest land, the minister said that it affected 3,342 acres. And 922 acres have been illegally allotted. He did not name the people who have occupied the forest land in Sindh, but said that they had been trying to repossess the government land.

tribune.com.pk

Rwanda: Country to achieve 30 percent forest cover by 2020

The Minister of Natural Resources, Stanislas Kamanzi, has launched a new forest intensification programme, which is aimed at achieving a 30 percent forest cover in the country as provided for in Vision 2020. The programme will help Rwanda to develop a green canopy over the entire land because more trees will be planted and in a "systematic way", according to the minister, who said that the figure currently stands at 22 percent.

"Initially, it was projected at 30 percent by 2018, but it will be impossible if no intensified measures are taken," Kamanzi,

told The New Times. "In the past, people planted one or two trees in their farms, but the same trees could 'die' because of lack of care. But, under this programme, we will plant large numbers of trees in consolidated sites and, even, in all farm-lands".

The two-year intensification programme will officially be launched on November 19, though implementation is already underway in some districts, according to the minister. All districts are supposed to earmark specific hectares of land for tree planting "to create what will look like a forest there." The head

of the National Forestry Authority, Frank Rutabingwa, disclosed that 67 million seedlings of various species were prepared for the programme, this year. Thirty percent of them will be planted on hill tops while the rest will be in reserved sites, water banks, public places like parks along the roads and in people's homes.

Areas that have experienced gradual extinction of the forest cover, like Gishwati Forest, will also see more seedlings of wild trees planted. At least 3,020 hectares of land within the forest

will be reforested. Kamanzi added that the tree planting activities will be championed countrywide by the Rwanda Reserve Force, owing to its vast manpower. District Task forces, headed by vice mayors for Finance and Economic development, have also been set up to follow up on the growth of these trees. They will work alongside the military, the police, women groups, environmental organisations and several other stakeholders.

Allafrica.com

Senegal: Prospects and pitfalls along a Great Green Wall

Former goat-herder Samba Ba proudly points to a row of metre-high acacia trees growing amid the fine grasses that are the only other vegetation in this part of northern Senegal's arid savannah. "Planting trees is a blessing – trees mean life. We call this the Nile River of the Sahel."

Ba hopes that in time the trees will bear black fruits that can be used as goat-feed. He and his fellow villagers are also planting the Sahel acacia, which produces a gum with medicinal properties, the tamarind, which has edible bitter-sweet fruit, and the desert date or "sump" tree, which bears small fruits whose oil can be used in cooking. These are all thorny trees with small leaves, the only kind that can survive in the arid conditions.

Sedentary and semi-nomadic Fulani herdsmen are planting five hectares of vegetable and fruit crops and approximately 1,000 trees as part of the Great Green Wall project ("La Grande Muraille Verte"), an ambitious pan-African environmental programme designed to combat desertification along the southern edge of the Sahara and provide nomadic populations with extra livelihoods while enhancing their food security.

The scheme falls within the framework of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, which aims to decrease poverty and improve food sources, and is being supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Donors have pledged US\$3 billion to the 11 participating countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan.

The governments of these 11 Sahelian states intend that 20 years from now, a giant hedge, 15km wide and 7,000km long, spreading across two million hectares, will help slow the advancing desert and impede the hot winds that increase erosion.

"The wall is just the final result. What we're looking for... is to protect and improve the eco-systems of these Sahel regions, and [through this] to improve the diets, health, lifestyle and environment of the Savannah people," said Matar Cissé, director general of the national agency implementing the project, in the Senegalese capital, Dakar.

Chronic drought has made it increasingly difficult for Fulani nomads to make a traditional living as pastoralists. Ba, 42, a Fulani who has settled in the village of Mbar Toubab, 100km south of where the Sahara desert starts in neighbouring Mauritania, says herdsmen would consider settling in such villages if they could earn a living by growing and selling fruit and vegetables.

Cissé said, "We are, we hope, developing a system that will help these people help themselves to stay in one place, create jobs and raise their own incomes. For the nomadic peoples, this could fundamentally change the way they live."

Villagers are taught how to plant market gardens and use drip irrigation by connecting a small elevated water tank to perforated pipes that deliver small amounts of water to each plant. "We travel great distances in search of pasture and water. If this project is successful... this area won't be hopeless any more," Ba told IRIN. "To have water and food to feed ourselves and our animals on our doorstep can only be beneficial."

The Great Green Wall could play an important role in environmental management and supporting nomadic livelihoods, but it must not be seen as "the solution" to food security, Gubbels said. The project risks being too ambitious by taking on desertification as well as food security, which are separate issues, requiring separate solutions.

allafrica.com

Sierra Leone: Tempers rise over oil palm

In a remote corner of Sierra Leone, signs of a bonanza are evident. New corrugated zinc roofs have replaced simple thatch on houses, motorbikes ply the streets and market stalls are well-stocked. The new wealth of the villagers in Pujehun district is thanks to a land lease deal with a European investor for an oil palm plantation that has backing from the

national government in Freetown right down to the local "paramount chief". But not everybody is happy.

"The chief brought the company here. He is the one supposed for talk to us," 28-year-old Eddie Amara, who led local protests against the project last month, said in hesitant English in the village of Kortumahun. "He's not treat us good, fair," said

Amara, adding that pledges of local employment had yet to fully materialize and giving voice to local claims that villagers felt they had little choice but to hand over land.

The Sierra Leone plantation of Lichtenstein-based Socfin is one of many such projects in Africa, spurred by global demand for food and biofuel but criticized by some as “land grabs”. Police arrested 39 local people in last month’s protests, and the row has become a political hot potato. A German aid group withdrew one of its workers from Sierra Leone earlier this year following a dispute over the case.

The saga highlights the tensions surfacing as Africa is drawn further into the global economy, triggering hope that the continent’s people will one day benefit but also concern that precious local resources will be lost with little gain. The U.N.’s Food and Agriculture office last month warned African governments not to rush into big land lease deals for risk of deepening poverty or heightening social tensions.

The Socfin deal was completed earlier this year. The Sierra Leonean government leased land from local landowners, and the company in turn has its own lease with the government. It is adamant that the project is a win-win proposition. “You cannot start a project like this in Africa against the will of the

people,” Gerben Haringsma, general manager of Socfin Agricultural Company Sierra Leone Ltd, told Reuters.

“When there is no harmony there is no profit,” adding that if all goes well the initial stage of the project will stretch to a total 12,500 hectares and could be expanded further to include rubber cultivation.

The project currently employs 1,500 Africans, many on a temporary basis and not all of them locals. When production begins, the headcount is due to rise to 3,000.

The daily rate is \$2.30. That compares to Sierra Leone’s national income of \$340 a head, as measured on the World Bank’s Atlas scale – just under a dollar a day.

The row has been fueled by the fact that in Sierra Leone, as in other African countries, there is an uneasy co-existence of traditional chiefdom structures with Western-style government that has muddied key issues such as land ownership.

Local paramount chief Brima Victor Sedi Kebbie has championed the deal in contrast to the local member of parliament who opposes it. People in Malen chiefdom accuse Kebbie of having pressurised them into giving up their land.

www.reuters.com

UK: Healthy woodlands ‘need quality not quantity’

There needs to be a greater focus on woodland management rather than just paying attention to the number of trees being planted, a report has concluded. Conservation group Plantlife said although there were now more woodlands in England than 20 years ago, many of the habitats had become overgrown. Ground-level plants were struggling because canopies had closed over and reduced much needed light, it added. Management techniques like coppicing needed to be put in place, it advised.

“We’re living in a time when everyone is rushing to go out and plant trees,” said co-author Andy Byfield, Plantlife’s landscape conservation manager. “For example, there is a government target to plant 10,000 hectares of trees each year for the next 15 years.” He told BBC News: “While in some ways that is good, we are saying that it is quality, not quantity, that matters. “We believe that we need to see better management for the nation’s woodlands, rather than just creating more dull woodlands.”

The report, *Forestry Recommissioned: Bringing England’s Woodlands Back to Life*, listed a range of solutions to tackle what the authors viewed as the main problems facing the nation’s existing woodlands:

- **Too dark** – increased coppicing and pollarding to allow more light to reach the ground-level plants, with the

coppiced or pollarded wood being used as a fuel source;

- **Overgrown** – reintroduction of grazing stock in woodlands, which would limit the growth of coarser plants – such as nettles and brambles – and allow a more diverse array of flora to become established;
- **Silent** – establishing management systems would encourage and sustain enough biodiversity, resulting in robust food chains – from plants and invertebrates to predatory birds and mammals.

Mr Byfield said that from about the time of World War I, there had been a move away from woodlands being managed and producing a range of goods – from charcoal and poles to animal bedding and fodder – to the habitats being largely unmanaged and not utilised. “Before about 1950, half of our woodlands were either coppice or scrub, the other half was high forest- where trees grow to their maximum height,” he added. “What we now have is a situation where something like 97% or 98% of all woodlands are high forest, the canopy has grown over and plants do need light to survive.”

www.bbc.co.uk

