CFA Newsletter

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Research confirms water sceptics' worst fears

Photo: Arnoud Frumau

Common but misguided views about water management particularly the myth that trees always improve water availability have encouraged major investments in national and international water resource projects that are either ineffective or counterproductive, according to a new report from the United Kingdom's tropical Forestry Research Programme (FRP).

From the Mountain to the Tap: How Land Use and Water Management Can Work for the Rural Poor is a summary of a series of research projects commissioned by FRP, which is funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The booklet draws its conclusions from extensive studies conducted in India, Costa Rica, South Africa, and Tanzania by water experts based at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and the Free University of Amsterdam. These researchers teamed up with colleagues from Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Grenada, India, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, The Netherlands, the UK, and the US.

Their work over the last four years directly observing and monitoring water resources and management projects reveals that projects intended to improve water conditions in developing countries may be wasting massive amounts of money because they are pursuing solutions that are not supported by scientific evidence. In particular, their collection and analysis of extensive data on streamflow amounts, water production, and rainfall amounts in forested regions compared to nonforested regions challenges conventional wisdom that forested land always conserves and supplies more water than grasslands or other treeless areas.

FRP's effort to close the gap between science and policy comes as the World Commission on Water is warning that demand for water will increase by around 50 percent in the next 30 years and that around 4 billion people–half

of the world's population–will live in conditions of severe water stress by 2025. The FRP booklet will be formally released next month in Stockholm as part of World Water Week and the 15th Stockholm Water Symposium (21-27 August). The FRP report concludes that while trees can play many vital environmental functions, their negative effects, such as in waterhungry areas of India, are either misunderstood or ignored. Meanwhile, their benefits in places like Costa Rica, where landowners are compensated for conserving forests based in part on a belief that forests provide more water, may have been literally oversold.

"We're not saying forests never produce water benefits or that they don't have an important role in the ecosystem," said Ian Calder, director of the Centre for Land Use and Water Resources Research at the University of Newcastle. "But if we are trying to manage our water resources effectively, the overenthusiastic adoption of the simple view that 'more trees are always better' is a prime example of how a failure to root decisions in scientific evidence leads to bad water policy." Calder's work with Ashvin Gosain and other experts from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, revealed that increased tree planting in the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh has had a negative effect on water supplies. Their research indicates that efforts to convert agricultural lands to forests in the area could cause a 16 percent to 26 percent reduction in water yields.

The findings may warrant a review of water management projects that include aggressive tree planting initiatives, as there is strong evidence that rainfall in forests evaporates up to twice as fast as it does in treeless areas. If increased forestation leads to reductions in streamflows, then trees could be contributing to a drop in groundwater tables and reservoir levels. The FRP report notes that the negative effect of forests on water levels observed in India is buttressed by previous research in South Africa, where commercial plantations of non-native tree species have been found to reduce surface runoff nationally by 3.2 percent. South Africa now requires commercial forest operators to pay an "interception levy" to account for the high water use and reduced stream flows associated with timber plantations. This is one reason that Calder and other researchers view South Africa as a model for how to match water policy to scientific evidence.

In related work in Costa Rica, an FRP co-funded research team led by the Free University of Amsterdam's Sampurno Bruijnzeel, one of the world's leading experts on the effect of forests on water supply, looked extensively at the relationship between tropical mountain forests and water resources. The team concluded that overall amounts of streamflow from certain wet, forested areas were very similar to those from adjacent pasture lands. Bruijnzeel and his colleagues have been probing the conventional view that these mountain forests, often called "cloud forests," collect and retain much more moisture than non-forested areas because their soaring canopies "strip" water from low-lying clouds and fog, something grasslands can't do. Bruijnzeel said it turns out that much of what was thought to be water stripped from the clouds was in fact horizontal wind-driven rain. This rainfall wasn't being captured by rain gauges used in nearby treeless areas, he said, leading to the mistaken assumption that the forests collected much more water than pasture lands.

When Bruijnzeel's team developed a way to measure the moisture captured from wind-driven rain and fog, they found only small differences–for example, cloud forests capture 25 percent of winddriven rain compared to 15 percent for pasture lands–some of which was canceled out by the fact that more moisture evaporates from forests than from grassy areas.

Bruijnzeel said there are isolated "hot spots" in Costa Rica where forests collect a particularly large amount of moisture from cloudsvmore than 300 millimeters per year compared to less than 100 millimeters in other cloud forest regions–but noted that these are relatively small areas. Overall, his work shows that in most cases converting cloud forests to pasture land does not cause major reductions in water yields. This discovery is important for policies that offer payments for forest conservation on the premise that the money is buying more water.

The good news, according to FRP-supported scientists, is that some countries are adjusting their water management practices to conform to the science. For example, Indian officials appear open to rethinking water management practices based on the research conducted by FRP-supported experts and are particularly interested in considering South Africa's water management successes. Also, in Costa Rica, officials are reviewing the new evidence on cloud forests and water production.

But challenges loom. For example, Panama is seeking hundreds of millions of dollars in World Bank support for a massive forestation project based on the assumption–which appears to run counter to scientific evidence–that planting more trees will increase water flows to the reservoirs that feed the Panama Canal.

"The point of our work is to show that the science surrounding water uses and land use change is constantly evolving and policies and practices need to reflect this," said John Palmer, Manager of FRP. "Given the large sums being invested in good faith in water management projects that will be critical to the welfare of entire nations, it is critical that these projects be based on scientific evidence of their benefits."

Forestry Research Programme of DFID

Association News

Strengthening the role of forestry in civil society

Report from the CFA Side Event at the 17th Commonwealth Forestry Conference

Civil Society is defined as a wide array of non governmental and not for profit organisations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific or philanthropic considerations. Civil Society Organisations and social networks operate at grassroots level and represent the interests of poor and marginalized communities and promote

a common agenda that reflects the interests of the poor. Civil Society Organisations are important for forestry and natural resource management because they among others:

- Contribute to national development by addressing poverty and gender related issues.
- Involve community development providing vital services such as education, healthcare and social services.
- They advocate in areas of national resource allocation and distribution.
- Coordinate the efforts of groups through umbrella organisations.
- Mobilize volunteers, advisors and holders of past and traditional knowledge.
- Work to empower people.
- Have intimate knowledge of grass roots issues and realities and are active in protecting the natural & physical environments and cultural heritage.
- Coordinate the efforts of individual groups through umbrella organisations.
- Provide a counterbalance to competitive and commercial values with values that are people centred and cooperative.
- Provide independent advice/feedback and embody community memory and traditions (often lacking in the government and private sector), and remind governments of past agreements and treaties.

The objective of the workshop was to understand the importance of strengthening civil society for forest management across the Commonwealth through

- Sharing foresters' experiences of interaction with the civil society across the Commonwealth.
- Having a platform for national branches to give feedback to CFA on civil society and examine ways in which CFA could contribute to its development.
- Providing a platform for NGOs and other civil society organisations for CHOGM.
- Following-up up on suggestions emerging out of the workshop.

Presentation highlights

Ajith Chandran (India)

While working with NGOs and also while doing research he realised that there is a very strong need to develop mechanisms for building understanding between NGOs and the Forest Department. The relationship between the Forest Department and the village institution also needed to be improved at grassroots specifically as the local community who are dependent on forest are also mostly the poorest and the most disadvantaged often having difficulty in having a meaningful and balanced relationship with the forest department. A major role of NGOs is in bridging this gap. Unfortunately while the role of NGOs are recognised and given importance at the Central and state level, at the operational level they face many problems

Priscilla Nyadoi (Uganda)

The forestry department/government contracts civil society (community-based organisations, Non Governmental organisations, individuals, professional bodies/consultants) to perform forestry activities on their behalf. The activities that have been done on behalf of the forestry sector include; community mobilisation for forestry activities, networking, tree planting on farm, advocacy and lobbying on policy issues affecting forestry activities at national and community levels, training, information dissemination and awareness raising, community and professionals empowerment to perform forestry activities and demand for participation in management and benefits from forestry and environmental resources.

Rainee Oliphant (Jamaica)

CSOs have a significant role to play in the forestry sector in Jamaica.

Successes

- Participatory approach generally accepted by government and CSOs.
- Projects have been accepted by funding institutions because of interventions made by Forest Department on behalf of several CSOs.
- Land accessed by LFMC through Forest Department. Nursery formed to grow seedlings and contracts signed by Forest Department to facilitate payment for them.
- Acquisition of additional funding (IFCA) to do tropical forest conservation projects.
- Reforestation projects underway on state owned land with funding accessed by civil society group in conjunction with Forest Department.

Dan Raymond (Solomon Islands)

Mr Raymond addressed the issue of civil society through a case study based on his experiences. Solomon Islands (SI) is a less developed country which lacks any true party system. The government is shifting targets both in terms of people and policy concerns thus continuity in policy implementation becomes difficult. The situation if civil society is no different from other countries including the usual international NGOs with their organisation's individual goals. There is a plethora of local organisations often focussed mainly on tapping donor funds and therefore often pushing messages and news expressed by donor.

Unfortunately the experience suggests that a better-informed public does not translate to significant reforms in the forest sector. There is so much money in the sector and such a disturbed forum of democracy that public pressure almost never translates to reforms. So does civil society have a role? Reform is slow, but one has to start somewhere. Lobbying is still a key role of the civil society but in SI public awareness is probably the key activity right now for civil society. Forestry is one issue but governance, public health for example AIDS, education and of course valuing the natural environment are also great examples of areas where civil society is playing and will continue to play an essential role into the future.

Discussion highlights

Role played by CSOs

It was generally agreed that CSOs work in all countries and have an important role to play. In some countries the number of CSOs were low. In Sri Lanka the number of CSOs working on forestry and development works was reportedly very few. It was however felt that the recognition given to any CSO varied from country to country. In many countries the Constitution recognized the functions of CSOs specifically

those that are registered as societies. Despite difficulties in recognition, the role and extent of activities undertaken by of CSOs was recognized as broad.

Issues faced by CSOs and critical problems

While is many countries like Sri Lanka, low number of CSO in itself is seen as an issue, in countries like India the mushrooming of CSOs without much credibility seems to create skepticism. It was suggested that a private audit could be done similar to green rating projects to keep check of the quality of CSOs. Despite these general situations the CSOs address some very critical problems of land and conflict.

Conflict Management

It was felt that CSOs could do conflict resolution. In many cases however they do not do so. In Nepal for instance it is felt that CSOs could assist in addressing the Maoist problem. It was suggested that it might be a future role that CSOs may play in time to come.

Suggestions/way forward

It was felt that the time seems appropriate for consolidation and linking with other link minded organisations. It was suggested that CFA could bring together other environmental organisations as well under one umbrella. Networking well could strengthen the CSOs more, and add to learning from each other.

Key outputs for the CFA

At the beginning of the workshop each participant was asked to answer 2 key questions. These were then collated by and divided into categories for a basis and guide for possible CFA involvement with Civil Society organisations in the future.

Is the role of Civil Society recognised in your country?

General answers to the question

- It is an acknowledgement of the need for a strong Civil Society movement to deepen democracy in the country but the problems is around the relationship with government and credibility as a voice of the poor in a politically charged environment
- (India) The recognition of Civil Society organisations depended upon their egalitarian attitudes, credibility and development concerns – a few Civil Society organisations are recognised, but not all.
- (India) the role of Civil Society is recognised – legal support is available for registration and running of CSOs, which function in a democratic and decentralised manner.
- (Solomon Islands) recognised primarily by donor agencies, with Government often preferring to ignore Civil Society. It is important to understand Civil Society as it often posts an agenda that is not shared by many in the country of operations.

How can the Commonwealth Forestry Association, as a professional organisation strengthen the recognition and role of Civil Society?

Meetings & Awareness

- Strengthen capacity of forestry associations at regional and national level through regular workshops where experiences on working with Civil Society can be shared.
- By drawing benefits from grassroots knowledge that the Civil societies generally have access to.
- Educate them on lapses in forestry issues and provide them with reports from conferences and workshops organised by the CFA.
- Build capacity of both Civil and state to work together through seminars, workshops etc.
- Promoting and acknowledging the country's chapter to take up 'brain storming' sessions / Training/conferences.
- Assist in awareness raising amongst community based organisations, NGOs, CSOs in respect to forestry and forestry related issues.
- Making information available about forest issues and in particular cases where there is a lack of justice associated with forest dwellers, workers and the owners of forested land.
- Incorporate them into training workshops and conferences so as to offer a platform where they can interact and share experiences and challenges.
- Seminars and training in: accessing donor funds, building and strengthening of institutions and transparency and accountability.
- Mainstreaming issues in appropriate forums including trade, environment and forestry, illegal logging and strengths of robust policies on community forestry.
- Development of resource agreements on resource management with the Government through facilitating cross sectional meeting between the Civil Society and the Government.
- Undertake advocacy with relevant international organisations for deliberations of the CFC.
- Provide regular meetings and updates on forestry Civil Society interface.

Networking

- Link with established NGOs in forestry / environmental management; encourage them to join the CFA.
- Through networking CSOs; providing technical support and including in the newsletter information about activities undertaken by CSOs in different countries.
- Civil Society is small and isolated – could benefit from upward linkages
- Provide for an exchange of information and experiences between NGOs e.g. web based discussion groups
- CFA should network CSOs from national level with the regional level to come together to share their experiences, time and financial services.
- Enter into partnerships with national forestry Civil Society
- Enhance and/or create linkages between CFA and CSOs
- Establish a network of members of the CFA
- Enhance and widen the associations linkages and conduct international conferences
- Promote and facilitate networking and exchanges between weak and strong CSOs
- Establish a forum for CSOs
- By linking with existing CSOs who have some interest

in forestry and environmental issues
- Civil societies in all countries interested in forestry activities can be linked under the umbrella of the CFA. Their activities can be supported, monitored and highlighted by CFA wing in the different countries.

Funding & Direct Support
- Capacity building with NGOs so in turn NGOs capacity build with poor people
- By offering support to activities
- Capacity building – but not in isolation!
- CFA should encourage skills development for students of forestry in community work and capacity building
- Facilitate the transfer of ownership and resources and management of some natural resources to Civil Society
- Support them financially
- Facilitate the empowerment of Civil Society by the state
- Documentation and disseminating information of work done by Civil Society (NGOs)
- Provide professional and technical support
- Reduce donor dependency of some Civil Society
- Support to increase social capacity of forest departments (social forestry)
- Provide support in young professionals with regards to training and development
- Provide information on sources of forestry information (for example on the internet)
- Support financially the CSOs that are involved in forest conservation & sustainable harvesting of forest products.
- Include them in more programs
- Seek funds for Commonwealth CSOs to be able to organise to represent common positions at international policy development events dissemination of the results of studies on community development related to forestry issues and successful examples of such developments to the broader Society including the government and the markets

CFA UK tour to the Lake District

A blustery early June in the English Lake District saw the UK branch tour visit a range of forestry enterprises in the region. Our first stop was at the home of the President of the Royal Forestry Society of England and Wales, John Fryer-Spedding, who kindly showed us around his Mirehouse estate. Discussions focussed on forestry measures which could be taken to mitigate the potential legal issues facing land owners who need to balance their desire for public access with their liability against public safety. An interesting challenge in what is often perceived to be a climate of litigation.

In the evening, the Annual CFA UK Branch Dinner in the beautiful village of Grasmere gave our Chair, Jim Ball, a chance to summarise developments in the Association over the past year and map out future plans.

On the following day Cumbria Woodlands Director Edward Mills explained about how his non-profit making organisation co-ordinates grants and advices woodland owners and farmers. Brian Crawley of Woodland Ways who is a member of the scheme also gave a fascinating insight into coppicing and charcoal making operations at the same location.

The afternoon visit to Grizedale Forest provided an insight into the history of Grizedale Forest and the Grizedale Forest Project which aims to create a Recreational and Rural Industries Centre integrating tourism, forestry, farming and sustainable rural development.

John Fryer-Spedding discusses management at Mirehouse.

CFA members enjoying bracing weather

A rather unseasonably wet and cold day greeted the group the next day at the Hervey Memorial National Nature Reserve at Whitbarrow, Kendal where we were brought face-to-face with the increasingly common situation encounted by the Foresty Commisson where they seek to work with local Wildlife Trusts and other interested parties in transition management of their land. In the case of Whitbarrow the legacy of early FC tree planting on unsuitable land was witnessed over land which is gradually being changed to encourage and nurture local wildlife. We were also able to see Bellart How Moss, one of the largest remaining areas of lowland raised bog habitat in Britain where the Cumbria Wildlife Trust is now planning to restore the habitat during a five-year restoration in one of the biggest restoration projects carried out in Britain.

The organisation of the tour was flawless and great thanks were expressed by everyone to CFA member Nicole Mirza of Glendale Managed Services for her excellent work in managing all arrangements.

E-newsletter for Australia

The Australian Branch of the Commonwealth Forestry Association is pleased to launch the inaugural issue of 'Australia Branch e-news'. This electronic newsletter will be emailed to members fortnightly in association with the University of British Columbia. The newsletter will highlight recent events in Australia that may be of interest to members at home and abroad.

If you would like to be put onto the mailing list please contact cfa_australia@hotmail.com

CFA Zambia and IFSA co-operation commences

Plant resources contribute to our way of life in innumerable ways: some direct and others indirect. Knowledge of various genera of plant resources appears to have side-stepped political will in Zambia. And the end result has been the narrowing of forest resources contribution to the social, economic, cultural and environment development to timber and charcoal burning! Various commentators on the performance of the forestry sector in Zambia, including, government line ministries and departments, have bemoaned the lack of management plans for Zambia's forests.

Beyond this, management plans also fall short of addressing such resources as rivers, lakes, etc.. and how these vital resources can be used as conduits for development paradigms.

From the time the Commonwealth Forestry Association, Zambian Branch was inaugurated in 1998; there has been a gradually growing emphasis on opening up negotiations on agriculture, forestry and rural development in order to reduce the 'pressure' on fragile ecological resources. Because poverty pervades much of rural Zambia, where there is a thin hope of conserving and preserving natural habitats and resource's *status quo*, gluttonous opportunities have unfolded that have led to the wanton exploitation of these vital resources to meet society's requirement for bread and butter.

Developing management plans for Zambia's natural habitats has become a rallying cry and has been elusive on the national development agenda. In this line, I contend that this is the missing link in 'forests and their respective habitats' and as a primary reasons why forestry's contribution to the GNP per income is negligible in Zambia. Such an unhealthy consequence from a lukewarm approach to the way we perceive natural resources development where forestry appear underestimated to stem from the fact that information is a basis upon which developing management strategies depend. Through gathering information on the extent, context dynamism and nomenclature of plant resources there is a likelihood that some capacity can be built in helping to design management plans and sustain our natural resource for the benefit of today's future generations.

As a consequence, the Commonwealth Forestry Association Zambian Branch planned for a programme to begin investigating the ecological dynamics of Zambia and Forestry inventory in early 2000. But the question was; how would we respond to the financial risks that such an ambitious exercise poses? For CFA Zambian Branch, one way was to raise a clarion call to partners both within and outside the country to help facilitate the building of this important information base. One such partner that responded favourably was the International Forestry Students Association (IFSA) by placing an advertisement on their website, www.ifsa.net, inviting and directing students to take up the challenge that our forestry sector in Zambia poses for education and eventual development.

Since 2004, the Zambian Branch of CFA has received application from the UK, Germany, Nigeria and the Netherlands and which are being and others have already been processed. On 3rd March 2005, CFA Zambian Branch successfully received one intern from the Federal Republic of Germany. Miss Hanni Huber, 24 years is a Forestry student at the University of Applied Sciences (Weihenstephan), Freising, Germany. She is in her sixth semester (3rd year). Hanni had, before coming to Zambia, spent her first practical semester in Landshut (Forest District in Germany) where she came to terms with typical practices of modern forestry work coupled with an additional experience of forestry work. In her fourth Semester, she had practical experience with forest inventory.

The CFA Zambian Branch entered into an agreement with IFSA for the project to investigate the ecological dynamics of Zambia and forest inventory. Within this programme is the requirement to develop the Luapula River Conservation Plan Project. Luapula River is shared between two riparian states: Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Her job description includes surveying, mapping of soils and vegetation beginning with Mansa district. Upon her arrival on 3rd March 2005, Hanni began by completing a month long orientation of Lusaka, the capital of Zambia from 4th March to 3rd April. During this period she was attached to different partner institutions such as the Lusaka Museum (Nature Reserve), the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) and the Traditional Foods Association of Zambia (TFAZ). This is a step to begin domesticating resolutions and recommendations passed at the just ended 17th Commonwealth Forestry Congress, 28th February 2005 to March 2005, Sri Lanka, on the role of Forestry in Poverty reduction and I quote: "The Conference calls upon Commonwealth governments to involve their Forestry Department, Civil Society and non-governments partners fully wider government programmes for social justice, poverty reduction and mainstreaming gender, ensuring that national forest programmes are explicitly linked to national poverty reduction strategies and incorporated into expenditure frameworks in the wake of the millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Such is a significant step geared up to harmonise and complement government efforts by addressing identified weakness practically.

For Zambia as a whole, we the citizens stand to benefit from the wealth of information anticipated to be generated district by district over a span, which is long term, as we do not anticipate immediate results. For our partners and especially researchers, class work is not the basis for understanding forestry as a discipline. The actual learning takes place in the forest. The various principles of forestry as taught in a classroom can be properly be understood and practiced out in the field. For CFA International, there is a likelihood of more members joining in.

Victor Kawanga, CFA Zambia Branch

Special Feature: Malaysia

Implementation of MTCC timber certification scheme

By **Chew Lye Teng**, Chief Executive Officer, Malaysian Timber Certification Council

Introduction

In Malaysia, the need to implement timber certification as a means to encourage and ensure the sustainable management of Malaysia's forest resources, as well as to meet the market demand for certified timber products, has been recognised and in response to these needs, the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) started operations in 1999 as an independent organisation to develop and operate a voluntary national timber certification scheme. MTCC is governed by a Board of Trustees comprising representatives from the key stakeholder groups in Malaysia, i.e. timber industry, non-governmental organisations, academic and research institutions and government agencies.

Overview of MTCC scheme

The MTCC timber certification scheme is summarised in Figure 1. As the timber certification body, MTCC receives and processes applications for certification, arranges for assessments to be carried out by its registered independent assessors, and decides on all such applications, based on the reports of the assessors. The assessment report for forest management certification will be subject to a peer review process by qualified individuals who are registered with MTCC for this purpose. MTCC also provides an appeals procedure, should there be parties which are not satisfied with its decisions.

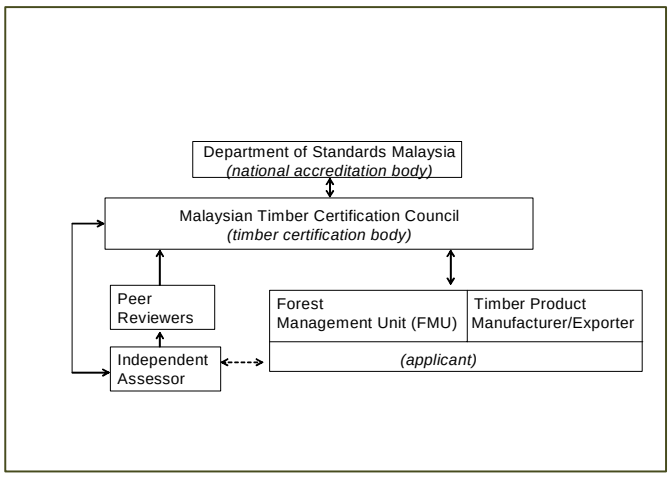

FIGURE 1 *MTCC timber certification scheme*

Malaysia has been recognised as one of the twelve mega-diverse areas in the world and its tropical forests are very complex. The management of these tropical forests is more challenging and demanding compared to temperate and boreal forests. Not only is the sustainable management of these forests a very difficult task; in addition a good amount of scientifically-backed information and technical knowledge, as well as financial and human resources, are required to develop cost-effective and practical management prescriptions that can be used by forest managers to achieve sustainable forest management. As with the other tropical developing countries, Malaysia needs time and assistance to obtain such information, knowledge and resources. It is hence necessary that the certification process should be implemented using a phased approach.

The MTCC timber certification scheme therefore began operation in October 2001 using a phased approach. The standard currently used for assessing Forest Management Units (FMUs) for the purpose of certification is the *Malaysian Criteria, Indicators, Activities and Standards of Performance for Forest Management Certification (MC&I 2001)* which is based on the 1998 ITTO *Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests*.

For the next phase of its certification scheme, MTCC plans to use a new standard *(MC&I 2002)* that has been developed using the Principles and Criteria of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as the template. 2005 is the transition year for the change from the use of *MC&I 2001* to *MC&I 2002*.

The standard for chain-of-custody certification used by MTCC is the *Requirements and Assessment Procedures for Chain-of-Custody Certification (RAP/COC)*. MTCC plans to use a revised version of this standard, i.e. the *Requirements for Chain-of-Custody Certification (RCOC)* in 2006.

MTCC certificates

Under the MTCC certification scheme, two types of certificates are issued. The *Certificate for Forest Management* is issued to FMUs which have complied with the requirements of the forest management standard, while compliance with the chain-of-custody standard will qualify timber product manufacturers or exporters for the *Certificate for Chain-of-Custody*.

To date, nine FMUs (eight in Peninsular Malaysia and one in Sarawak) covering a total of 4.73 million hectares of Permanent Reserved Forests have been awarded the *Certificate*

for Forest Management. This area represents about 33% of the total Permanent Reserved Forest in Malaysia. As at April 2005, 66 timber companies have been awarded the *Certificate for Chain-of-Custody*.

The MTCC certificates are valid for a period of five years. Certificate holders will be subject to regular surveillance visits by assessors during the period of validity, to ensure that they continue to comply to the requirements of the relevant standards.

Export of MTCC-certified timber products

The first shipment of MTCC-certified timber was exported in July 2002, and by the end of April 2005, a total of 31 294 m^3 of MTCC-certified sawn timber, plywood, mouldings, S4S and laminated timber have been exported to The Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, France and Australia.

As a result of the promotion programmes which have been carried out, a number of authorities and companies have shown interest in accepting MTCC-certified timber products. For example, the Danish Ministry of the Environment has included the MTCC scheme as an accepted scheme in its document *Purchasing Tropical Timber: Environmental Guidelines*.

Feedback from assessments using the MC&I 2001

During the main assessments and follow-up surveillance audits carried out in the certified FMUs against the requirements of the *MC&I* 2001, a number of Corrective Action Requests (CARs) were issued, some of which involved areas of non-compliance that would require more research inputs before appropriate management prescriptions can be formulated to provide guidance to the forest managers to meet the requirements of the *MC&I* (2001). These include the following:-

(i) Cost-effective and practical methods for use by forest managers in the field to monitor water quality in logged-over forest areas;
(ii) Procedures to identify endangered, rare and threatened species of forest flora and fauna, and cost-effective ways to monitor and protect them;
(iii) Assessment of current harvesting prescriptions for protecting water quality;
(iv) Research on the implementation of current prescriptions for sustained yield within predetermined harvest levels and cutting cycles to determine their efficacy in terms of meeting the set objectives under the management system;
(v) Procedures to monitor growth, composition and structure of residual forest stands. Issues to be considered are pertaining to logging damage threshold levels, number, size and species of retention trees, impact of logging and other operations, and growth parameters;
(vi) Developing cost-effective and operational methods to monitor changes in forest biodiversity in logged-over areas;
(vii) Determining appropriate level of participation of local

stakeholders in the forest planning and management processes; and
(viii) Cost-effective and practical technologies and techniques for reduced impact logging (RIL) to be applied by forest managers in the field, especially for harvesting activities at higher altitudes or in steeper areas.

Conclusions

With the assessment of the nine FMUs, a significant area of Permanent Reserved Forests has now been independently assessed under the MTCC certification scheme. These assessments have provided valuable information about the current status of forest management in Malaysia, particularly on aspects which need improvement and further research.

The positive effects of timber certification in the certified FMUs and its contribution towards the achievement of the sustainable management of these resources has been acknowledged by various stakeholder groups. Certified timber products from the MTCC certification scheme are now available from Malaysia and the export volumes have increased steadily.

It is hoped that the phased approach taken by MTCC can be accepted and supported by the international market, in order to encourage the efforts which are being made towards sustainable forest management in Malaysia.

Malaysia's challenges in sustainable forest management

By **Thang Hooi Chiew**, former Deputy Director–General of Forestry,
(Forest Planning & Development), Peninsular Malaysia, Malaysia

Under the Malaysian Constitution, forestry comes under the jurisdiction of the respective State Governments. As such, each State is empowered to enact laws on forestry and to formulate forestry policy independently. The executive authority of the Federal Government only extends to the provision of advice and technical assistance to the States, training, the conduct of research, and in the maintenance of experimental and demonstration stations.

Hence, in order to facilitate the adoption of a co-ordinated and common approach to forestry, as well as reconcile cross-sectoral policies that interface with the forestry sector, a National Forestry Council was established in 1971 to serve as a forum for the Federal and State Governments to discuss and resolve common problems and issues relating to forestry policy, administration and management, as well as to enhance co-operation between the Federal and State Governments in implementing policies and programmes related to forestry.

At the end of 2003, the total area of forests in Malaysia was estimated to be 19.52 million hectares or 59.5% of the total land area, with per capita of forest area estimated to be 0.78 hectares. Of the total forested area, only 1.3% or 254,717 hectares had been planted with commercial forest plantations, while a total of 14.39 million hectares has been designated as Permanent Reserved Forests (PRFs) which is under sustainable management. Approximately 11.18 million hectares of the PRFs are production forests with the remaining 3.21 million hectares being protection forests.

Malaysia has also 2.40 million hectares of conservation areas which are totally protected by legislation. Of these, 2.15 million hectares are located outside the PRFs, whilst the balance of 0.25 million hectares are located within the PRFs. Hence, with the protection forests of the PRFs, the totally protected areas designated for the conservation of biological diversity in Malaysia are now estimated to be 5.36 million hectares, representing 27.5% of its total forested land or 16.3% of its land area.

In Malaysia, under sustainable forest management, the Dipterocarp and Peat Swamp Forests are selectively harvested which are based on prescribed minimum cutting limits with cutting cycles varying from 25 to 55 years; while mature trees in the Mangrove Forest are clear-felled. All forest harvesting operations have to be carried out in accordance with the Forestry Departments' specifications, rules and guidelines, particularly those pertaining to road construction, alignment, gradient, and drainage; tree marking and the direction of felling; as well as the setting up of log-yards.

In this context, as the construction of forest roads during timber harvesting operations constitutes a major part of the total environmental degradation, there is an urgent need to further refine the current reduced-impact logging (RIL) practices as logging is now moving into much steeper areas. This is pertinent as forest roads that are properly designed, constructed according to environmentally sound engineering practices and well-maintained would provide convenient low-cost access to forest products, especially in rural areas, as well as serve the needs for forest management, conservation and protection. The revenue generated from the harvested forest products, notably industrial timber, would provide the much needed resources to enhance sustainable forest management in the long term. Thus, the challenge is to construct forest roads that minimise adverse environmental impacts and safeguard the productivity of the site, especially during forest harvesting.

In fact, the current forest management practices would not only need to be further refined so as to minimise their adverse impacts on the forest biological diversity and its sustainability, but also to fully implement the 270 Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests(IFF) Proposals for Action that are relevant to Malaysia. Choices will have to be made to prioritise one habitat or species over another. In some cases, long term conservation strategies may also have to include the rehabilitation and the setting aside of primary forests. Mangroves and coastal forest ecosystems should also be given special focus as they are of major importance in the functioning of important life processes and in protecting the coastal areas as the recent tsunami in December 2004 had demonstrated.

The challenge for biological diversity conservation, therefore, is not to 'halt deforestation' but to secure a minimum set of strategically located primary forests in representative areas having high diversity and endemism. The areas surrounding the biological reserves should also be simultaneously managed to meet social and economic goals. Similarly, in production forests, it is pertinent to identify 'keystone' species or other components of special ecological values for protection and conservation.

Furthermore, the water situation in Malaysia, over the past decades, has changed from one of relative abundance to one of relative scarcity. Hence, there is a need to not only understand the impacts of forest management practices on on-site water quality and yield, erosion and sedimentation, streamflow patterns etc., but also those affecting off-site values; as well as the relationship between upstream and downstream activities. Greater emphasis should be accorded to watershed management in order to enhance food production in high-yield areas.

In this regard, benchmarks for the quantification of watershed parameters, and in particular, the cumulative watershed effects from forest management activities, especially those involved in forest harvesting, which may impact on the long-term sustainability of the forest ecosystem need to be developed. Notwithstanding this, current research findings should be translated into site-specific operational forest management prescriptions so as to control the extent and severity of soil disturbance and erosion, and to determine the extent and spatial distribution of riparian and other watershed protection areas, including waterbodies, required during forest harvesting operations. This is especially critical for the mangrove and peat swamp forests in Malaysia as quantitative information of the hydrological impacts of harvesting these forests is still lacking as much of the research programmes thus far have been concentrated in the inland forests.

As sustainable forest management can contributes towards carbon dioxide (CO_2) emission reduction and to carbon sequestration, three strategies should be adopted for managing forest carbon. First, efforts should be taken to increase the amount or rate of carbon sequestration by creating or enhancing carbon sinks through afforestation,

reforestation and restoration of degraded lands, including forest lands. Second, action be taken to prevent or reduce the rate of release of carbon already stored in carbon sinks through conservation of biomass and soil carbon in existing forest stands; improved harvesting practices, such RIL; and improved efficiency in wood processing and better fire protection. Third, efforts should also be taken to reduce the demand for fossil fuels through increased conversion of wood biomass into durable wood products for use in place of energy-intensive materials, such as steel and aluminium; increased use of biofuels with the introduction of bioenergy plantations; and enhanced utilisation of harvesting and mill wastes as feedstock for biofuel.

To meet the demand of environmentally sensitive market for certified timber and timber products that emanate legally from sustainably managed forests, especially in Europe, nine forest management units (FMUs) covering a total of 4.73 million hectares of PRFs or representing 32.9% of the total PRFs in Malaysia have been assessed by independent third party assessors using the *Malaysian Criteria, Indicators, Activities and Standards of Performance for Forest Management Certification, 2001* which was developed from the 1998 International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) *Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests*. These FMUs have been awarded the *Certificate for Forest Management* by the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC), with eight of the certified FMUs located in Peninsular Malaysia while the other remaining FMU in the state of Sarawak.

However, further work is needed to develop, first, more effective procedures for assessing changes in forest biological diversity and water quality of streams emerging from logged-over forests as compared with similar areas that are kept free from human intervention; second, appropriate mechanisms to resolve disputes, conflicts and grievances, particularly those over tenure claims and use rights; third, procedures for evaluating social impact of forest operations directly affecting communities; and fourth, to document traditional forest-related knowledge and practices of indigenous people in the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations.

In the coming years, much more attention will also be paid to the importance of non-wood forest products, and in particular herbs and medicinal plants, as it has been estimated that the current market value of US$ 1.2 billion of herbal and medicinal products in Malaysia would grow at a rate of 10-15% a year.

Nevertheless, current economic valuation of forest resources based on the monetary costs of extraction and distribution has often resulted in inadequate incentives for sustainable resource use, which in turn induce over consumption of forest products and environmental degradation. There is, therefore, a need to further develop mechanisms and methodologies for valuation of the many diverse goods and services that the forest provides, especially those that are not readily traded in the markets. Some of these include watershed protection, carbon sequestration and in the conservation of biological diversity. The internalisation of environmental costs will dispel the assumption that the environment is a free good, while the full valuation of forest goods and services would yield surpluses for investment in sustainable forest management.

There is no universally available forest management practices that can be uniformly applied to ensure forest sustainability as what is defined as sustainable may vary with time and space as societal demand for forest goods and services change. Optimising the various values to be derived from forest would require the conventional forest management unit or stand to be managed in the context of the broader landscapes, and that the traditional system of sustained-yield management, which is based on the concept of an equilibrium or a balance between growth and harvest that can be sustained in perpetuity be replaced by a new paradigm of multi-resource forest management that involves the simultaneous production of forest goods and services which is compatible with the need to preserve the forest ecosystem and the environment.

While there is no denying that there are still some outstanding issues unresolved, nevertheless, given the constraints, Malaysia has certainly not been side-stepping conservation and environmental issues in managing and developing its forest resources. This renewable asset will continue to be managed in accordance with national objectives and priorities so that the country will continue to enjoy the benefits generated from the forest and forest industries. The present strategies to retain natural forest, to create man-made forest in strategic locations and to rehabilitate logged-over forest have been implemented because there is genuine concern for the continued existence of the tropical forest heritage.

The log-term viability for sound and sustainable forest management and conservation in Malaysia will be one that balances the needs of the economy, environment and ecology.

The role of a forestry research and development institution in the conservation, development, and sustainable management of tropical forests in Malaysia

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Background

Conservation, development, and sustainable management of tropical forests in Malaysia is not a new endeavor for those who are directly involved with the forestry sector, including the scientific community. For instance, the issue of sustainable management of forest resources, an ever-challenging field, gained the attention of foresters in Malaya back in the early 1900s. Historical records indicate that Malaysia has been practicing sustainable management of her forest resources since 1901, i.e., during the period when the British ruled the country. In short, the existence of some form of forest management clearly indicates that Malaysians have made a concerted effort to manage the country's forest resources on a sustainable basis.

At this juncture, has anyone ever thought how the

different forest management systems were created, and how they have been implemented and improved? The implementation of the forest management system *per se* may not be directly related to R&D, but the creation of and improvements to that system certainly have involved the scientific community. As an institution responsible for R&D, the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) has acted and will continue to act as a backbone in generating new and improving existing scientific knowledge to support the forestry sector. To date, the importance of FRIM's contribution through its research community is recognized not only in the generation of scientific knowledge but also in the formulation and implementation of forestry matters. It is only through hard evidence from such research findings that decisions will be more realistic and acceptable.

What has FRIM done and what will it do to support conservation, development, and sustainable management of the country's tropical forests?

In the early days of the Forest Research Institute (FRI), R&D was focused mainly on botany, silviculture, entomology, wood anatomy, and timber. With the formation of FRIM in 1985, the Institute's objectives were expanded to cover research on forest management, environmental science, forest-product utilization, and forest economics. Today, R&D conducted by FRIM's scientists extends from basic to applied to applied areas, and is meant to serve clients' needs. Besides conducting R&D on its own, FRIM also has been engaged with international organizations, such as the International Topical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Danish International Development Authority (DANIDA), and other world-renowned institutions, in conducting forestry research with an international dimension. The following sections will give readers a quick rundown on R&D conducted in FRIM, as efforts to enhance the conservation, development, and sustainable management of the forest resources. The listing does not represent any order of ranking, as all R&D activities are equally important in ensuring that the benefits of the forests are sustainable and equally shared by present as well as future generations.

a) Conservation of Forest Resources

Malaysia is recognized as one of the 12 mega-diverse countries of the world, with rich and pristine forests that host about 12,000 species of flowering plants and more than 1,000 species of ferns and fern allies. Nevertheless, even though Malaysia has established 23 ex-situ collection centers in various states as means of protecting and conserving her biological resources, gaps remain in the management of non-tree plants, such as rare plants, shrubs, climbers, herbs, epiphytes, and others.

i) The Tropical Forest Biodiversity Centre (TFBC)

Currently, FRIM is conducting many projects related to conservation, such as Dipterocarp conservation studies, conservation assessment of threatened plant species, and plant geography and important plant areas. Equipped with excellent infrastructure (e.g., the National Herbarium and live arboreta of forest species) and strong technical back-up, FRIM is considered to be an ideal site to set up the TFBC, which aims at conserving and sustainably utilizing forest resources. The TFBC at FRIM became a reality when, early this year, the Government of Malaysia (GoM) announced that the Institute should take the lead in inventorying and documenting flora and fauna in Malaysia. Although this directive is a tall order and presents a huge challenge to scientists and FRIM, in the long run it will be beneficial to forestry in terms of conservation and management of biological resources.

ii) Conservation Genetics

To support the effort to conserve forest resources, FRIM also has set up a Genetic Unit under the Forest Biotechnology Programme. To date, the Genetics Unit has developed various types of genetic markers, such as Amplified Fragment Length Polymorphism (AFLP), isozymes, Randomly Amplified Polymorphic DNA (RAPD), and microsatellites to study the population structure and the genetic diversity among populations of species. The laboratory also assists the plant taxonomist to clear doubts in the classification of species by employing molecular techniques to differentiate species in a genus.

iii) Other Conservation Efforts

In addition to focusing on inland forest species, more attention is now being given to conserving mangrove and other coastal ecosystems as protectors against coastal erosion, storm surges, and calamities like tsunamis. FRIM is playing an active role in this conservation effort as the Director General of FRIM himself is the chairman of the Technical Committee on Mangroves.

b) Development of Forest Resources

The inconsistent supply of logs from forest plantations has left the GoM no choice but to take serious strides to develop more large-scale forest plantations. In fact, FRIM's contribution to this field started back in the 1950s. At that time, much of the work on forest plantations concentrated on the formation of sample plots, such as teak (*Tectona grandis*) and many other potential species.

i) Forest Plantation

With increasing pressure for an alternative timber supply, a decision was made to set up the Forest Plantation Programme at FRIM in 2003. Today, R&D in Forest Plantation Programme covers such topics as selection of species, optimal silvicultural practices for forest plantations, species site-matching, and prevention and control of pests and diseases. To improve the cash-flow problem, FRIM has also advocated integrating timber trees with agricultural crops or livestock on the same piece of land, i.e., adopting an agroforestry approach. Efforts to encourage private-sector involvement in forest plantation projects have begun to bear fruit as increasing numbers of potential investors are contacting FRIM on this subject.

ii) Forest Biotechnology

To shorten the rotation period for timber species planted on a plantation basis, the tissue culture laboratory, under the Forest Biotechnology Programme, FRIM, undertakes all forms of *in vitro* manipulation work. To date, several forest species have been successfully tissue-cultured, namely, *Tectona grandis, Acacia* hybrid, *Dyera costulata*, *Aquilaria malaccensis*, and others. Other facilities available at the

Biotechnology Division include DNA sequencing, electrophoresis systems (starch, agarose, and polyacrylamide), high-speed centrifuge, DNA and RNA isolation, and purification systems and cryopreservation facilities for conservation. The Forest Biotechnology Programme also hosts the Centre for Proteomic Research (CPR). CPR provides hands-on training in proteomics research and bioinformatics. Figures 1 through 3 show some of the up-to-date technology available at the Centre.

FIGURE 1 *Automated gel processing robotics (AGPR) for protein isolation*

FIGURE 2 *High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) Machine*

FIGURE 3 *Isoelectric and electrophoretic machines for protein separation*

iv) Urban Forestry and Nature Tourism

Strengthening the capacities of researchers in all forestry fields has not prevented the top management of FRIM from setting a high priority on urban forestry and nature tourism. For instance, appreciation for nature tourism inculcates a "sense of belonging," which indirectly helps conservation and sustainable management of forest resources. A major contribution by FRIM to urban forestry in the country was the establishment of a so-called forest in the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA).

iv) Medicinal Plant Research

Although FRIM is responsible for the development of timber and non-timber products, the Institute has not ignored the opportunity to develop natural products from medicinal plants. Today, the Medicinal Plant Programme has ventured into the development of natural-product activities, either solely or through collaborative research. An example of successful collaborative work is that with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Such a collaborative effort has resulted in three patents and eight disclosures on *Eurycoma longifolia* (Tongkat Ali) and *Centella asiatica* (Pegaga) combined.

FIGURE 4 *Centella asiatica (Pegaga) in raw form*

FIGURE 5 *Centella asiatica (Pegaga) ready for use*

c) Sustainable Management of Forest Resources

To support sustainable management of forest resources, FRIM has focused its R&D on the following areas:

i) Sustainable Forest Harvesting

Scientists from FRIM have successfully embarked on low-impact harvesting technologies to minimize environmental damage (Figure 6). Efforts also continuously have been focused on improving the production of second-growth forests through various silviculture options. With regard to securing adequate restocking by natural regeneration, enrichment planting using a big hole was successfully introduced by FRIM's scientists (Figure 7). To assist the GoM in fighting illegal logging, the Genetic Unit also conducted a service called forestry forensics.

FIGURE 6 *Log-hauling process using a cone, commonly known as ' Ecolog," aims at minimizing damage to the environment*

FIGURE 7 *Planting of seedlings using a big hole has been more successful with help from a Skid Steer Loader*

d) Stakeholder Participation and Public Awareness Programme

In this area, researchers at FRIM have embarked on a Twinning Programme with *Skov & Landskab*, Denmark. One of the component's objectives is to integrate forest goods and services, and public participation in forest policy and management. It is through such integration that management of forest resources can be made successful. Besides focusing on R&D, environmental awareness campaigns are continuously being conducted. This awareness building is geared toward informing users about the potential benefits of sustainable forest management for all.

Conclusion

Efforts regarding conservation, development, and sustainable management of Malaysia's forest resources are highly dependent on scientific inputs. Equipped with expertise in various fields, FRIM is expected to be at the forefront in handling all of the above-mentioned issues and other growing international concerns regarding tropical forestry and the forest sector in the coming years.

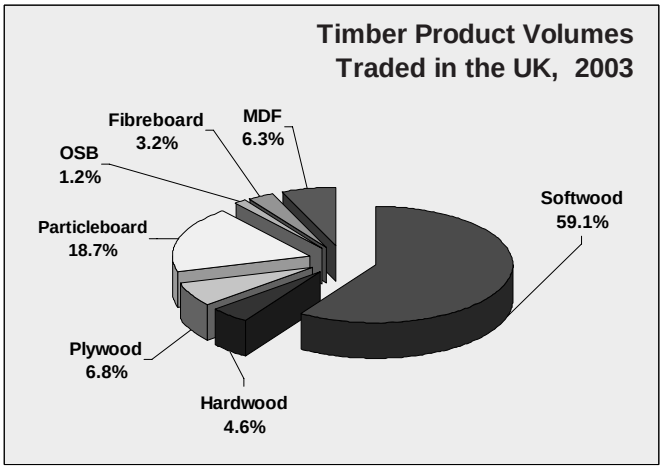
Forest scenes

Business governance in the UK Timber Trade: a tale of enlightened self-interest

By Andy Roby, Adviser, Corporate Social Responsibility, Timber Trade Federation, Clareville House, 26/27, Oxendon Street, London SW1Y 4EL, UK

The UK Timber Trade

The UK Timber Trade Federation is an association of companies whose 300 UK-based members handle about 80% of the timber imported into the UK, or about 12m m^3 of timber product per annum. TTF companies buy, import, process and distribute timber both in the UK, and between overseas countries. As traders they play the important role of matching supply with demand, and adding value where they can through further processing, packaging, just-in-time delivery and advice on timber use. Timber-based products fall into three broad categories; softwood, hardwood and panel products (plywood, particle board, OSB, fibreboard, MDF - see chart below) that are imported into the UK from all over the world. Timber trade customers include builders, joiners, furniture manufacturers, engineers, and the general public, as well as retailers such as merchants and DIY companies who sell on to the general public. Timber consumption in the UK is growing and the Timber Trade Federation's mission is to encourage further growth and so help our members businesses.

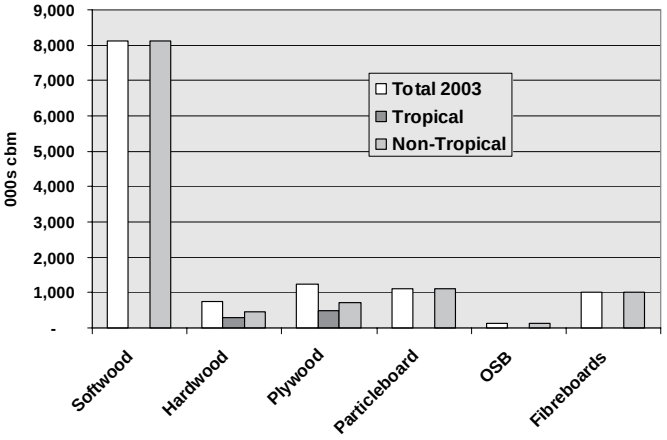


Source: Nick Moore, TTF Statistics 2003

Illegal Logging

Illegal logging" became an international "issue" in 1998 at the Birmingham G8 meeting and is a recognised problem in about 15 or so supplier countries, including many tropical countries and Russia. With current UK trade being predominantly softwoods from Scandinavia and North America, the risk of illegally logged timber entering the UK trade is relatively low as only about 5% of our timber comes from contraversial sources (see chart below).

UK Consumption by Volume of Imported Tropical/Non-Tropical Timber & Panels 2003



Source: Nick Moore, TTF Statistics, 2004

Nevertheless TTF recognised the issue and produced a Code of Conduct in April 2002 stating our commitment to trade in legal and sustainable timber. However it is not easy to verify whether suppliers are legal and sustainable – forest certification and chain of custody is still the exception in many countries, and the supply chain itself is long, convaluted and uncertain, making it difficult to monitor effectively from the UK.

In the UK NGO's have been very effective at drawing public attention to illegal logging and some TTF members have been directly attacked with letter writing campaigns and activists entering premises. The reputation of the whole trade has suffered as a consequence so the TTF has had to respond. Government, equally, has been targetted with direct action by Greenpeace, notably when in 2002 activists exchanged Sapele doors in the Cabinet Office with certified oak, and then abseiled from cranes in a government building site in London in 2003, declaring it a rainforest destruction scene. In this case the effectiveness of the UK Government's July 2000 commitment to procure legal and sustainable timber came under the spotlight.

The UK Timber Trade has responded to the illegal logging issue by tightening up of its performance in Corporate Social Responsibility.

What is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is about increasing the positive impact of business on society. The term is used to describe a range of commitments towards society that business organisations are expected to acknowledge and to reflect in their actions. The following definition from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development

encapsulates CSR well:

> *"CSR is the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life CSR policies include the fair treatment of employees, customers and suppliers; respect for human rights; responsible behaviour towards the communities in which they operate and conservation of the natural environment."*

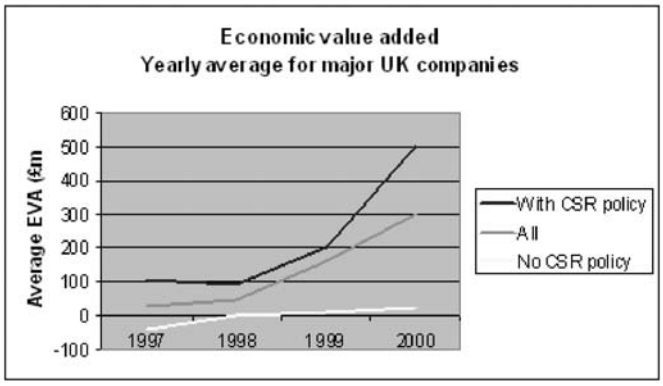
CSR has also been described as a new contract between business and society, as behaving responsibly to customers, shareholders, people (including future generations), the Natural World and the Plane. It could equally be described at a company's efforts to create optimal value in all its relationships.

Is there a business case for CSR?

On the one hand businesses are under greater competitive pressures from the global marketplace and from shareholders for short-term results. On the other hand, public opinion, the media, NGOs, shareholders, financiers and the government are calling for better CSR performance. A long-term business case for CSR is emerging from various studies - three bits of recent evidence are quoted below.

Firstly there is a correlation between CSR policies and Economic Value Added. A recent study of the FTSE 350 index undertaken by the Institute of Business Ethics found above average financial performance for companies with CSR policies (see chart below).

CSR policy and economic performance - FTSE 350:



Secondly good environmental performance in forest companies is correlated with improved financial performance. Innovest Strategic Value Advisers assessed 29 forest product companies and found that company stock with above average environmental ratings outperformed by 43% those companies with below average ratings in the last 4 years. The same companies outperformed on operating profit margin, net profit margin, return on equity, return on assets, price/earnings ratio, and other financial parameters. They concluded that there was "strong evidence of financial merits of sustainability leadership to the value placed by the market on the shares of top performing firms".

Whilst causal evidence remains elusive, good CSR policies are being picked up by business analysts as indicators of good management – they show that a company understands its impact on society and is trying to ameliorate that impact. Good CSR policies suggest companies have positive relations with stakeholders, which in turn reduces risk of NGO attacks, employee disatisfaction or government regulation, and improved customer relations.

Thirdly, and more significantly for long term shareholder value, when staff satisfaction improved at Sears companies by 5%, customer satisfaction improved by 2%, which in turn lead to a 0.5% increase in store revenue. (Harvard Business Review, 1998). Increasingly buying decisions depend less on price and technical quality and more on feelings towards the retailer or supplier – examples include willingness to pay premiums for designer clothes or fair trade products. The same trends have been detected in the timber trade – TTF members are no longer just providers of functional timber, but are increasingly expected to show that the timber is legal and sustainable.

Other business drivers bear down on the industry;

- Increasing litigation – seen in the case of Greenpeace ordering an injunction against a Brazilian mahogany importer, and taking a Swiss forest company to court for corrupt practices in Africa.

- The globalisation of environmental information – as Internet access and telecommunication facilities improve it is getting more difficult for companies to conceal environmental impact in remote forests.

- Consumer pressure – one of the driving factors behind the current development of a government procurement policy for timber. In 1999 a poll of 25,000 citizens across 23 countries on six continents showed that 17% of consumers were likely to be influenced by ethical considerations when making purchasing decisions, with another 5% regularly taking account of a business's ethical performance when shopping.

- Globalisation pressures of competitiveness – as companies expand abroad, issues of fair trade and ethical policies have been highlighted giving a competitive edge to companies that address them effectively. The phenomenal growth of the fair trade coffee market is a good example of this.

- NGO pressure from their expanding globalised networks – Greenpeace action of stripping mahogany doors from the Cabinet Office in Whitehall affected the reputation of individual timber companies and the industry as a whole.

- Socially responsible investment – institutional investors are now actively screening out unacceptable shares from their portfolios or selecting companies on such grounds as superior social or environmental performance or long-term sustainability. Equally, shareholders are voicing their concerns through AGM resolutions for example, BP and Rio Tinto. Analysts see good environmental or social performance as a good indicator of overall good management.

- The threat of legislation – the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan anticipates a timber licensing scheme for partner countries, whilst broader legislation such as the

Proceeds of Crime and Money Laundering Acts are being seriously explored.

- Government regulation of business – changes were made to the 1995 Pensions Act in July 2000 requiring pension funds to disclose the extent to which they take social, environmental and ethical issues into account when investing money. Broader reporting requirements are likely to be included in changes to company law, requiring disclosure, in the first instance, of social and environmental impact.

The implications of the above business drivers on the timber trade are to question whether company values tie in with business practice. Companies need to ask;

- whether company reputation might be undermined.
- whether they know where all their timber comes from?
- what impact purchases might have on local or international communities?
- what are the risks associated with the business or identified ways to enhance the positive impacts of the company?

CSR and Poverty Reduction

Good forest management is generally recognised as being of benefit to society. Jobs are created, revenue and hard currency is raised, a renewable resource is being used, rural income, environmental services, etc. Equally a responsible forest industry should benefit society; if it abides by the rules is should deliver an efficient use of resources, innovation, capital, investment, development, training, know-how, and downstream industry.

But much of the world's forests are still poorly managed or fast disappearing. In developing countries forests don't deliver the sustainable benefits they should. Forest rent studies in Ghana (Richards, 1995 and Birikirong 2000) showed that only 8% of log value was being retained in the treasury for redistribution to forest owners, forest managers. In Liberia, in spite of protests from the wood industry, the UN Security Council imposed timber sanctions because so little benefit from timber was accruing to the poor (UNSC…..). Yet the correlation between well managed forests and economic growth is clear – most OECD countries have well stocked and growing forest resources.

Illegal logging is thought to cost treasuries around the world and estimated $10-15 billion pa. It brings conflict (Cambodia, Congo Basin, Liberia, Brazil). It damages society through corruption, patronage, the rule of law and way it can sustain evil regimes. Environmentally illegal logging is very bad as it results in overcutting and short termism. Peoples livelihoods are the most difficult to quantify, but illegal logging can results in fewer schools and hospitals, abuse of human rights, damage to farms and crops and damage to the next deneration.

Thus illegal logging is probably the biggest single issue facing the international trade in timber. It is one of the main reasons forestry underperforms on poverty reduction, but it is a complex problem requiring action on a broad front. A good example of such an approach is the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan. The private sector has an important role to play in this action plan and foresters working on poverty reduction need to use the opportunity offered by the growth in CSR to bring market forces to bear on the problem of illegal logging.

The UK Timber Trade: A Case Study in Business Governance

UK market drivers add up to significant changes in the market. The main drivers are;

- UK Government Timber Procurement Policy which requires legal timber as a minimum
- Big corporate customers who are adopting the same policy
- The UK TTF commitment to trade in legal timber through a Code of Conduct
- Responsible Business drivers such as reputation, employee/board conscience and NGO pressure
- European Union Action Plan on Illegal Logging, with the prospect of new legislation restricting imports of illegal timber

The TTF has begun to monitor the UK market for legal and sustainable timber, with assistance from the Department For International Development (DFID). Industry analyst Rupert Oliver asked 15 UK timber traders whether they were paying any sort of premium for verified legal or certified timber (Oliver, 2005). Certified softwood attracted no premium but hardwoods attracted between 2 and 30% for legal and sustainable timber. These payments were going to producers, but costs were not yet being passed on to the customer - rather the traders canvassed were absorbing the extra cost as a form of an insurance risk premium (see summary report on www.ttf.co.uk/Forestsforever/responsible).

The TTF Response

Since January 2003 TTF has been undertaking research into CSR in the timber trade with funding from the UK Department for International Development (Roby, 2005). The study is due to be completed shortly and will include guidelines on best practice and policy advice to government.
TTF has been revising our purchasing policy as a core element of a timber traders CSR policy.

We have been actively developing work in Indonesian and Cameroon on sourcing legal timber, and have helped initiate a European Timber Trade Action Plan to source legal timber into the EU. But the UK is a relatively small player in the global timber trade and we need to form partnerships for action.

Nevertheless from our experience so far we have developed a package of best practice measures for traders, to help tackle illegal logging:

a. Commitment: In April 2002 TTF launched a Code of Conduct, which is compulsory on the membership, and requires members to trade in legal and sustainable timber.
b. Due diligence: In January 2005 TTF members began signing up for the Responsible Purchasing Policy, which provides an audited framework for objectively assessing suppliers
c. The Purchasing Decision: TTF members are expected to discriminate against illegal and unsustainable suppliers by chosing the most responsible suppliers
d. Helping suppliers: tell them what the market wants and help them through tracking systems, auditing and technical assistance using a € 3.5 million grant from the European Commission.
e. Simplifying requirements: working with other trade

associations and markets to harmonise purchasing policies

f. Using buying power: partnering up with other buyers to squeeze out the worst suppliers and send consistent messages to producers.

Altruism or enlightened self-interest?

In all this good work it is important to stress that the fundamental business driver of making a profit has not changed. There are still shareholders to pay, but for the UK timber trade shareholder value is at the heart of what we are doing. Buying legal and sustainable means encouraging long term suppliers of quality timber, reducing company reputational risk, capitalising on timber's competitive advantage – it's renewability, and most of all meeting UK market demand. It is no coincidence that our biggest and most successful companies are leading this work.

In the end the sustainability of our industry is at stake. For many years we have been promoting timber's renewability as a building material competing with materials such as concrete, plastic and steel that have developed sophisticated sustainability strategies with well funded communication campaigns.

What further action is needed and by whom?

Recommendations for Action by International Foresters:

a. Talk to your industry and find out what they think
b. Challenge industry leaders
c. Create industry forums for debate AND action
d. Encourage champions
e. Weed out your worst companies regardless of nationality /political affiliation
f. Don't be afraid of alternative governance involving 3rd party independent auditing

Recommendations for other action

1. Government procurement policies – by government, but with industry and civil society
2. Harmonised purchasing policies across markets – government and industry
3. Capacity building (government, private sector, civil society) - government
4. Supplier databases – that encourage transparency and promote good performers
5. Independent auditing – private sector but with accreditation and validation by government and civil society.
6. Independent monitoring – civil society should maintain its watchdog role highlighting problems.
7. Definitions of legality – broad agreement through consultation with all parties, so that auditing standards are based on standards that are accepted in timber markets.
8. Partnerships/communication – forming coalitions that work together on practical solutions

Conclusion

Forest potential to contribute to poverty reduction is enormous – especially but not exlusively from its timber element - up until recently most of the trade in timber has been undertaken by companies who have claimed that it is not their responsibility to ensure that the timber comes from legal harvesting or that forest management plans are in place.

But times are a changing. Society demands more from companies now than ever before. It is not enough to plant a few trees on leaving the concession, or to build the odd pit latrine or rehouse the traditional chief. Companies are getting bigger and trading shares on stock exchanges, and the world is getting smaller, so the chances of ignoring the issues such as illegal logging are receding. It is no longer "not my problem" – and the market says so apart from anything else.

This is a golden opportunity for foresters to capture this CSR movement and use it to improve the impact of forestry on poverty reduction and raise standards of forest management

"The best way to predict the future is to create it" – Dr Peter F. Drucker

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Will the UK Presidency of EU influence European policy on illegal logging?

After great expectations that the UK Government's Presidency of the EU between July and December would herald a new approach by the Commission towards illegal logging the disappointing reality is that avoiding divisions within member states appears more important than implementing new initiatives. A briefing by the UK Government held at Whitehall on 15th July for representatives of Government (Defra, DFID and FCO), the private sector and NGOs reinforced the need to promote consensus amongst EU member states on the EU Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT).

Interest in illegal logging

The issue of illegal logging already has momentum within the EU, partly arising from the G8 programme from the Denver summit in 1998 and the Okinawa summit in 2000. Currently the EC is developing a Regulation on FLEGT and trying to determine whether it is legislation that can be managed by the EC DGs alone or if it needs to be co-decision-making shared between the EC and the EU Parliament.

There are also arguments about trading under CITES-type licensing or by the much better and widely known (customs) ComCode system and also the list of products that would be included in the legislation.

The EC still have some way to go to reach a conclusion on their negotiating position in relation to producer countries for Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA). Items still under discussion include the request of the private sector for operator-based export licensing (which would provide full chain-of-custody licensing) compared with the current system of shipment-based licensing. Arguments also continue about the relative levels of responsibilities of the EC and the EU Member States for the development of operation of VPAs and their revision.

There is a short list of priority countries for the initial VPAs selected on the basis of the severity of the illegal logging problem and the existence of working relationships between EU Member States and the producer county. Counties currently working on VPAs are:

- Cameroon (assisted by Germany).
- Ghana (assisted by the Denmark, EC, Germany, Netherlands and the UK).
- DRC and Congo Brazzaville (assisted by France).
- Indonesia (being assisted by the resident EC delegation and consultants).
- Malaysia (being assisted by the Netherlands).

In addition to the EC Regulation, options for extra legislation are under discussion within the EC and EU Member States.

Within the EU, national reviews of local legislation from which nationally-acceptable definitions of legality will be produced are currently being undertaken.

However, concern was expressed that the VPAs would be meaningless unless all timber trade could be covered and hope was expressed that more products could be added to the list. A point was also raised that there was little local knowledge in some of the exporting countries in West Africa and associated EC Delegations about FLEGT in spite of the recent African Ministerial conference in Cameroon. In recognition of this some EU Member States are being encouraged to second people to assist in FLEGT. (e.g. France was supporting work in Central Africa and the UK was assisting West Africa for awareness raising) and EC Delegations are being encouraged to include costs for FLEGT in the budgets of the EC Country Strategy Plans. Extra documents have been commissioned for the EC FLEGT Briefs series, and the EC will publish further briefs and they will be placed on the RIIA illegal logging website.

G8 leaders agree $50bn aid boost

The G8 summit has ended with an agreement to boost aid for developing countries by $50bn (£28.8bn). The debt of the 18 poorest nations in Africa is also being cancelled.

On trade, there was a commitment to work towards cutting subsidies and tariffs. On climate change, Prime Minister Tony Blair said an agreement had always been unlikely, but that the US now accepted global warming was an issue. But reaction was mixed, with some calling it "vastly disappointing". "The people have roared but the G8 has whispered," said Kumi Naidoo, chair of the Global Call to Action against Poverty.

'Progress'

But Live 8 organiser Bob Geldof spoke of a "great day". "Never before have so many people forced a change of policy onto a global agenda. If anyone had said eight weeks ago will we get a doubling of aid, will we get a deal on debt, people would have said 'no'," Mr Geldof said. He added that he gave the G8 summit "10 out of 10 on aid, eight out of 10 on debt".

Irish rock star and fellow anti-poverty campaigner Bono, praised the agreement to give universal access to Aids drugs. "600,000 Africans, mostly children, will remember this G8 summit at Gleneagles because they will be around to remember this summit, and they wouldn't have otherwise," said Bono.

Key points:

- Mr Blair said trade discussions in Hong Kong later this year should yield an end date to agricultural subsidies.
- Britain is to host a 1 November meeting on climate change, to assess progress.
- Mr Blair said "only people who can change Africa ultimately are the Africans".
- $3bn agreed for Palestinian Authority for investment in infrastructure.
- Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo described the deal as a "success".
- G8 commits to training 20,000 peacekeepers for Africa.
- African leaders to commit to democracy and good

governance as part of the deal.
- Debts of the 18 poorest countries to be forgiven.
- Universal access to anti-HIV drugs in Africa by 2010.

Summing up the G8 meeting, Mr Blair acknowledged: "It isn't all everyone wanted, but it is progress." UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said the G8 deal represented a "good day", but that it was only "a beginning". "The fight to end poverty is just starting," said Mr Annan.

On climate change, Mr Blair said: "If it is impossible to bring America into the consensus on tackling the issue... we will never ensure the huge emerging economies, who are going to consume more energy than any other part of the world... are part of the dialogue." He said however that agreement had been reached that climate change was a problem, human activity contributed to it and it had to be tackled with urgency.

'Face of death'

Earlier the prime minister had said that in the wake of Thursday's attacks, the communique was the "definitive expression of our collective will to act in the face of death". "It has a pride and a hope and a humanity that can lift the shadow of terrorism," he added.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) remained critical of the G8 deal. Some described the talks on climate change as a "significant lost opportunity". G8 leaders have indicated the statement represents progress but Stephen Tindale, a spokesperson for Greenpeace, said: "The G8 has committed to nothing new but at least we haven't moved backwards on the environment."

The Sustainable Energy and Economy Network, a worldwide coalition of environmental and development campaigners, said: "Urgent action is now required to substantially reduce emissions, reduce fossil fuel dependence and to protect people around the world, especially the vulnerable, the poor and disappearing nations."

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk

G8 and Africa

Ben Chikamai, CFA's Regional Coordinator for East and Southern Africa, gives his views on whether the highly publicized focus of G8 on Africa will have any meaningful impact on the continent's forest resources or their management

Allow me to start on a positive note by saying that renewed commitment of the international community to Africa, represented in this context by the G8, is a welcome gesture and an opportunity for the region to take advantage of. The G8 has made it clear that it will not provide its own dossier but rather build on the initiatives already started by the African Union (AU) and its programme, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) including recommendations of the commission for Africa (an independent group established by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair) that is tasked with drawing up a coherent programme of action that would provide a powerful impetus in support of successful and sustainable development in Africa.

Accordingly, the G8 has identified the following areas as crucial and focus for investing its resources; strengthened peace and security (a first condition for successful development), better governance (critical to peace and security, economic growth and prosperity), investing in people through improved education, health care and food security, and enhancing growth by promoting enabling environment of access to markets and capacity to trade, among others. It has made commitments to increase aid, through a variety of means, including traditional development assistance, debt relief and innovative financing mechanisms to support the above areas. These commitments, if properly implemented in the region through agreed channels should surely spur development of the region.

Unfortunately, not much has been said about the rich and diverse African natural resource base as a vehicle to sustainable development. Least has been said about forests and/or trees and their role in livelihood support and environment. I have only seen two documents; one by the UK to the G8 on Climate change and Africa's development challenge and the other; a statement by Environment and Development Ministers of the G8 to the Chair of the Gleneagles Summit of Heads of States. These documents highlight two aspects that can easily undermine the commitments set out by the G8 on Africa's development if not addressed properly; illegal logging and the impact that climate.

Illegal logging undermines good governance, is a recipe for conflict (and hence peace and security), distorts markets and trade (and hence destroys livelihoods) and results in environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. Consumer countries (including the G8) contribute to this problem by importing wood products without ensuring that they are legally sourced. Sustained pressure is needed on the international community to speed up action to control such trade and related ones that finance conflicts and hence undermine good governance.

Meanwhile, it was encouraging that the issue of climate change was discussed and presented at the G8 meeting even though the role of forests and allied resources did not seem to have featured prominently. Concrete actions were identified including the need to build the capacity in Africa to understand and manage climate risk, build resistance to climate variability and change in key sectors related to environment e.g. agriculture and water management, health, land degradation and food security.

The publicized focus of the G8 on Africa can have a meaningful impact on forests and their management if the key issues of the sub-sector are picked out and properly articulated in the framework of the focal areas identified. Why the issue of the natural resource base and particularly forests did not feature prominently is not clear. Yes, the place of forests in most debates tends to receive low priority until damage has occurred. It will remain so if forestry professionals remain indifferent or quiet. Let professionals from Africa and those with good knowledge about African forest resources come out aggressively through appropriate fora [AU, NEPAD, Commission for Africa, FSC, CFA, IUFRO] to provide needed information. Then there will be support and meaningful impact on forest resources and their management, among others.

Africa reacts to the G8 communiqués

GHANA

Joseph Intsiful *Senior Research Fellow, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn, Germany; Visiting Scientist, The International Center for Theoretical Physics, (ICTP), Italy; Visiting Scientist, Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Ghana*

"The G8 announcement to support 'networks of excellence' linking institutions in Africa with those in other countries is very positive. It has come at an opportune time, when such networks badly need funding and political support, both locally and internationally. But the declaration alone is not sufficient to bring about the desired scientific and technological development in Africa. We need our African governments to back their words with actions and show much more commitment than they are currently doing. They will need to make some very painful sacrifices to turn this initiative into a success. Similarly, the G8 will need to turn words into deeds and help us through this very difficult process. They will need to identify reliable and trustworthy partners in Africa with whom they can work to harness the rich human and educational resources of the continent and promote its socio-economic development. Most importantly, a mechanism must be put in place to monitor the success of the program and ensure that it keeps its focus."

MALAWI

Cornell O. Dudley *Professor, Department of Biology, Chancellor College, Zomba*

"The fact that the most severe effects of climate change will be felt in the relatively distant future allows both politicians and the general public not to really take this problem seriously. The G8 leaders are no exception. Climate change is already negatively affecting countries' development goals, their environment, their wealth and, in many cases (such as small island states), their ultimate survival. The immediate goal of bringing real economic and political development to Africa must also be addressed. The continent's poverty, social disintegration in some countries, and poorly managed and wasted resources in others, is not only an African tragedy but also a world tragedy."

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Delphin Diasolua Ngudi *Senior researcher, National Nutrition Programme, Ministry of Health, Kinshasa*

"The G8 leaders did not back the recommendations of the Commission for Africa, set up by British prime minister Tony Blair in 2004, nor the statement issued in June 2005 by the science academies of the G8 countries and the Network of African Science Academies, nor calls from the fifth African Union summit held in Libya in the last week of June 2005. These asked for specific action to strengthen science, engineering and technology capacity in Africa by providing up to US$3 billion over ten years to develop centres of excellence in science and technology, as well as providing US$500 million a year over a ten-year period to strengthen African universities. The G8 closed their ears to these demands and their final communiqué provided Africa with words that were not backed by commitments. Thus, in real terms, African science came away empty-handed. I hope that this shock will wake Africa up, as its nations must grow up and start realising that they must help themselves. It is the right time for African countries to improve their universities and create scientific strategies based on partnership with, not charity from, the West. This can be done through organisations such as the African Union, the Arab League, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Association of African Universities, the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the Association of Arab universities, and so on. African countries must join forces to get science and technology to the top of their agenda for development, and seek funds and support within the continent. They must increase the budget devoted to research and higher education, and decrease military spending. This would help solve the funding problem, stimulate researchers and help tackle the brain drain."

TOGO

Ampah Kodjo Christophe Johnson *Senior lecturer and head of the earth sciences department, University of Lomé, Togo*

"The G8 communiqués on Africa, science and development seem promising in some respects. But decisions are not everything. What Africa needs is for the decisions to be implemented immediately. African universities have many centres of excellence with several good projects, but they do not know where to find appropriate funding. The G8 must get closer to these centres and give them clear information and guidance about the range of existing possibilities. Research and development financing should not focus only on centres of excellence. Other organised bodies close to communities can also play a major role, provided they receive micro-financing to conduct their work, mainly in the areas of poverty reduction and health. And to ensure help allocated to Africa is used appropriately, G8 leaders should really support the implementation of democratic structures. Concerning aid to education, G8 leaders should insist on the basic and ongoing training of teachers and lecturers. They should also help researchers and lecturers update their bibliographies of scientific references by promoting affordable and accessible online libraries, just like those used by scientists in the North."

SENEGAL

Jean-Philippe Thomas *Research Coordinator, ENDA Energy, ENDA Tiers Monde, Dakar, Senegal*

"I think the only positive result is the resumption of a dialogue with the United States. Apart from that, I can't see any commitment, any specific agenda. Worse, in their communiqué they consider climate change as a long-term issue, but it is now imperative that steps are taken to respond to the urgent needs of the poorest populations. It is critical for the G8 countries to adhere to the Kyoto Protocol with firm commitments and an agenda but the United States will not find this politically acceptable. African science leaders have to be present in international debates (particularly in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – IPCC) and at the national level, to explain the scientific points of the convention on climate change to the public and policymakers,

and also to contribute to the measures and policies that need to be set up."

UGANDA
Syda Bbumba *Energy and Mineral Development Minister*

"Uganda wants the G8 to increase funding to Uganda's energy sector. This will enable Uganda to further develop clean energy sources such as hydro-, solar- and geothermal power – all of which are in abundance but still inadequately tapped. Although we want the G8 countries to use cleaner energy just like Uganda wants to, we also want them to increase the Global Environment Facility's carbon credit fund, to enable us to do more in forest plantations and to expand rural electrification. Uganda has received US$5 million from the Global Environment Facility for rural electrification. We are in our fourth year out of ten, but the money is not enough. Our companies need more subsidies from the carbon credit fund to implement the government's rural electrification programme."

UGANDA
Jeje Odongo *Minister of State for Environment, Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment*

"Uganda expects the G8 to endorse and implement programmes that reduce greenhouse gas emissions – not only in their own countries but by supporting Africa to do the same – because environmental issues are trans-boundary and we are already suffering the effects of massive fossil fuel use by developed countries. Lacking trained scientific and technical manpower and with poor capacity in technology, Uganda cannot adapt to the effects of greenhouse gas emissions in the G8 countries. Like most African countries, Uganda is a signatory of the Kyoto protocol and expects all countries to endorse it, particularly the G8 – first and foremost, because they are the world's biggest emitters. But we also want them to support us by removing all agricultural subsidies for their farmers so that exports from African countries can compete with theirs under a fair trade regime. This would let us build strong economies and the scientific and technological capacity to exploit our immense natural resources more rapidly, carefully and sustainably."

ZAMBIA
Lloyd Thole *Manager of technical department, National Science and Technology Council*

"The National Science and Technology Council welcomes the G8 pledge to support 'centres of excellence' in African science and technology institutions, but words must be backed by action. The resolution is only positive if the G8 countries stick to it by allowing assistance to flow. If they do not, it will spell doom for the continent as far as the development of science and technology is concerned. It is worrying that the G8 leaders have not been specific about the amount of money they intended to provide to support African centres of excellence."

ZAMBIA
Juliana Chisupa *Deputy science and technology minister*

"I am confident that the G8 will meet its obligation to provide substantial financial aid to Africa's science and technology institutions. The G8 resolution gives Africa hope that we are moving in the right direction, one that will see our learning institutions develop to acceptable standards. It also makes me happy to learn that the G8 will support networks linking African institutions with those in other countries."

Source: www.scidev.net

G8 outcomes mention illegal logging

Information on the outcomes of the G8 discussions can be found in The Gleneagles Communiqué at http://news.bbc.co.uk /1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/g8_gleneagles_communique.pdf

The only direct reference to forestry is contained in paragraphs 36 to 38 which state:

Tackling Illegal Logging

36. We recognise the impacts that illegal logging has on the livelihoods of many in the poorest countries in Africa and elsewhere, on environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and deforestation and hence global sustainable development. We particularly recognise the importance of global carbon sinks, including the Congo Basin and the Amazon.
37. We agree that working to tackle illegal logging is an important step towards the sustainable management of forests. To tackle this issue effectively requires action from both timber producing and timber consuming countries.
38. We endorse the outcome of the *G8 Environment and Development Ministerial* conference on illegal logging. To further our objectives in this area we will take forward the conclusions endorsed at that meeting, with each country acting where it can contribute most effectively.

Around the world

Ancient woodland policy welcomed – but more commitment is needed

The Woodland Trust, the UK's leading woodland conservation charity, welcomes one of the most important developments in forestry policy in the last twenty years with the launch today of a new policy for England's ancient and native woodland by Forestry Commission (England).

Speaking at the launch of the policy, Sue Holden, Woodland Trust chief executive stressed the importance of preventing any further loss of this irreplaceable resource, the UK's

richest habitat for wildlife.

"We welcome the commitment to maintain the existing ancient woodland," said Sue Holden of the Woodland Trust. "However, the aspirations of the policy cannot be achieved unless all parts of Government publicly commit to ensure their activities don't destroy or damage ancient woodland too. Now is the time to enshrine such protection in new national planning guidance on nature conservation in England."

"The Trust regards the restoration of ancient woods planted with conifers as a key priority to improve woodland wildlife. With most of these sites reaching economic maturity within the next ten years we are at a crossroads for ancient woods – within our grasp is the opportunity to deliver huge improvements or face severe losses. We would like to see the policy move from having the majority of planted ancient woodland improved to seeing a commitment to restoring all."

Source: woodland-trust.org.uk

Amazon countries team up to tackle biopiracy

Representatives from patent offices in six Latin American nations that share the Amazon basin have agreed to work together against 'biopiracy' – the unauthorised commercial exploitation of their native species.

According to the Rio Declaration – signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 1 July – Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Surinam and Venezuela will share information and jointly develop policies to tackle the phenomenon. Along with Colombia and Guyana, the countries are members of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, which organised the Rio meeting. They are concerned that researchers could patent drugs and other products derived from their native species, including products based on traditional knowledge such as herbal medicines, without sharing the benefits fairly. To tackle this threat more efficiently, the countries agreed to harmonise their intellectual property laws and share technical information included in patents.

The Amazon basin is one of the most biologically diverse regions on Earth, with many species found nowhere else on the planet. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty was created in 1978 to promote sustainable development in the region.

Source: www.scidev.net

Amazon basin stores carbon dioxide 'for just five years'

Researchers have cast doubt on the theory that tropical forests can store the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide for decades or even centuries, but have allayed fears that tropical rivers might be releasing previously unaccounted for carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In a paper published in *Nature*, the scientists say that within just five years of trees in the Amazon basin absorbing carbon dioxide, the Amazon river and its tributaries return much of the gas to the atmosphere. Plants use the carbon dioxide they absorb to grow, and the carbon ends up in rivers when rain washes fallen leaves, dead plants or soil into them.

"Our results were surprising because those who have previously made measurements found that the carbon in rivers that came from the surrounding forests was 40 to 1,000 years old," says Anthony Aufdenkampe, of the Stroud Water Research Center in the United States, who led the research with Emilio Mayorga of the University of Washington. Until recently, it was thought the Amazon basin stored large amounts of carbon dioxide in its forest and soil, and that its rivers acted as pipes, carrying some of this carbon to the Atlantic – another important 'sink' for carbon storage. But in 2002, Aufdenkampe and colleagues showed that only a small fraction of the carbon entering rivers reached the ocean. This is because microbes and animals feed on the carbon-rich soil, leaves and wood washed into the rivers by rainfall, and breathe out carbon dioxide. "What that means," explains Aufdenkampe, "is that a lot of carbon is going into the forest [and rivers] but not staying there because it is leaking out [into the atmosphere]."

Aufdenkampe's latest findings show that the forest carbon is stored for only a very short period of time. "The time from carbon dioxide being taken in by a leaf, dropped into a river where it is consumed, and then released back into atmosphere is five years or less," he says.

Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas responsible for climate change. Scientists had hoped that large areas of forest – such as the Amazon – could act as huge carbon 'sinks', absorbing the gas from the atmosphere and preventing it from contributing to global warming. Even a short storage period, on the scale of 100 years or so, says Aufdenkampe, would give us "breathing room" to deal with global greenhouse gas emissions. "We are showing that this whole process is so rapid it does not even give a temporary respite."

In an article accompanying the team's paper in Nature, Peter Raymond of Yale University, United States, says the good news is that rivers are not a source of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere that climate scientists had previously not known about. "The carbon dioxide [released by tropical rivers] simply represents the cyclical movement of the gas from the atmosphere, through land and rivers and then back to the atmosphere, and does not represent an additional input of greenhouse gas," writes Raymond.

Aufdenkampe agrees, but adds that it also suggests there is no system by which forest carbon gets stored in forests or rivers for decades or even centuries before returning to the atmosphere. Because rivers 'breathe out' the carbon within five years of receiving it, they are highly sensitive to changes such as deforestation, say the researchers. They found that in one region the carbon emitted by the rivers had come from farmland that had replaced the forest.

Because the Amazonian rivers get almost all of their carbon from the surrounding forests, deforestation can affect the biodiversity of rivers by reducing the availability of carbon for aquatic life to feed on. Aufdenkampe and Mayorga's findings suggest that deforesting an area means cutting off a river's food supply almost immediately.

Source: www.scidev.net

Awards Available for Forestry Work in the Developing World

The Tropical Agriculture Award Fund (TAAF) was set up in 1989 by the Tropical Agriculture Association (TAA), an association of agriculturists, foresters, agroforester and other natural resource professionals with an interest not only in the tropics but in the developing world in general. It is Registered Charity No. 800663, and its website address is www.taa.org.uk. TAAF's purpose is to help young British nationals or permanent residents, suitably qualified in natural resources subjects, to gain practical experience and appropriate training in rural development work. For this purpose it can award grants of up to £2,000. Applicants should not be more than 30 years of age, and should have a field assignment, placement or project with a duration of at least six months. For further informaion, go into the TAA website and then click on the "Award Fund" tab on the left hand side, where information is also given on the addresses to which applications can be submitted.

Mikael Grut
Hon Secr of TAAF, secretary_taaf@taa.org.uk

Benefits of planned forest fires are cited

Firefighters have battled blazes on nearly 4 million acres of public and private land in the USA so far this year -- and federal officials are on track to deliberately burn 2.5 million more. But this is not a case of rampant arson. Federal and state officials, joined by some environmentalists and academics, increasingly advocate deliberately setting fires in wild areas to restore ecosystems and prevent wildfires from raging out of control. Fires are part of the natural life cycle of forests, they argue, and help maintain a broader diversity of habitats for wildlife. After decades of fire suppression and Smokey Bear, the government now embraces "prescribed fire" as a key tool in managing the nation's forests.

The policy began under President Bill Clinton and has accelerated under President Bush, but as it has grown, so has the controversy it inspires. Some community activists complain that prescribed fires pollute the air and damage valuable hardwoods, and logging companies say the strategy deprives them of valuable timber. Sen. Conrad Burns (R-Mont.) is calling on the Forest Service to reexamine the impact on logging, and environmentalists are divided on the issue.

"We've lost the consensus, there's no question about that," said former interior secretary Bruce Babbitt, who helped put out forest fires as a high school student and pushed for prescribed burning under the Clinton administration.

The Forest Service -- which celebrates its 100th anniversary this month -- started quashing fires five years after its inception, after wildfires burned more than 3 million acres in two days in Idaho and Montana and killed nearly 100 people. In 1935, the Service adopted a national "10 a.m." policy, demanding its firefighters contain every fire by 10 a.m. the day after they learned of it. Smokey Bear debuted nine years later, telling Americans, "Only you can prevent forest fires."

But by the mid-1990s, the federal government had begun to rethink that policy. Five years ago, it adopted a national fire plan that called for treating 40 million acres of brush and dense forest by 2010 through logging and burning. Forest managers prefer prescribed burns to "mechanical thinning" for several reasons. Prescribed burns are much cheaper than thinning, costing $13 to $28 an acre, by some estimates. Foresters light them by hand or set them from a helicopter by injecting a few drops of antifreeze into small plastic spheres containing potassium permanganate powder, which ignites several seconds after the balls hit the ground.

Officials now aim to return forests back to a cycle in which fires routinely sweep through, said Marc Rounsaville, the Forest Service's deputy director for fire and aviation. "Just like rain, like snow, it's part of the natural system," Rounsaville said. "It's probably the number one management tool in the South, and we're working hard in the rest of the country to put it into place. . . . Do we get it right every day? No, I won't lie to you. But we're getting better at it, we're getting smarter at it."

Source: www.washingtonpost.com

Biotechnology in forestry gaining ground

Research and applications of biotechnology in forestry are advancing rapidly, FAO said today. A significant majority of forest biotechnology activities, around 70 percent, is taking place in developed countries, according to a new global study of biotechnology in forestry conducted by FAO, with the United States, France and Canada being the most active players. India and China are the most active of the developing countries and countries in transition.

While forest biotechnology activities have spread to at least 140 tree genera, the great majority of activities (around 60 percent) has been focused on only six (Pinus, Eucalyptus, Picea, Populus, Quercus and Acacia). Of the over 2700 biotechnology activities reported in the world over the past 10 years, genetic modification accounts for around 19 percent only.

Overall, genetic modification activities in forestry are taking place in at least 35 countries, with the vast majority apparently restricted to the laboratory, with some supporting field trials, FAO said.

Worldwide, more than 210 field trials of genetically modified (GM) trees are currently under way in 16 countries; most of the trials are being conducted in the United States and are restricted largely to Populus, Pinus, Liquidambar and Eucalyptus. Only China has reported the commercial release of GM trees: around 1.4 million plants on 300-500 hectares in 2002.

Weighing the benefits and risks

"Genetic modification is not intrinsically good or bad," said Pierre Sigaud, a forest genetic resources expert at FAO. "A regulatory framework to govern research and application of genetically modified forest trees on a case-by-case basis is essential. The issue goes beyond the country level, since pollen flow and seed dispersal do not take account of national boundaries, and since wood is a global commodity," he added.

The potential traits of interest for GM trees are increased wood production, improved wood quality and resistance to insects, diseases and herbicides. In addition, production and processing costs of wood or chips could be reduced, as well

as financial and environmental costs for pulping.

But deploying GM trees is not without risks, FAO warned. Transgene instability, plantation failure, poor wood quality, development of tolerance to the modified trait by insects or disease organisms and the escape of modified genes into natural ecosystems are potential risk factors.

"Given that genetic modification in trees is already entering the commercial phase with GM Populus in China, it is very important that environmental risk assessment studies are conducted with protocols and methodologies agreed upon at national and international levels. It is also important that the results of such research are made widely available," the study stated.

"The economic value of forest products in global trade is far less than that of agricultural products, and the economic rationale for employing biotechnology in forestry has not yet been clearly demonstrated," Sigaud said. "It is not possible yet to reach conclusions on the potential impacts of genetically modified forests because of the lack of reliable information."

"Since some 95 percent of the world's forests are natural or semi-natural, plantation of

Source: www.fao.org

Ensis puts on a growth spurt

The joint venture between CSIRO Forestry and Forest Products (FFP) and New Zealand's Scion (formerly Forest Research) - **ensis** - will soon become one of the world's largest integrated forestry and forest products research rganisations.

From 1 July this year **ensis** will incorporate FFP's remaining R&D units to create three new strategic business units (SBUs) - Forest Biosecurity and Protection, Sustainable Productive Forestry and Integrated Environmental Forestry - thereby almost doubling its staff to 320 and increasing its projected annual income to around $A55M.

The new SBUs will complement the work of **ensis'** four original SBUs: Papro (pulp, paper and packaging), Wood and Fibre Quality, Wood Processing and Products, and Genetics.

This will complete the integration of the forest R&D capabilities of the parent organisations and allow ensis customers and stakeholders to benefit from research activities across the forestry value chain.

FFP Chief, Dr Rick Ede, says combining the research capabilities of Australasia's two leading forestry R&D organisations has enhanced Australia and New Zealand's ability to deliver optimum outcomes for the governments and forestry sectors of both countries.

"Both countries also share the same types of sustainability issues in the management of both plantation and natural forests so it makes sense to pool our science capability in these areas," Dr Ede says.

"Collectively, **ensis** mirrors the commercial relationships across the Tasman in our two nations' industries' and is widely endorsed by the industry and its partners," he says.

The importance of collaboration is reinforced by the Chief Executive for the National Association of Forest Industries in Australia, Catherine Murphy, who says: "These sorts of partnerships are essential for the growth of the industry on both sides of the Tasman."

Australia's Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, says **ensis'** continuing success is not only a good example of Trans-Tasman research collaboration, but also highlights the potential economic impact research can have on key industries.

"**ensis** is an excellent example of building critical mass in forestry research within Australasia. Industries have the opportunity to capitalise on ensis' multi-disciplinary R&D teams from both sides of the Tasman," Dr Nelson says.

ensis was formed as an unincorporated joint venture in July 2004 and won a 2005 Telstra Trans Tasman Business Award for bringing together the two countries' leading forestry R&D agencies.

Source: www.csiro.au

FERN fights bogus carbon claims

The European Commission's 'Green Week' (31 May-03 June 2005) sparked controversy this year, claiming that the event would be 'climate neutral'. FERN dismissed the claims – that paying extra for the conference could offset any climate damage it might cause – as 'misleading'. Meanwhile, plans for more plantations projects to offset climate change have now been submitted for approval to the Executive Board of the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).[1] These include several which are based on very questionable carbon calculations, as well as the controversial V&M do Brasil project (FW no. 93), which has now been submitted for the third time.

In a new briefing note,[2] (attached) FERN use clear examples to demonstrate that while carbon 'offset' projects can salve our conscience, they cannot solve the problem of excessive fossil fuel use. FERN is now calling on the Commission to drop bogus Green Week 'offset' plans and false claims of 'zero net effect' based on phoney carbon accounting.

Source: www.fern.org

Fire season worst in years – Ontario, Canada

A forest fire burning out of control northwest of the Lac des Iles mine is the latest challenge in what one fire official called the worst season in years. The fire, called Thunder Bay 57, was projected to grow to more than 800 hectares by the end of the day Saturday, said Bob Johnson, a fire management supervisor with the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Fire crews were pulled from the blaze Friday for safety reasons, he said. Instead, waterbombers and firefighters were dispatched to a number of smaller fires that had sprung up in the region. The goal is to put out those fires quickly before they grow out of control, and redirect those resources to the Thunder Bay fire. "Hopefully, we can have one large one

[1] Project documentation: www.unfccc.int. Comments available at: www.sinkswatch.org and www.fern.org

[2] Carbon 'offset' - no magic potion that 'neutralises' fossil fuel emissions

instead of several smaller ones," Johnson said.

The MNR was monitoring the fire Saturday to create an action plan to fight it. The blaze, about 90 kilometres north of Thunder Bay, is threatening some private cottages on lakes in the area. The cottages were set up with sprinkler kits Friday night, he said. The fire is also approaching tree-planted areas under licence to Bowater and Abitibi-Consolidated, he said. Meanwhile, rain earlier in the week helped to stall two fires burning near Armstrong, called Thunder Bay 30 and 31. "They're still not under control, but they're not spreading," Johnson said. "We're just mopping up hotspots as they occur."

On Saturday, at least a dozen new fires started in the Northwest region, on top of 19 fires the day before. "This is probably the worst it's been in the last four or five years in Ontario," Johnson said.

The Thunder Bay district averages 80 or 90 fires each season, and last season there were only about 30, he said. This season, there have already been more than 60. But more than the total numbers, "It's just the number of fires a day you get, and the numbers you lose control of," Johnson said. "There doesn't seem to be any long-term relief."

He blames the hot weather and lack of rain. "There are two fires . . . where you can actually see signs of tree stress," he said. "Those are fairly good drought conditions. That two weeks of 30-degree weather we had just dried everything out."

In addition, lightning and high winds have made things worse, said Mitch Miller, a fire information officer. "The wind will take small fires and turn them into big fires very quickly," he said.

Additional firefighters from British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories have been called in to help fight the fires.

Source: www.chroniclejournal.com

Forest dept set to drive back wild elephants

Nearly a fortnight after the three wild elephants struck terror among the people in villages of Bardez and Bicholim taluka, the government has finally brought five trained tuskers called 'Kunki', along with ten 'mahouts' from Shimoga district of Karnataka to drive them away so that they can reach to their habitation in Maharashtra.

The trained tuskers reached Amthane plateau of Bicholim taluka at 3.30 p.m. and the 'Operation Drive Out' is likely to begin on Tuesday after consultation with the forest officials from both the states.

The assistant conservator of forest and range forest officers of Karnataka, along with a veterinary doctor and 'mahouts' will survey the affected areas and track the movement of the wild tuskers, before launching the operation.

Five mobile teams, each consisting of six personnel are on the job at Revora, Nadora, Pirna and Adwalpal with the control office being set up at Pirna.

The Director, Wild Life and Eco-Tourism, Mr C D Singh said the operation may last for seven to ten days. Initially, he said the domestic and wild elephants have to interact through sounds and added that this exercise may take little over 12 hours.

Inquiries from the Adwalpal villagers say that the wild tuskers are seen coming on the plateau at around 7 p.m. and return to forest area in the early hours of the day.

The Kunki elephants were brought to Goa by trucks and it took over 20 hours to cover the distance between Shimoga and Cotigao. From Cotigao to Amthane, it took five hours, the forest officials informed.

Source: navhindtimes.com

Forest growers adopt national standard in NZ

After five years of negotiation, the New Zealand forest industry has a national standard for sustainable plantation forest management. NZ Forest Owners' Association (NZFOA) environmental spokesperson Peter Weir says the standard formalises management practices in what is arguably the most environmentally-friendly production forest industry in the world.

"New Zealanders generally appreciate that plantation forests provide big soil, water and carbon conservation benefits - as well as exports and employment. But they may not understand the detailed forest management practices that provide those benefits. These practices will be even less well understood by customers and communities overseas."

Consumers in affluent overseas markets sometimes unfairly associate all plantation forestry with the loss of natural forests in the tropics and elsewhere. They are unware of the positive environmental and social profile that forestry has in New Zealand.

"A national standard provides proof to potential customers everywhere that we are as good as we say we are," Mr Weir says. "It also provides a mechanism for driving constant improvement in management practices, as new knowledge becomes available."

The standard covers the protection of biodiversity; water and soil protection; obligations to Tangata Whenua, employees, contractors and the wider community; safe chemical use; and a prohibition on the use of genetically modified organisms. It enables independent verification that forest owners are growing and harvesting wood to an agreed standard under conditions that are environmentally and socially sustainable.

Mr Weir says New Zealand forest owners have a history of voluntarily committing to sustainable land use practices, starting with the 1991 Forests Accord. This landmark agreement between the forest industry and major conservation organisations committed the New Zealand forest industry to the protection of indigenous forest remnants in the establishment and management of plantations. For their part, conservation groups recognised the sustainability and conservation benefits of plantation forestry.

Since 1991, forest owners have taken this commitment to heart and many have sought to obtain Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for their forests using interim internationally prescribed standards. At present, 620,000 hectares or 34 per cent of the country's total plantation area meets the council's standards.

"The industry remains hopeful of FSC endorsement of the New Zealand standard, but after five years of negotiation, the NZFOA decided that a standard should now be implemented," says NZFOA president Peter Berg. "It is acknowledged that the interim FSC standards are useful for some individual forest owners, but may be impractical to apply to the whole industry. Like Australia, Chile and several other countries, we have deemed it is better to base our national standard on rigorous and relevant standards."

Mr Berg says forest owners are appreciative of the significant input made by iwi, environmental, recreational and social groups in the development of the National Standard. He says industry associations will be encouraging their members to get their forests certified, and exporters of

forest products will be encouraged to adopt and promote the standard in domestic and international markets.

Source: www.certificationwatch.org

The Tolpuddle Sycamore

Tolpuddle, a village in the English county of Dorset, is where trades unionism was born. In 1834 six labourers met under a sycamore tree in the village to establish a "friendly society" to press for an increase of wages above the meagre six shilling weekly that they were paid. During their meeting they swore an oath never to reveal the secrets of the group.

The government of the day, which was vigorously opposed to unions, reacted strongly. All six were sentenced to seven years' transportation to the penal settlements of Australia for administering unlawful oaths. But there was such a public outcry in support of the "Tolpuddle Martyrs" that the sentences were remitted and all six were given free passage back to England. Ultimately legislation was passed that gave everyone the right to belong to a union.

The sycamore, now the protected by the British National Trust, is still standing. It has been shown that it dates from the 1680s, yet it is still healthy. Every year trades unionists gather at Tolpuddle to commemorate the martyrs, and all have a special affection for the mighty tree that sheltered those brave pioneers of the labour movement.

Source: *The Independent*

Malaysia haze triggers emergency

Malaysia has announced a state of emergency in two towns after air pollution reached dangerous levels. The pollution is blamed on fires lit to clear land in neighbouring Indonesia, seriously affecting air quality and visibility across the Malacca Strait. Air quality readings taken in the two towns showed pollution markers to be above the emergency level of 500. The haze has prompted hundreds of schools to shut, as well as disrupting airports and busy shipping lanes.

Malaysian and Indonesian officials met to discuss the fires, which are an annual problem as poor farmers on Sumatra use fire to clear land for planting. This year's haze is the worst since 1998, when Malaysia was affected for weeks, causing severe economic losses. The readings over 500 were detected in the western towns of Port Klang and Kuala Selangor. Under the state of emergency, all workplaces must shut except for those providing essential services, and selling food.

Air quality levels throughout the Klang Valley have reached levels considered hazardous to health. Emergency measures could yet be introduced in the region's major cities, including the capital Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya, Putrajaya and Shah Alam. Schools in Kuala Lumpur and surrounding districts have been ordered to close, and people have been advised to stay indoors and wear masks if they venture out.

The BBC's Malaysia correspondent, Jonathan Kent, says the acrid smog that has enveloped Kuala Lumpur is like sandpaper on the back of one's throat. Some bars and restaurants have even offered special haze discounts on drinks to tempt customers in. However, the country's tourist destinations including Penang, Langkawi, the East Coast and Malaysian Borneo are almost entirely unaffected. Nevertheless there will be concern that pictures of the haze from the Kuala Lumpur area will scare away visitors.

With stock markets falling and hospitals inundated with people complaining of eye, throat and chest problems, Malaysia is offering Indonesia help to put out the fires that are causing the problem. The two countries' leaders spoke on Wednesday, and on Thursday, Indonesian Forestry Minister Malam Sambat Kaban met Malaysian Environment Minister Adenan Satem in Sumatra, where more than 900 fires are reported to be burning. Malaysian officials would say only that there is a definite willingness to co-operate.

Source: news.bbc.co.uk

Russia applies satellite technology to fight forest fires

A space satellite performs the role of a fire tower. In the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area the information about seats of fire in taiga now comes to Emergencies Ministry officers straight from the space. It has to be admitted, though, that fire-extinguishing equipment remains unchanged.

Only three minutes are given to clear a landing site for a helicopter. This brigade has been staying in the woods for over a week. It is re-deployed from one fire to another without a break. The today one is the third in a row.

This year, scientists are assisting the airborne fire-fighting unit for the first time. The Ugra Research Institute of Information Technologies have launched a programme of environmental monitoring. Information about fires is received straight from the satellite. Red spots on the map indicate the fire seats. Fresh information is received and sent for processing every 1 - 1.5 hours. The satellite can spot places where temperature is unusually high. The fire-fighters and the forestry department for the area of Malaya Ugra are immediately informed by telegrams. After satellite-provided data is confirmed by aerial reconnaissance, a team of six fire-fighters is parachuted on the scene.

Source: www.gateway2russia.com

Scotland's native woodlands under the microscope

The first phase of the most comprehensive survey ever undertaken of Scotland's native woods and forests is under way. Surveyors from Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Research will spend the next few years scouring brae, glen, moor, field and town to discover exactly how much native woodland Scotland has, what types of native woods they are, what condition they are in, where they are, and a range of other information. But first, pilot surveys are being undertaken in four areas over the next nine months to enable the researchers to test their methods and refine their survey techniques to ensure that when they begin the main project they gather the correct information in the most appropriate

way for end users' needs. The results of the pilot surveys will also be used to demonstrate the benefits and value of the survey to a wider audience.

The four areas being surveyed in the pilot survey are in Ettrick & Lauderdale in the Borders, the Clyde Valley, Wester Ross and Strathspey & Badenoch. Leading the work will be project manager Dr Zoe Laird, who is based in Forestry Commission Scotland's national office in Edinburgh.

Dr Laird encouraged woodland owners and managers to help the surveyors, because the survey results will be useful to them as well as to scientists, foresters and policy makers: "The survey will be valuable to woodland owners and managers by providing them with information that will them with management planning, It should also help Forestry Commission Scotland and other government bodies to target their support for woodland owners as effectively as possible. I therefore encourage owners to offer any help they can to the survey staff.

"Scotland has only a tiny fraction left, perhaps only 2 per cent, of the once-vast expanse of original native forest that covered more than half the land thousands of years ago. Over the past 20 years we have made good progress in protecting these precious fragments, and also in adding new native woodland to our landscape.

"However, in order to progress and evaluate the effectiveness of our policies for protecting and expanding native woods and forests, we need to establish a sound baseline of information, and this survey will go a long way to filling the gaps in our information.

"Protecting and expanding our native woodland is important for Scotland, not just because of its nature conservation and heritage value, but for sound economic reasons as well. There is widespread public enthusiasm for more native woodland in the landscape. Our forests and woods are becoming increasingly significant players in key industries such as green tourism and recreation. Activities such as wildlife watching, mountain biking, horse riding, forest holidays and many others are growing significantly and providing new jobs and business opportunities in many small and often fragile rural communities, and native woodlands are very attractive places to enjoy these activities.

"We are also keen to grow the market for, and the supply of, sustainably produced native timbers, some of which are excellent alternatives to imported timbers. The information we gather from the survey will be invaluable in informing those efforts as well."

Source: www.forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Publications

Bush Boy to Bug Man

By TCR White

Published by Athena Press, ISBN 1-84401-308-1, 438 £12.99 or US$ 20.95

Published by Athena Press, Queen's House, 2 Holly Road, Twickenham TW1 4EG. Distributed in the UK by Gardeners and obtainable through Gardeners Bookshops and from Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com. ISBN 1-84401-308-1, 438 pages including more than 40 photographs, a number of cartoons, and several maps - price UKP12.99 or USD 20.95.

After 1940, and for almost the next 30 years the New Zealand Forest Service's Technical Trainee programme recruited and trained young men (but very few women) for roles in the burgeoning organisation, more than 750 in total. Many of these people went on to become the leaders in the forest industry in New Zealand; in the Forest Service, in private enterprise, in research and in forestry education. Many are still active in the industry but a number of those first recruited have sadly passed away.

The early years, i.e. those immediately after the Second World War were notable for many reasons, including the still quite pioneering aspects of life in rural NZ, the influx of returning servicemen who had spent long periods on the battlefields of France and N Africa, and the drive by the NZ Forest Service to develop an efficient and successful recruitment and training scheme for all the many facets of forestry with which it was then involved. In 1946 when Tom White first joined the trainee ranks things were still far from settled, although some of the rough spots had been removed and after a year or two in the field trainees were either assigned to professional (University) or technical and managerial (Ranger) training progression, and careers that developed from that background.

Like so many others before and after him, Tom's introduction to forestry involved being dropped off "in the bush" (in this case Gwavas Forest), which for a young fellow, more or less fresh out of school required some resilience. Most important was self reliance, especially when it came to cooking and cleaning although hard physical work in all weather conditions could also be challenging until one hardened to it. If you lasted (and most did, with a little help and good-humour from their colleagues when necessary) then the comradeship and relationships that grew from this experience often lasted for lifetimes. In fact much of the camaraderie and esprit de corps that was associated with the NZ Forest Service throughout its existence (and indeed the entire NZ forest industry) owed a great deal to this enlightened and effective training scheme.

Tom clearly kept a quite detailed diary and provides many interesting insights into his life as a trainee (his first stay in a hotel and what to do with his bacon rind at breakfast, the importance of a good recipe for gravy, and a range of other hunting, camping and tramping experiences). Costs, prices and some of the challenges of travelling around NZ at that time are also well recorded – a new pair of boots for 41/- (or $4.10 today), three nights in the Blenheim Club Hotel for 3 pounds ($6.00), and a fairly solid but traditional meal featuring meat, potatoes and 3 veges for 2/- or 2/6 (20-25c) – while Tom also enjoyed the movies (such as *The Seventh Veil, Rhapsody in Blue, Anna and the King of Siam*) and whenever he was in town he took the opportunity to go along.

Those with any association with forestry in New Zealand will find this account full of familiar localities and forests, haunts (e.g. the old Geyser Hotel in Rotorua, which must have served more than a few beers to almost every technical trainee at some point during training), and the names of people who are now part of the folk-lore of NZ forestry (Tom Birch who ran the trainee scheme for many years and mentored many of the trainees, Sandy McQuire who later went on to become the guru of timber preservation treatment and only recently passed away, Bill Girling-Butcher and John McDonald of fire protection fame, and many more).

However the book is more than that; it is an unusually detailed account of one person's experience as a technical trainees with the NZ Forest Service over the period 1946-54, and is accordingly a significant addition to the history of the service. Many NZ foresters reading it will find the mind quickly turning to similar events and places, while the book sits open on the knee – only to jerk back to the delightfully recounted and often quite personal events of Tom's life. In an Appendix at the end of the book, and contributing to its historical value, is a chronological list of technical trainees –commencing with well-regarded foresters such as Charlie Brown, Tony Grayburn, Trevor Foley and Peter Maplesden in the 1941 intake, and running all the way through to RR Worsnop in 1968.

The book itself is produced in paperback style; so print and photo reproduction quality is no more than you would expect of a book published in this fashion. Its style is quite lively with a mixture of humour, romance, some quite frank and self effacing commentary and a good deal of general interest forestry material contributing to what is otherwise a very informative read.

Tom White was brought up in Hawera, and even while he was training to become a forester with the NZ Forest Service he was developing an abiding interest in forest insects. Not surprisingly when he completed his degree in forestry in Edinburgh, Scotland he returned to Rotorua to work in the Forest Research Institute as an entomologist. Later Tom went to the University of Adelaide in South Australia as Senior Lecturer and subsequently has had periods as Professor of Biology at the University of South Pacific, Dean of Applied Science at Charles Sturt University (Australia), and he is now Hon. Research Fellow at the Waite Institute of the University of South Australia.

Foresters in many parts of the world, but particularly those in New Zealand will find this well worth reading.

Peter J Berg

ARTICLE REVIEWS

Forest certification: sustainable forestry or misleading marketing?
Hall, D. / American Lands Alliance , 2005

This article compares two forest certification systems, namely the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). The main point of the article is that while it has improved over time, the SFI remains much weaker than the FSC, and is still neither independent of vested timber interests, nor sufficiently protective of forest ecosystems and social values.

Altogether, the article argues, the FSC excels the SFI in a number of issues:

- the FSC achieves both relevance to, and independence from, forestry interests through a standards development and governance system that vests equal control in three membership chambers: environmental, social, and economic
- the FSC is also predominantly funded by independent sources
- the FSC is further reaching in its forest and environmental protection standards
- also, only the FSC consistently protects indigenous peoples' rights, requires workers to be paid competitive wages, and requires reinvestment in local communities
- only the FSC requires chain-of-custody monitoring and tracking of certified products, to ensure the accuracy of labelling and marketing claims.

The article concludes that the FSC remains the threshold for credible forest certification. Until other systems close their credibility gaps, businesses and individual consumers interested in reducing their ecological "footprint" should look beyond the rhetoric–and give preference to wood and paper products from FSC certified forests.

Source:http://www.eldis.org/ds/docdisplay.cfm?doc=DOC19179&resource=f1forests&n=1 (from where a the full paper can be downloaded)

Time to measure the impacts of certification on sustainable forest management
Ozinga, S. / Fern , 2005

This report assesses the benefits and developments relating to forest certification schemes which have been evolved over the last ten years.

It gives a brief overview of current certification schemes and also makes the following points:

- certification has led to increased consumer demand for timber products from well managed sources, with certified forest products now having a market share of between 5 and 10 percent in some countries
- it also seems to have improved forest management practices and working conditions, although not substantially
- certification has highlighted land rights problems and increased understanding that forest management is not just a technical matter
- while certification was originally driven by concerns over loss of tropical forests worldwide, most certification programmes are actually in developed countries
- the perception of certification has weakened the sense of urgency about deforestation
- certification has brought different stakeholder groups around the table to discuss what constitutes sustainable forest management.

The report concludes that concrete impacts on the ground have to be examined better in order to understand where and why positive and negative impacts have occurred. Focus should be given to enhancing the certification tool to improve and enlarge its impact.

Source:http://www.eldis.org/ds/docdisplay.cfm?doc=DOC19071&resource=f1forests&n=1 (from where the full paper can be downloaded)

Meetings

September 2005

Name: **Multifunctional Forest Ecosystem Management in Europe**
Place: Barcelona, Spain
Date: 09/09
Website: http://www.efi.fi/events/extra/2005/2005ac/

Name: **The stability of tropical rainforest margins: linking ecological, economical and social constraints of land use and conservation**
Place: Göttingen, Germany
Date: 19/09
Website: http://www.storma.de/symp2005

Name: **Sustainable Management in Action**
Place: Geneva, Switzerland
Date: 19/09
Website: http://www.smia.info/

Name: **Restoration and Wise Use of Tropical Peatland: Problems of Biodiversity, Fire, Poverty and Water Management**
Place: Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia
Date: 22/09
Website: http://www.peat-portal.net/ev_en.php?ID=3672_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

November 2005

Name: **39th Session of the International Tropical TImber Council and the Associated Sessions of the Committees**
Place: Yokohama, Japan
Date: 7-12/11
Website: http://www.itto.or.jp

Name: **Research Workshop on Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Risk – an Economic and Business View**
Place: Halle, Germany
Date: 16 – 18/11
Website: http://www.wiwi.uni-halle.de/lui/bwl/umwelt/

February 2006

Name: **6th Session of the UNFF**
Place: UNHQ, New York
Date: 13-24/02
Website: http://www.un.org/esa /forests

Name: **A Scientific Symposium: Global Forests in Ethical Discourse**
Place: Pietermaritz-burg, South Africa
Date: TBA
Email: antti.erkkila@joensuu. fi

March 2006

Name: **The World Congress on Communication for Development (WCCD)**
Place: Rome, Italy
Date: 15 – 17/03
Website: http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEVCOMMENG/EXTDEVCOMSUSDEVT/0,,contentMDK:20350741~menuPK:1330005~pagePK:64146915~piPK:64146896~theSitePK:423901,00.html

June 2006

Name: **Water, Land and Food Security in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions**
Place: Valenzano, Italy
Date: 06/09
Website: http://www.iamb.it