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The editors and authors are responsible for their own articles. Their opinions do not necessarily always express the views of WWF or IUCN.

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## Back to the tinder box

A year after "the worst forest fires in history", uncontrolled fires have once again been burning throughout the world. In the first fourth months of 1998, Brazil suffered its largest fires since 1925, covering an area estimated to be the size of France and damaging large tracts of natural forest. The fires defeated desperate attempts to put them out, ranging from water bombs to shamans' dances, until heavy rains finally (and temporarily) doused the flames in early April. Further south, natural forests in Chile have caught alight. Fires are also burning throughout South East Asia, with large parts of East Kalimantan already in flames and forests in protected areas on fire in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. The haze is so intense that even in some remote Pacific islands the haze is as strong as a Los Angeles smog.

So much for all those who swore in 1997 that this must never happen again. But amidst all the gloom and hand-wringing, there are a few signs of hope. First, this year's repeat conflagration is finally putting paid to the notion that what happens to the environment in one country is no-one else's business. People and businesses suffering the second major catastrophe within a year are becoming increasingly vocal, particularly as calculations of the costs of the 1997 fires become available, and reports start trickling in of companies relocating from affected areas, such as Singapore. It is highly significant that the Brazilian government has accepted \$5 million from the World Bank to fight the fires, after years of rejecting such foreign intervention. In the future, all countries are going to be increasingly under scrutiny from their neighbours, who will soon be demanding compensation for the effects of natural resource mismanagement.

Many of our own national organisations and programme offices have been intensely involved in efforts to control the fires and to address the underlying causes of fires in tropical forests. At the United Nations, Klaus Töpfer has been appointed to coordinate its fight against the fires. Meanwhile, at WWF and IUCN headquarters, we are working together to develop a major response: Project Firefight, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Center for International Forestry Research and a range of other partners. The project will support global, regional and national response strategies for fire mismanagement, develop an early warning system and launch a major education programme. Contact either office for further details.

The next issue of the newsletter will be produced in August 1998 (copy deadline mid-July).

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## Structural adjustment and forests

A study on Bolivian forest loss and degradation found that the 1985 structural adjustment policies increased poverty but did not cause widespread migration to natural forests. Structural adjustment contributed to forest clearing for export-orientated soybean production and to degradation by lumber companies. While the policies did not reduce the government's already weak capacity to address these problems, they missed the opportunity to improve the situation. Meanwhile, analysis by CIFOR, the Center for International Forestry Research, suggest that austerity measures forced on the Indonesian government by the IMF could both decrease and increase pressure on forests. The timber sector is experiencing a fall in demand for its products, which could relieve some pressure on forest resources. On the other hand, Indonesia's ability to under-price its competitors means that land for agroexport production will increase, sometimes at the expense of forest cover (for example a vast rice production system in Kalimantan) and mining pressure and migration to rural areas are also both likely to grow. Amongst significant IMF-imposed policy changes are reduced export taxes on logs, switching control of state forests from the Ministry of Forestry to the Ministry of Finance, reducing land conversion targets and ensuring that the reforestation fund is actually used for reforestation (not previously the case). Long term environmental implications of the IMF involvement remain uncertain.

Sources: David Kaimowitz, d.kaimowitz@cgn.net and Daju Pradnja Resosudarmo, d.pradnja@cgn.net

## Most species found in 17 countries

Over 66 per cent of the world's species and 80 per cent of endangered species are concentrated in 17 countries – Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, USA and Venezuela – according to research by US-based Conservation International, reported in a new book *Megadiversity: Earth's Biologically Wealthiest Nations*. Brazil is the most biologically diverse country, with 20 per cent of the world's species and 30 per cent of tropical rainforests, and Indonesia ranks second.



CJ Hicks/WWF-UK

## Illegal logging continues in Cambodia

Armed factions are involved in frenzied logging across Cambodia, reaching into national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and tribal lands, according to London-based researchers [Global Witness](#).

At least five government groups were working with former Khmer Rouge guerrillas in logging Bokor National Park south of Phnom Penh. Although the protected area was virtually untouched in May 1997, by February 1998 locals were estimating that 70 per cent had been logged. Resistance troops and independent groups are also involved in logging, according to the group, the profits from which end up with top local military or political figures. Meanwhile, Cambodia's fragile Angkor temples are threatened by forest clearing within the protecting area surrounding them, with a tenth of the forest already destroyed.

Sources: Global Witness and Associated Press

## Fires update

Fires are burning again in many areas, fuelled by continuing drought conditions and the impacts of El Nino.

**Indonesia** Over a thousand fires in East Kalimantan province were "spreading out of control", damaging 155,000 ha, and cloud seeding efforts have failed. Large areas of the Kutai National Park have burnt. Fires threaten orang utan and freshwater dolphins.

**Sources:** agencies and WWF Indonesia Programme

**Malaysia** The government has declared that current haze problems are arising from domestic fires and ordered an urgent crackdown on use of fire for land clearance.

**Brunei** The Sultan sacked his health minister after fires caused serious haze problems.

**Source:** New Straits Times 24/3/98

**Philippines** 5000 ha of rare natural forest burnt in Palawan.

**Source:** Agence France Presse 30/3/98.

**Thailand** Large areas of the Khao Yai national park and 3000 ha of the Huay Kha Khaeng national park – a World Heritage listed forest – have burnt.

**Source:** The Sun (Malaysia), 24/3/98

**Brazil** The largest fire since 1925 threatened indigenous peoples and burnt an area which some reports suggest was equal to the size of France. Fires centred in Roraima state and burnt out of control for two months until heavy rains helped dampen the flames.

**Sources:** Washington Post 27/3/98, Reuters, 29/3/98 Greenwire and agencies

Associated Press



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**Chile** About 180 fires, set by local residents to clear grassland, have scorched over 4860 ha of natural forests.

**Source:** Santiago El Mercurio 23/3/98.

**Pacific islands** Smoke from huge fires around the world has created smog levels similar to those in Los Angeles.

**Source:** Los Angeles Times 31/3/98

**WWF report launched** 1997's fires cost Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore US\$1.4 billion in short-term health costs and losses to industrial production and tourism, according to a study by WWF and the Singapore-based Economy and Environment Programme for Southeast Asia. Figures do not include long-term damage to timber and biodiversity, or impacts on other affected countries.

## News in brief

### Logger convicted under Oregon fish protection law

A new law protecting dwindling native salmon runs was used in October 1997 to convict a logger who bulldozed a logjam on the Nehalem River that harboured more than 35,000 coho salmon eggs.

**Source:** Portland Oregonian, 22 October 1997

### China launches US\$54 billion acid rain plan

The government will coordinate sulphur dioxide controls, including requirements for desulphurisation equipment, reduction in high sulphur coal production and fees on other heavy polluters. Acid rain has already affected a third of China and parts of Korea and Japan.

**Source:** Agence France Press, 2 December 1997

### Tribal survivors return to rainforest homelands in Peru

Thousands of the Ashaninka tribe, forced from their homes by Shining Path guerillas and drug smugglers in 1989, are returning to their traditional homelands 200 miles east of Lima, under an initiative supported by the UK-based Rainforest Foundation.

**Source:** Rainforest Foundation, November 1997

### Armed protection for rhinos in Congo national parks

Armed rangers in the Democratic Republic of Congo will be protecting the world's remaining white rhinoceros population, which has fallen from about 1400 to 30 in 30 years. In February 1998, President Laurent Desire Kabila met with a delegation from WWF and expressed a commitment "to establish a genuine conservation agenda" for the country.

**Source:** WWF

### European forest health declines

A study of ten years' data suggests that health of seven common tree species has declined, particularly in central and eastern Europe and the Iberian peninsula. Stress factors included sulphur dioxide (where critical load was exceeded at a fifth of test sites), ozone (with 90 per cent exceedance of critical loads in 1990), nitrogen oxides and drought.

**Source:** Ten Years of Monitoring Forest Condition in Europe, UNECE and European Commission, 1997

## Major new protected areas in Gabon

Two new protected areas have been created in the Gabonese rainforest. **Joseph Mayombo and Ralph Mengue** report from Libreville.

The government of Gabon has classified 3,320 km<sup>2</sup> of biologically rich rainforest at Monts Doudou as a wildlife management area where hunting and logging are banned. Monts Doudou is within the Congolian coastal ecoregion in south-west Gabon, which is one of the *Global 200* selected as being of primary importance for biodiversity conservation by WWF. It is part of Gabon's three presumed Pleistocene rainforest refuges, containing many rare and endemic species such as Ogilby's white-footed duiker (*Cephalophus ogilbyi crusalbum*) along with elephants, gorillas and chimpanzees. Monts Doudou also form

a unique biological corridor, included in the Gamba Protected Areas Complex and is adjacent to three existing reserves: Moukalaba, Ngove-Dogo and Setté-Cama. This area is now the largest contiguous reserve area in Central Africa, containing over 13,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land. The decision, which comes five months after the government classified 6000 km<sup>2</sup> of Minkebe as a protected area, will help assure the long-term conservation of Gabon and the region as a whole.

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### Protected areas news in brief

**Oil exploration in Pakistan National Park**  
In violation of wildlife protection laws, federal authorities in Islamabad have given a company gas and oil exploration rights in Pakistan's largest and oldest national park, the Kirthar National Park. Rare species include Sindh Ibex, Urial, desert wolf, Chinkara gazelle, and jackal leopards.

Source: Greenwire

**Carbon offset money funds Bolivian PA**  
The Bolivian government, The Nature Conservancy, a local NGO and three US energy companies agreed "the world's largest forest-sector project designed to mitigate global emissions of greenhouse gases." US\$9.5 million will purchase an additional 850,000 ha for the Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, protecting it from logging and sequestering up to 16 million tonnes of carbon. Local communities should benefit economically from the project, which includes a long-term endowment.

Source: Nature Conservancy press release

**Private fund buys protected areas in California**  
The Los Altos-based David and Lucile Packard Foundation will donate US\$175 million over five years to preserve Californian landscape, creating an annual budget four times what the state parks service has available for land purchase. The Nature Conservancy will be an early beneficiary, receiving US\$9 million to protect woodlands and riparian habitat along the Cosumnes River.

Source: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 March 1998

**Chilean energy company buys protected area**  
Endesa company has purchased almost 35,000 ha in southern Chile to develop an "environmentally friendly park project". Company officials said they hoped the purchase would help deflect recent criticism about Endesa's environmental record, which has been under attack for involvement in controversial hydro electric power projects.

Source: Greenwire

**Acute mining threat to Ecuador's protected areas**  
A new law being proposed will allow mining to take place in all national parks, wilderness areas, natural protected sites and even archaeological heritage sites, and in legally protected public and private forest reserves. It seeks to make mining a national priority, more important than agriculture, ranching, tourism etc. It also means that mining companies will have the right to mine on other peoples' private lands and weakens existing environmental regulations.

Source: Carlos Zorilla, [rdexter@uio.satnet.net](mailto:rdexter@uio.satnet.net) (Carlos Zorilla)

**California tribes dedicate first Indian park**  
In October 1997, eleven Native American tribes in California dedicated the nation's first Indian-owned wilderness park, the 3,900-acre (1580 ha) Intertribal Sinkyone Wilderness Park. Reforestation is restoring old logging roads and skid trails and stabilising slopes prone to mudslides due to clearcutting.

Source: *Washington Post*, 7 October 1997

**Proposed Canadian coal mines threaten US Glacier National Park**  
Plans for coal mines run by Fording Coal Ltd, just across the US-Canadian border are "posing the threat of disastrous pollution" to Glacier National Park's western border according to park officials.

Source: *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*, 18 November 1997.

**Bioprospecting in the USA**  
Yellowstone National Park has been accused of striking an illegal deal with Diversa Inc, a San Diego bio-tech firm, giving the right to take microbes from geysers and patent any resulting products, in return for a small annual fee and undisclosed royalties. A coalition of NGOs alleges that the deal was made through a research and development agreement to avoid the environmental review required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Source: *Billings Gazette*, 6 March 1998

## International initiatives update

### Forest biodiversity in Slovakia

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is holding its fourth Conference of Parties in Bratislava, May 4-15 1998. Last year its scientific subcommittee blocked plans for a programme of work on forest biodiversity and the CBD has also got bogged down in disagreements about roles with the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). [Andréa Finger](#) reports on future options.

IUCN and WWF have been working together to produce a focused set of proposals for the CBD COP4 meeting in Bratislava. Much of the necessary work has already been carried out, particularly with respect to developing a programme of work on forest biodiversity, and is currently being delayed mainly by lack of political courage. The two organisations will be going to Slovakia with three key recommendations, that the COP4:

- review SBSTTA3 recommendations by recalling previous conference decisions and Intergovernmental Panel on Forest recommendations and provide a statement to the second main meeting of the IFF, proposing synergies between the CBD and the Commission on Sustainable Development
- establish a Thematic Panel for Forest Biodiversity that will develop without further delay an effective and action-oriented programme of work
- ensure that additional and adequate resources are allocated to fulfil the objectives of the CBD with regard to forest biodiversity

A full text of the IUCN/WWF position paper is available from either of the two forest programmes.

### Disappointment at the Climate Change Convention

Before the conference of the Convention on Climate Change, in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997, US Vice President Al Gore compared continued sceptics about global warming, to people who defend the tobacco industry. Yet the US government did little to address the long-term problems created by climate change. The agreement reached on December 11 left a series of loopholes which will allow major polluters to continue much as before. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) agreed at Kyoto, which allows polluters to "offset" some emissions by sponsoring afforestation, could in theory fund a range of forest conservation (see news piece on page 4). But there are few guarantees that this will be spent on beneficial forest projects, and IUCN and WWF are concerned that it could instead become an excuse for rapid commercial afforestation schemes with few social or environmental benefits. – *Nigel Dudley*

### Upcoming meetings

Apart from the CBD, a series of other international forest meetings are taking place over the coming months:

May 8, Birmingham, UK G-8 meeting where forest commitments will be discussed

May 20-28, Libreville, Gabon International Tropical Timber Organisation meeting

June 10-14, Bata, Equatorial Guinea Second meeting of the conference on Central African rainforest ecosystem (CEFDHAL)

August 24-September 4, Geneva, Switzerland Intergovernmental Forum on Forests second meeting

### Research in Brief

As a result of the Kyoto meeting of the Climate Change Convention, interest in climate change is running high. Mapping changes in potential natural vegetation due to doubling  $SO_2$  found potential increases in Europe, and to a lesser extent in Asia and North America, with small decreases in Latin America and Africa and major decreases in Oceania (*Journal of Forest Research* 2, 147-152, 1997).

Number of forest fires have increased in southern Europe and Russia over the last decade, although trends in the area burned are less definite (*United Nations Timber Bulletin* 50 [4]).

The academic debate about forest management continues. Around 34 per cent of the world's industrial wood supply now comes from plantations, as compared with 30 per cent from old-growth, illustrating a shift in sources (*Environment* 39 (10), 14-20, 1997).

The viability of sustainable forest management comes in for sustained criticism in an article that has sparked considerable debate by arguing that set-asides offer the only realistic long-term options for conservation (*Scientific American*, April 1997, 44-49).

Meanwhile, a paper from the German aid agency GTZ argues that the importance of secondary forests is currently being undervalued and provides some starting points for action (GTZ, *The relevance of secondary forest management for development policy*, 1997).

Opportunities for reducing the impact of roads in tropical forests are also discussed in a recent article (*Environment* 39 (8), 1997).

Social issues also remain at centre stage. Many Latin American common property management regimes (CPMRs) have broken down due to centralised land tenure policies, changing cultures and policies favouring resource privatisation. Yet evidence suggest that CPMRs are more likely to deliver environmental and development objectives (*Development and Change* 28, 95-117 1997).

## WWF's NTFP network for the Mediterranean

The multiple-use management of Mediterranean forests results in the production of a large number of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Methods of production range from simple gathering to complex management of agro-silvo-pastoral systems. Assessments of NTFPs suggest that any attempt to address forest conservation in the Mediterranean must consider the important role that their production plays in both forest ecosystems and the socio-economic welfare of rural communities.

In pursuit of a more integrated approach to forest conservation, WWF's Mediterranean Programme is starting a project titled *Towards a Network for the Sustainable Use of NTFPs in the Mediterranean Region*. The project targets the conservation of important Mediterranean forest areas and promotes rural community development by sustainable NTFP production. It will develop a common identity for the participating areas and products, increase technical knowledge regarding the role of particular NTFPs in the Mediterranean, promote awareness and build human resource capacity to manage NTFP production.

In January 1998, WWF organized a project start-up workshop in Mértola, Portugal. The workshop was the initial step taken for the establishment of the network. Participants reviewed the current status of NTFPs in the Mediterranean and other parts of the world and presented marketing and certification initiatives for NTFP promotion and production respectively. During the workshop the framework was set for the development of pilot projects throughout the Mediterranean.

– Alan Pierce, co-chair of the FSC NTFP working group.

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### News in brief

**Claude Martin meets President Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo** President Kabila met the WWF delegation in Kinshasa, and pledged a commitment to establishing a genuine conservation agenda. Most of Congo's national parks are in a state of acute crisis and the world's last wild population of white rhinos is at extreme risk. Yet D R Congo is probably the richest country in Africa in terms of biodiversity, and contains half Africa's tropical forest, with enormous conservation potential.

Two new publications from WWF *Forest Futures* is a short booklet describing forest conservation at WWF. *Protected Areas for a New Millennium* is the final version of a draft position paper first published in 1997 (see *arborvitæ* number 6). Available for 10 ChF including p/p. For further information contact Devendra Rana on Tel: +41-22-995-0211, Fax: +41-22-364-0640 E-mail: drana@wwfnet.org

**Core Forest Advisory Group meets at Glion, Switzerland** The advisory group met for two days to discuss global forest strategy over the next six months. For details contact Devendra Rana (drana@wwfnet.org)

**Correction** In the last issue of *arborvitæ* the article on Cooperative arrangements for managing Kanchenjunga mountain ecosystem in the Himalayas, the governments collaborating together should have read Nepal, India (instead of Bhutan) and China.

## arborvitæ

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## The Brazzaville Process continues

Two years ago, IUCN helped develop a unique intergovernmental process in Africa, when countries of the Congo basin came together to develop steps towards sustainable forest management. Now the second meeting is taking place in Bata, Equatorial Guinea, from June 8-14 1998. It will provide a major opportunity to review progress over the past two years and to look at how the countries of the region can cooperate with respect to such issues as controlling illegal trade, certification and sustainable forest management.

Contact: Guido Broekhoven Tel: +237-21-64-96, Fax: +237-21-64-97

## Half a century of conservation

IUCN celebrates its fiftieth birthday this year, with a major symposium at Fontainebleau, France called *Imagine Tomorrow's World – Diverse or Divided*. The forest programme will be running a workshop on fair shares, looking at the impacts of decentralisation. This process is sometimes forced on local communities before they are properly prepared and sometimes responsibility is decentralised without sufficient authority or funds. Decentralisation offers both opportunities and dangers for conservation, depending on how it is managed. A keynote speaker and three responses will discuss the issues from a forest management perspective.

Contact: Bill Jackson, E-mail WJJ@hq.iucn.org

## A new face at headquarters

In late 1997, Don Gilmour retired from IUCN; he intends to maintain an active interest in IUCN and WWF (see his article from Australia on page 8). Bill Jackson has replaced Don as IUCN's Forest Conservation Programme Coordinator. Before joining headquarters, Bill was the facilitator for IUCN's Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative in Eastern and Southern Africa.

His postgraduate studies focused on collaborative management of forests in Nepal. He has extensive experience in community forestry in South and South-East Asia and in the forest sector in Australia where he worked with State Forests of New South Wales. The headquarters team now comprise Bill, Ursula Senn (Administrative Assistant) and Simon Rietbergen. Simon joined IUCN in 1997 from the World Bank. He has extensive experience in Africa and previously worked for the International Institute for Environment and Development.

### New Publications

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Large Dams: Learning from the Past,  
Looking to the Future

Proceedings of a joint workshop between IUCN and the World Bank, looking at the environmental and social impacts of large dams and based initially on an internal review of 50 large dams funded by the World Bank. The meeting ended with a decision to establish a two-year international commission on the issue; the commission was set up in January 1998.

The sustainable use of biodiversity  
in Mesoamerica: towards the consolidation  
of democracy

A new discussion paper from ORMA, published in Spanish and English. It looks at the links between people, development and biodiversity and distinguishes between the biologically based concept of biological diversity and a wider biodiversity which also embraces cultural, legal, economic, political and social issues. The authors propose that we need to move from wildlife conservation to the conservation of this wider biodiversity. An important conceptual document.

A Global Overview of Forest Protected  
Areas on the World Heritage List

– by Jim Thorsell and Todd Sigaty, IUCN September 1997.  
A paper which lists and maps existing sites, discusses those at risk and proposes possible new sites worthy of designation.

Don Gilmour retired as the coordinator of IUCN's global forest conservation programme in August 1997. Under his guidance, the programme decentralised, with the appointment of regional forest staff around the world, and grew dramatically with an expanding publication series and joint policy and programming with WWF. Don brought a wide range of experience to the Union; both as a forest hydrologist, teacher and manager in Queensland and also through his work in community forestry in Nepal, now recognised as a world class example of collaborative resource management. His combination of solid technical experience and a deep interest in the social aspects of forest management has broadened the thinking of the programme and strongly influenced a generation of forest managers and conservationists. I am sure that all staff and advisors would join me in wishing Don and Helen all the best for the future. Don hopes to continue to contribute to the Union's work in a consulting capacity.

– Bill Jackson

## Forest Conservation in Australia Changing policy landscape

Australia is a paradox – one of the best protected area planning systems in the world coupled with one of the highest rates of deforestation.

Don Gilmour, recently returned to the country, gives *arborvitæ* an update.

The past five years has seen a considerable maturing of the political landscape in Australia as far as forest conservation is concerned. The bitter battles between the conservation community and commercial forestry interests that characterised the 1980s have given way to an acceptance by both sides of the need to work together to achieve the objectives of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD). This has become the accepted credo for debates about the management of all natural resources where the trilogy of economic, ecological and social benefits must be harmonised. This is not to say that the battles are over but at least there is a broadly agreed framework within which the various agendas are being pursued and this, in itself, is no mean feat.

The starting point for this framework is the *National Forest Policy Statement*, which was negotiated in the early 1990s and signed by the Federal Prime Minister and the State Premiers in 1992. A part of this Policy is the requirement for a process whereby the States can invite the Commonwealth to participate in undertaking *Comprehensive Regional Assessments* (CRA) of environmental and heritage aspects of forests. These assessments provide the basis for enabling the Commonwealth and States to reach a single agreement relating to their obligations for forests in a bioregion (the *Regional Forest Agreements* RFAs). Commonwealth obligations include assessment of national estate values, World Heritage values, Aboriginal heritage values, environmental impact and obligations relating to international conventions including those for protecting endangered species and biological diversity. The *Regional Forest Agreements* that come out of the Assessments cover guidelines for ecologically sustainable management of the regional forests. Thus, the final outcome should be an adequate, representative reserve system and sustainable management of forests outside the reserves. This is in the context of previous commitments by the Commonwealth Government that 15 per cent of forests present in pre-European Australia will be reserved. This

In Australia the six State Governments have control over land resources including forests. However, the Commonwealth, through its foreign affairs powers, is the signatory to international conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES. This creates an obvious tension between the States and the Commonwealth as the latter government frequently tries (often successfully) to impose its will on the States through financial leverage and negotiation; eg the Commonwealth Government has to approve wood chip export licences and can withhold licence approval until the states conform with Commonwealth interests.

target is not intended to be prescriptive but rather is a guideline for the process. (In fact, a 15 per cent target will be very difficult to achieve, particularly in the case of poorly conserved forest types, many of which are represented predominantly on private land.)

The timber industry has felt under considerable threat during the past decade, as more and more land has been taken from the productive forest estate and added to conservation reserves of various types. The successful outcome of the CFA/RFA processes should provide some long term planning certainty for the timber industry. One of the real challenges in the process is the effective incorporation of stakeholder interests. This is essential for any durable outcome, but it is the area which has caused the most problems. Among these are:

- In some regions key stakeholders have withdrawn from the development of RFAs;
- Processes to involve Aboriginal interests fully in cultural heritage assessments and forest use planning are not resolved;
- The highly centralised planning approach adopted for developing RFAs has led to problems with representation at the sub-regional level.

It seems that much more attention needs to be given to the social side of the process to ensure that all stakeholder interests are adequately catered for. An elegant technical outcome is of no value if there is not broadly based stakeholder support.

To date, *Regional Forest Agreements* have been concluded for Tasmania and for east Gippsland in Victoria and they are in progress for the major commercial forest regions in Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and the remainder of Victoria. Yet to be addressed are the extensive areas of largely non commercial forests and woodlands, particularly in Queensland, many of which are held as leasehold land for grazing.

### A dark cloud on the horizon

In spite of the significant progress being made in rationalising the management of the commercial forest areas of Australia through the implementation of the CRA and RFA processes, one dark cloud still looms. This is the massive deforestation still taking place in dry forests and woodlands, particularly in tropical Australia. Official estimates are that 500,000 ha of land are being cleared of trees each year, mainly for cattle grazing and mainly in Queensland. This makes Australia's deforestation rate the sixth highest in the world and the highest among the OECD countries. The Government estimates prepared for the Kyoto climate change negotiations in December 1997 showed that more than 5 million ha of land had been cleared between 1983 and 1993. A 1994 report for the National Greenhouse Inventory listed land clearing as being responsible for 24 per cent of Australia's emissions, with Queensland responsible for 75 per cent of the national clearing. Recent estimates by the Department of Natural Resources in Queensland using up-to-date GIS systems put the annual clearing rate in the State at 262,000 ha during the period 1991-95.

This is lower than some earlier estimates. However, irrespective of the exact figure, there is clearly a major change taking place in the landscape of rural tropical Australia. This is likely to have significant impacts on biodiversity conservation as well as on greenhouse gas emissions. Resolving this issue is one of the major conservation battles for the future.

*Preparation of this article has benefited from discussions with Alf Said of the Queensland Department of Natural Resources.*



# Linking policy development and field actions

WWF has been running an ambitious programme linking forest conservation and development. In the following article, Tom McShane and Michael Wells sum up the experiences to date and make a proposal and a call for partners

The DGIS-WWF Tropical Forest Portfolio is implementing seven integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs) in Honduras, Ecuador, Gabon (2), Ethiopia, Pakistan and the Philippines, with funding from the Dutch government. ICDPs link biodiversity conservation, usually in protected areas, with local social and economic development. Most emphasize local participation in design and implementation.

After having been virtually unknown a decade ago, ICDPs have become the dominant tropical conservation project approach supported by NGOs, development agencies and governments. But not a lot is known about the ingredients for success. There is still a lack of cases where local peoples' development needs have been effectively reconciled with natural resource management. Two particular problems have been identified: failure to establish coherent links between conservation objectives and investments in local development, and an inability to confront national policy and institutional factors which pose barriers to success.

The WWF project is coordinated by an Interregional Project. Within this, the *ICDP Adaptive Learning Process* aims to use project experiences to make ICDP conservation approaches more effective, and then to communicate these findings.

Key links between ICDPs in the field and both local and national policies and institutions will be identified and analysed to highlight the most critical factors affecting project success (*linkages analysis*).

Particular emphasis will be given to:  
**one:** identifying problems and threats to natural resource management as starting points for ICDP interventions  
**two:** in-depth analysis of the threats  
**three:** identifying conservation constraints outside the ICDPs' immediate spheres of influence, and the influence of these three factors on **four:** the selection of specific ICDP activities. These steps can be launched with a rapid policy and institutional assessment to provide an overview for strategy development. The results should include enhanced understanding of the factors determining ICDP effectiveness.

Strategies will be developed and launched to influence "upstream" policies and institutions through discussions with policy makers on the basis of "downstream" ICDP experience, with information and lessons flowing both ways (*policy dialogue*). This will explore how small ICDPs with a modest conservation impact can leverage their influence to catalyse change at a broader level. Considering a field project as downstream, the upstream processes which

it might seek to influence could include actions of government agencies, resource use and access rights, local investments in economic development, indigenous peoples' status, other donor programmes, private sector activities, conservation planning and priority setting. Results from the dialogue with policy makers would be passed back to the ICDPs. The result should be a series of carefully-targeted attempts to overcome some of the key constraints facing ICDPs, based on field experiences.

ICDP experiences and their impact on policy and institutional change will be monitored, evaluated, documented and disseminated (*documentation and communications*). Linkage analysis and policy dialogue will be documented, shared between the projects and externally disseminated. Project performance indicators will be developed and monitored. ICDP field experiences will provide the basis for refining the linkages analyses, the policy dialogues and future ICDP activities.

## Call for Partners

This is an ambitious agenda. An early priority is to identify potential collaborating projects and organisations, both national and international, with a common interest in testing new approaches to effective ICDP implementation.

The first activity, the *linkages analysis*, will require the services of a national research organisation, possibly university based and preferably with the potential to become a long-term partner in training, research, strategy development, evaluation and policy work. Analysts must interact effectively with ICDP staff and appreciating field-level concerns in addition to displaying analytic skills in sectors related to conservation.

The second activity, the *policy dialogue*, could be difficult to launch convincingly from a single ICDP. Instead, partnerships involving two or more ICDPs within a country seem more likely to be able to influence policy and institutional change, by pooling their expertise, contacts and capacities. Other ICDPs and conservation programs in the Portfolio's six countries are therefore invited to explore a possible partnership with the DGIS-WWF Tropical Forest Portfolio.

ICDP field staff will be key participants and beneficiaries in the development and testing of the ICDP Adaptive Learning Process, and will be the primary sources of information. They will have every opportunity to influence the learning process and will often spearhead the policy dialogues. However, project staff will usually have neither the time nor expertise to lead the development and testing of analytical tools.

## Next Steps

- One** Identify partner organisations and projects within the six DGIS - WWF Tropical Forest Portfolio countries.
- Two** Identify candidate national research organisations and experts as consultants, initially to carry out a rapid assessment for the linkages analysis (including review of relevant existing information on conservation policy and institutional issues).
- Three** Develop a preliminary matrix for the linkages analysis, for field input and testing, including ICDP questionnaires.
- Four** Develop a policy dialogue strategy for one or more countries, with partners.
- Five** Develop a work plan.

## The DGIS – WWF Tropical Forest Portfolio of ICDPs

**Ecuador** Conservacion de la Biodiversidad y Manejo Participativo del Parque Nacional Sangay

**Ethiopia** Forest Conservation in High Priority Areas

**Gabon** One: Complexe d'Aires Protegees de Gamba Two: Projet de Conservation Integree dans la Region de Minkebe

**Honduras** Conservacion y Manejo Integrado de Recursos Naturales en la Reserva Biosfera Rio Platano y Mocerón, La Mosquita

**Pakistan** Conservation of Mangrove Forests at the Coastal Areas of Singh and Balochistan

**Philippines** Biodiversity Conservation on Mt. Guiting-Guiting

**Michael Wells, Environmental Economist and Policy Analyst, Lier, Norway.** E-mail: wells@online.no

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## WWF Ecoregion-Based Conservation Workshop

Washington DC, January 12-15 1998

The world's biodiversity remains under extreme pressure. Conservationists must take a wider, regional, approach to their work, and also prioritise the areas where conservation efforts can make the greatest impact. [Nigel Dudley](#) describes a recent workshop which looks at the importance of ecoregions.

WWF-US hosted a major workshop on the issue of ecoregion-based conservation, which sought to strengthen the use of a regional or landscape approach to conservation. The workshop had three main aims:

- to introduce concepts of planning based on an *ecoregion* – an area containing a geographically distinct assemblage of natural communities, sharing species, ecological dynamics and environmental conditions, which interact ecologically in ways that are essential to their long-term survival;
- to describe the *Global 200*, a set of approximately 200 terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecoregions that support globally outstanding or representative biodiversity as identified through analyses by WWF;
- to explore options for project planning based on the ecoregion approach.

Delegates from WWF offices around the world spent a week in sometimes heated discussion about the opportunities, and sometimes the drawbacks, of taking an ecoregion approach. It was agreed that experience gained with practical application over the next few years would be needed to refine and strengthen the techniques, and that the ecoregional approach should become a cornerstone in WWF's future conservation work.

The WWF forest programme supports the ecoregional approach, *writes Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud*. The *Forest for Life* strategy, with its emphasis on forest quality at a landscape level, gives an opportunity for us to feed considerable practical experience into WWF's ecoregional work through our continuing programme of field and policy work, and particularly through our partnerships with agencies such as IUCN, the World Bank and GTZ.

### Forest Watch Experts' Workshop

On January 15-16 1998, the World Resources Institute hosted a meeting in Washington DC to discuss a proposed Global Forest Watch project. The project aims to develop local capacity to monitor, analyse and communicate information about forest condition - formulated in a mission statement that 'Global Forest Watch will provide the means (data and tools) for local and national audiences to gain access to locally – and nationally – relevant information to serve local and national needs'. Four pilot countries – Gabon, Cameroon, Canada and Indonesia – have been testing out some of the ideas in practice.

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## International meetings, seminars and conferences

### Causes and consequences of accelerating tree growth in Europe 17-19 May 1998

**Nancy, France** organised by the European Forest Institute, Public Forest Ecosystem Coordination Unit and IUFRO

Contact: Ms Brita Pajari, EFI, Torikatu 34, FIN-80100 Joensuu, Finland  
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E-mail: [pajari@efi.joensuu.fi](mailto:pajari@efi.joensuu.fi)

### International Conference on Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management 24-28 August 1998

**Melbourne, Australia** in association with IUFRO  
Contact: Ms Margaret Scarlett, The Conference Organisers PTY Ltd, PO Box 1127, Sandringham, Australia

Tel: +61-3-9521-8881  
Fax: +61-3-9521-8889  
E-mail: [conforg@ozemail.com.au](mailto:conforg@ozemail.com.au)

### The Taiga Rescue Network Fourth International Conference on Boreal Forests: Integrating Cultural Values in Local and Global Forest Protection 7-10 October 1998 Tartu, Estonia

Contact: Taime Puura, Conference Coordinator, Estonian Green Movement, PO Box 318, Tartu, EE2400, Estonia  
Tel: +372-7-422-598  
Fax: +372-7-422-084  
E-mail: [for-est@erl.tartu.ee](mailto:for-est@erl.tartu.ee)

### Forest Management in Designated Conservation/ Recreation Area 7-11 October 1988 Florence, Italy

organised by the European Forest Institute and the Accademia Italiana Scienze Forestali

Contact: Prof Orazio Ciancio, AISF, Liazzale Edison 11, Firenze, Italia  
Tel: +39-55-570-348  
Fax: +39-55-575-724  
E-mail: [ciancio@cesit1.unifi.it](mailto:ciancio@cesit1.unifi.it)

## Courses

### Current Methods in Tropical Forestry July-September 1998 Tropical Forest Resource Group – Oxford Forestry Institute

Contact: Nell Baker University of Oxford, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3RB, UK  
Tel: +44-1865-275-000 Fax: +44-1865-275-146  
E-mail: [nell.baker@plants.ox.ac.uk](mailto:nell.baker@plants.ox.ac.uk)

### Post-Graduate Diploma in Agroforestry University of the Philippines Los Baños

Contact: Roberto V Dalmacio, Coordinator UPLB Agroforestry Program PO Box 35023, 4031 College, Laguna, Philippines Tel: +63-49-536-2657  
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# Women and men: Men and women

**Edmund Barrow**, IUCN's East Africa Forest Officer, looks at the role of women in the management of resources in dryland Africa.

Though men are responsible for the overall management of livestock and vegetation resources in pastoral areas, women often possess intimate and detailed knowledge of different uses of trees and other plants. Women are active users and managers of forest and tree resources. But, as forestry is usually considered a man's field, women's roles are often invisible to planners and implementers. Local cultural values and myths often impede women's integration into social forestry programmes, and this may hamper their ability to participate in decision-making and project activities. These reasons, combined with the simple needs of justice and equity, mean that women's needs in social forestry require careful attention, especially in the dry lands.

There are significant gender differences concerning tree and tree-product use. Men tend to be interested in trees more for commercial reasons, whereas women are more interested in trees for the subsistence food and fuel characteristics of species. This includes fuelwood collection near the household, building poles for local use and trees as a dry-season source of fodder. Access to different food types is important and often depends on the severity of drought. Women make utensils for household use and sale. Sale of fuelwood and charcoal occurs if there is an economic need.

Women's close involvement with forest and tree products often gives them a greater awareness of environmental problems. In drylands, this is particularly critical where change may force, or has forced, women to over-exploit natural resources. For instance

food. The more important issues of coping with risk and drought through a variety of production niches is ignored.

*Ways forward: Women as natural resource managers*

There are a number of important implications concerning the gender role in drylands management. First, women should be involved at all levels in planning, extension and implementation. This implies that women as well as men have access to inputs, both technical and non-technical, extension advice, credit and training. Women are the most effective communicators of new forestry information to other women, so that training and promoting awareness should be designed to give women skills in a wide variety of activities, and help them understand their potentials and constraints. Women and men should both be consulted before introducing new techniques and species. For example, women discussing trees for a forestry project in Burkina Faso spoke with authority about a certain *Eucalyptus*. They knew that burning its leaves deterred mosquitoes and that boiling them produced a mixture for treating colds. They noted that because the tree thrives in arid conditions it might be useful for fuelwood. But they pointed out that the tree could not be eaten, they found its wood difficult to cut and disliked the fact that it burns fiercely, making it unsuitable for cooking local dishes. Its smoke gives food a menthol flavour. They also claimed it damaged other plants and poisoned the soil.

*This article was extracted from a chapter on gender in Edmund Barrow's book: The Drylands of Africa: Local Participation in Tree Management, which analyses and discusses the critical processes which might, if*



## Fuelwood in asia



Sacks of charcoal for sale by road

Biomass remains the main energy source for many of the world's poorest people. But is this necessarily a bad thing? [Wim Hulscher](#) of the FAO argues that the impact of fuelwood on forests has been exaggerated and that well-managed biomass is a sustainable and long-term energy source.

In South and South-East Asia, 78 per cent of all domestic energy applications come from biomass fuels, the bulk of which is wood. For several decades to come this situation is not likely to change, notwithstanding increasing penetration of fossil fuels in many areas. Most households in Asia simply cannot afford modern forms of energy – such as electricity, gas or even kerosene – for their daily cooking needs. Households also have various other cultural reasons to stick to fuelwood. The implications are generally not well understood by policy makers and the public at large. Environmentalists, and planners in support of modernisation, both tend to think that the practice of using woodfuels is undesirable and should be changed as soon as possible. Such beliefs are rooted in various misconceptions which date from times when key information on fuelwood use was still lacking.

For instance, in the 1970s the international community was alarmed by a perceived 'fuelwood gap'. The theory was based on the assumption that all fuelwood originates from natural forests. By now we know from field surveys that this assumption is not necessarily correct, at least for Asia where some 80 per cent of the world's woodfuel users live. It has been found that about two thirds of all fuelwood in Asia originates from non-forest land, and the presumed gap between sustainable woodfuel supply from forests and total consumption, does not exist. Agricultural land and various

other types of land provide the bulk of the woodfuel on a sustainable basis. Consequently, woodfuel use is not a general or major cause of deforestation, and this has been confirmed by further studies in the 1980s and 1990s. Exceptions exist only in localised areas.

Another common misconception amongst economists and planners is that wood and other biomass fuels 'help trap the user in poverty'. It is widely assumed that gas or electricity should be brought in to provide substitutes, and that economic development will reduce fuelwood use. Again, this appears to be incorrect. Available data show that in Asia biomass energy consumption per capita does not decrease with increasing GDP per capita. In fact, the reverse is true. In an economic

context it is also relevant to note that per capita GDP of North America is 40 times larger than the average of South and South-East Asia, but per capita woodfuel consumption is the same (1987 data). There is no need whatsoever to abandon woodfuels for the sake of economic development. Woodfuels can be used in a modern way, a traditional way, or any way in between. In Asia woodfuel problems are not related to the use of that fuel *per se*, but rather to lack of convenient, healthy and efficient technologies for converting the fuels.

Furthermore, policy makers are generally not aware that woodfuel-related activities constitute an important subsector in local rural economies. Wood energy generates at least 20 times more local employment than energy from oil products (per unit of energy), and woodfuel businesses are the main source of income for about 10 per cent of the rural households in Asia, supplying about 40 per cent of their cash earnings. Many of the people involved happen to be women. Such information is most important for socio-economic policies with regard to eg employment, rural development and social welfare.

For the global environment, woodfuel use is benign in terms of avoiding greenhouse gas emissions. When used on a sustainable basis, the carbon emitted by wood combustion is recaptured by regrowth of trees. This is exactly what happens in Asia. The current practice saves enormous amounts of carbon dioxide which would otherwise be released into the atmosphere from alternative fossil fuel use. It is estimated that woodfuel use in Asia annually saves some US\$ 14-28 billion, which would otherwise be required for carbon abatement measures.

Contact: W.S. Hulscher, Chief Technical Adviser, FAO Regional Wood Energy Development Programme in Asia; Bangkok

# certification

## A thousand certified products...

This year's UK 95 Plus Group meeting in January marked a watershed for forest certification and the FSC, with more and more companies demanding certified timber and retailers now actively looking for certified products.

Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud reports.

The UK 95 Plus Group's 1998 conference was, for many people, the occasion when they were finally convinced that certification is here to stay. Over 300 representatives from industry, government and NGOs met to hear a series of presentations from key industry spokespeople and to see an exhibition of over a thousand commercially-available certified wood products. Delegates heard that demand for certified timber was already outstripping supply, and Ross McLaren of Sainburys Homebase says that the company would make certification a key element in future purchasing decisions, delisting suppliers who refused to be certified. Olof Johannsen, a representative of the Sámi indigenous people, gave strong support for certification

and said that taking part in the standards working group in Sweden had been the Sámis' first chance to sit down with the industry with equal status and an equal voice. He said that the FSC was good for reindeer, good for the Sámi and good for the environment and urged consumers to buy certified wood products. Significantly, a representative of one of the larger Finnish paper companies privately voiced fears about the impact of the current impasse in Finland, brought on by opposition from the Finnish Forest Owners' Association, on the country's market access. Since the conference, a further 2.5 million hectares of forest have been certified around the world, making a total of 7.5 million hectares, with many more forests currently under consideration.

Olof Johannsen speaking at the conference



## First Canadian forest company to be certified to FSC standards

A large, family-owned forest operation in Ontario has become the first Canadian business to earn the SmartWood label and be certified to FSC standards. SmartWood certified the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve after inspecting the forest's 54,378 acres (22,023 ha), and endorsing longterm management practices, which include protecting the many streams and lakes on the land, preserving areas of biological significance, leaving all white pine trees intact and limiting harvest around bird of prey nests. Jon Jickling, leader of the assessment team, said that: "Haliburton Forest's practices are bringing the forest closer to its original condition, which will improve timber quality and biodiversity."

## Pulp mill certified

The UK-based QUALIFOR scheme awarded its first chain of custody certificate to a pulp mill in January 1998, issued to AssiDomän's Karlsborg pulp mill in northern Sweden – the first certificate issued for pulp and paper under the FSC. Assessments are currently planned or underway of plantations in New Zealand, Brazil and South Africa, and a group certification in Papua New Guinea

Members of the German Group 98 launched to promote forest certification in October 1997, are as follows:

- Bernd-Joachim Steinacker Produkt-und Vertriebs GmbH (furniture)
- Heinrich Fahlenkamp GmbH & Co (timber trade)
- HolzLand Holzhandels GmbH (large cooperation of DIY markets)
- Garant Fenster Neumeier GmbH (window frames)
- Gtzen Bau-Hobby-Garten Vertriebs GmbH (large DIY market chain)
- Johns Garden Furniture (garden furniture)
- Maul + co – Chr. Belser GmbH (large printing company)
- Mbel Walther AG (large furniture house)
- Mohndruck Graphische Betriebe GmbH (large printing company)
- Niveau Fenster Westerbürg GmbH (window frames)
- OBI Bau-und Heimwerkmrkte GmbH & Co KG (large DIY market chain)
- Westefel Werksttten GmbH (furniture producer)
- Zimmermann GmbH (timber trade)

### Associations

- Bundesverband Deutscher Heimwerker-Bau-und Gartenfachmrkte e.V. (DIY markets)
- Initiative Pro Holzfenster e.V. (window frame producers)

# news

## from the forest floor

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### Life Reserves

This feature has been edited from a longer paper commissioned by WWF and IUCN as part of its protected areas work. The full version will be published later this year in a joint publication on New Opportunities for Protected Areas.

“Life Reserves” are areas which are important to local communities because the site provides spiritual, cultural or religious comfort as well as ecological benefits. In this feature [Paul Sochaczewski](#), who first proposed the concept, assesses how forest conservation programmes could work with spiritual/cultural groups in common cause.

The individual's relationship with nature/forests is complex, and has several facets. First, the practical/pragmatic. We all have to eat, breathe, earn a living and so on, and our connection with nature in this context is direct, Cartesian, and can often be defined by economic valuations, science, and laws. Next, the spiritual/emotional/religious. These non-pragmatic factors are difficult to quantify but nevertheless affect us deeply. Why do we need living green in our lives? What is our emotional (or collective unconscious) love-fear relationship with wilderness? Why do we need birdsong? How do our religious teachings relate to nature?

Many (mostly northern-influenced) forest conservation programmes emphasise the practical/pragmatic approach. I do not suggest ignoring such a direction. Rather I urge the examination of opportunities to approach forest conservation holistically by incorporating both pragmatic and spiritual motivations where appropriate. At the risk of alienating conservationists who have built their careers on a scientific approach, I suggest that life reserves may offer a new window of conservation perception. Not necessarily better than what we have now, but complementary.

#### Sacred forests

A sacred forest can be described as any forest stand that is considered valuable by a local community and protected by that community for reasons that include the spiritual. Sacred groves are found world-wide, particularly in developing countries where some people live closer to the land than do their northern cousins.

#### The *Dragon Hills* of China

Sacred sites are often overlooked when planning conservation projects. In the extreme south of China's Yunnan Province (the world's most northern tropical rainforest), some 400 “dragon hills” or lung shan, provide for people's spiritual and physical well-being.

I stumbled on the dragon hills of Xishuangbanna while reporting on WWF's efforts to help the Chinese government manage several large nature reserves in the province. Neither the Chinese, nor the WWF project planners, thought to include the dragon hills in their efforts, preferring to focus on centrally gazetted and managed chunks of real estate that had only peripheral value to local communities. They missed a major opportunity to achieve conservation and relate conservation to the needs and spiritual lives of local people. Each dragon hill is protected by a Buddhist “white elephant temple”.

Though poorly studied, the sacred groves of Xishuangbanna may contain important new natural pharmaceuticals. Dr. Pei Sheng Ji, director of the Kunming Botanical Institute and one of China's leading ethnobotanists, has listed some 25 new drugs that have been developed from Chinese traditional medicines used by national minorities. From *Tripterygium hypoglaucum*, a plant used by the predominant Dai tribe, Chinese researchers have extracted a compound called triptotide hypolide, which is now prescribed by doctors throughout the country to treat rheumatism and arthritis. The forest harbours wildlife, including many bird species which eat insects that would otherwise eat the villagers' rice crops. The forest also protects the watershed, ensuring a regular flow of clean water throughout the year. Dr Pei notes: “The holy hill is a kind of natural conservation area founded with the help of the gods, and all animals, plants, land and sources of water within it are inviolable.”

#### A place for life reserves

Life reserves may not fit easily into commonly-used protected area categories. In addition, life reserves may not flourish under a standard protected-area approach, and indeed their very existence may challenge the conception of what is meant by a “protected area”.

World-wide, local communities protect life reserves for pragmatic and spiritual reasons. As such, forest conservation programmes have an opportunity to work with spiritual/cultural groups in common cause. While the conservationist's goal is to maintain forests and forest biodiversity, it should be recognised that partners in a spiritual initiative may have other primary objectives, such as the preservation of a forest for spiritual reasons, or maintenance of cultural integrity. By accepting that “spiritual” conservation partners may not have the same outlook on life, nor the same technical sophistication as the people who run other projects, life reserves could become part of the WWF/IUCN forest programme, complementing and supporting agreed geographic and biological priorities.

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Tree decorated by monks in Northern Thailand

Nigel Dudley





Per Angelstam/WWF-UK

## The need for a small grants facility for boreal and temperate forests

Since 1994, the Netherlands Committee for IUCN has administered funds from the Dutch Government to implement the Tropical Rainforest Programme (NC-IUCN/TRP), a small grants programme for NGOs to encourage the conservation of tropical rainforest through balanced and sustainable land and forest use. More than 150 projects by local NGOs, indigenous organisations, national and international organisations have since been supported. Making use of the experience of the NC-IUCN/TRP, programme coordinator [Willem Ferwerda](#), makes a plea for the creation of such a facility for boreal and temperate forests.

Temperate and boreal forests constitute half of the world's forest cover and provide crucial ecological services such as regulating the global carbon cycle, protecting watersheds, conserving soil and providing an important habitat for biodiversity. Most of the forests are found in Russia and remain uncut. Boreal and temperate forests are under great threat (see the latest *arborvitæ* special supplement) because of the activities of commercial logging companies, changes in infrastructure, oil and mining activities, etc. Although some large government-based projects are now receiving financial support from foreign or international institutions, NGOs and people-based organisations are doubtful whether these funds will be used effectively.

### Experiences

The results of NC-IUCN/TRP small grants programme are promising. More than 300 proposals are received annually of which 60-70 are supported. To confine a small grants

programme to one ecological habitat (such as tropical rain forests) makes it more accessible for potential requests.

Other aspects of the programme include:

- giving innovative ideas a chance;
- relative cost effectiveness (overhead versus output) and optimal transparency of expenditures and institutional costs;
- high accessibility for NGOs and grassroots organisations, as grants make use of the IUCN network, e.g. IUCN members, IUCN specialist groups (as advisors), IUCN National Committees, IUCN Commissions, and NGO networks such as Friends of the Earth, WWF, World Rainforest Movement, etc;
- lack of bureaucracy, resulting in a rapid decision-making process (NGOs will be informed within 1-3 months whether they can start with the project);
- low expenditure on external consultants;
- the building of extensive expertise and databases of NGO-projects related to tropical rainforest conservation;
- relatively low costs for monitoring and evaluation.

### Small innovative projects

There is now an urgent need for a small grants facility that works quickly, and has simple procedures and transparent criteria, to help small but vital NGO-actors in Russia, Central-Europe and the Southern Cone to act swiftly and effectively against boreal and temperate forest destruction. It will also give rise to innovative ideas and allow projects a chance to develop. In addition to the large financial institutions, a small grants facility for boreal and temperate forests would address the needs of local groups working with few resources under difficult circumstances. Hopefully it would make use of existing NGO networks in Russia and other boreal and temperate countries working on forest and biodiversity issues. It would, of course, only work if a reliable NGO, as a spider in the web, administers the programme, preferably in a boreal country.

Which donor agency will take up the challenge? The question is whether a European (Scandinavian?), Canadian or American donor agency is interested in setting aside US\$5-8 million (e.g. US\$75-100,000 per project) for let's say a period of 5 years to start a small grants facility for boreal and temperate forests. We would be happy to share our experience with anyone who does.

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For information on the *arborvitæ* special supplement on boreal forests contact: Andrew Deutz, Programme Coordinator, Temperate and Boreal Forests, IUCN-Canada, 380 St Antoine Quest, Bureau 3200, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2Y 3X7. Tel: +1-514-287-9704 Fax: +1-514-287-9057 E-mail: [adeutz@iucn.ca](mailto:adeutz@iucn.ca)

## Forests of Hope

### Forests of Hope: Stories of Regeneration

Christian Küchli  
 Earthscan, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN  
 Fax: +44-117-278-1142 e-mail: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk  
 Price: £19.99

In a field where most news is bad news, Küchli's sumptuously illustrated book is a welcome exception. Frustrated by the despair expressed about forest loss, this Swiss forester spent years searching five continents for forest management that worked. In a series of country studies, starting with Switzerland itself, he looks at why things have gone wrong and at what positive steps are being taken to put them right. He makes no claims that projects are solving all the forest problems in a country, or that they have all the answers. But he does draw some general lessons, particularly: 'wherever national governments and powerful market forces deny local people the chance to control their own resources, profound changes in land use occur...' and therefore of the need for more local control. This book is a powerful antidote to people who say that the battle about sustainable forest management has already been lost. – *Nigel Dudley*

## Spreading wealth

### The Economic Value of Non-timber Forest Products in Southeast Asia

Jenne H De Beer and Melanie J McDermott  
 Netherlands Committee for IUCN, available from IUCN Publications, 181a Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0DJ,  
 Fax +44-1223-277-136. Second edition, 1996

An important re-issue and revision of a book that first helped explain the importance of the vast array of non-timber forest products used by the 30 million forest-dependent people of Southeast Asia. Export values of NTFPs from Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand alone were worth almost US\$300 million a year in the mid 1980s. The book gives a detailed breakdown of types of products, looks at both household use and trade, summarises recent developments and makes recommendations regarding development and further research. – *Sue Stolton*

New paper for arborvitæ

We regularly use different papers for the newsletter  
*This issue is printed on 115 gm Recyconomic Offset, from Paperback (Tel: +44-181-980-2233, Fax: +44-181-980-2399). It is made by Steinbeis Temming Papier GmbH of Germany from 100 per cent recycled paper, using newspapers, magazines and telephone directories. It has received the Blue Angel Award for minimising environmental impact and is unbleached. There is an effluent treatment plant at the mill, and ink waste is solidified and reused for building purposes such as road surfacing.*

## In brief

**State of the World 1998**, edited by Lester R Brown and others, Earthscan, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN Fax: +44-117-278-1142 e-mail: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk, price £12.95  
*The Worldwatch Institute's annual overview; this year containing trends and opportunities for sustainable forest management.*

**Forest and Forest Products Country Profile: Russian Federation**, by Valentin V Strakhov *et al*, Geneva Timber and Forest Study Paper, available from the United Nations sales section, New York and Geneva.  
*Latest in an excellent series of papers from the UN Economic Commission for Europe and FAO, on forest resources in the former Soviet countries (earlier papers have covered everywhere from Moldova to Armenia). The most authoritative sources of information on forests previously unknown to most people in the West.*

**Conservation on Highly Fragmented Landscapes**, Schwartz, 1997, Chapman and Hall, 2-6 Boundary Row, London SE1 8HN, UK Fax: +44.171.410.6907; e-mail: helen.sturgeon@chall.co.uk, US\$ 49.95  
*Articles from a diverse group of researchers and conservation planners, which explore the issues related to developing an integrated conservation programme within the context of severe habitat loss.*

**Non-wood forest products: tropical palms**  
 Dennis V. Johnson. FAO non-wood forest products series No. 10, FAO Bangkok, 1997.  
*This very useful publication provides a wealth of knowledge about tropical palms, summarised in clear text and well laid out tables. It includes information about utilisation, potential for management and/or domestication and conservation status. Unusual, missing or unreliable knowledge (taxonomy, utilisation) is highlighted as well. Pictures give a good idea of the diversity of palm products. In a world that is increasingly well-wired, field practitioners will especially enjoy the internet references and expert email addresses included*  
 – *Simon Rietbergen*

**African Rainforests and the Conservation of Biodiversity: Proceedings of the Limbe Conference Seán Doolan**  
 Earthwatch Europe, 57 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6HJ  
 Tel: +44-1865-311-600, Fax: +44-1865-311-383,  
 E-mail: info@uk.earthwatch.org  
*Series of papers covering monitoring, valuation, participatory approaches and institutional frameworks; main focus Cameroon but papers from other parts of Africa as well.*

## Internet publications

**Access to Forestry Abstracts, Agroforestry Abstracts, and Forest Products Abstracts** is now available via the internet for subscribers to any of the above (or instead of subscribing to a paper copy). Some parts are available for anyone to access. <http://tree.cabweb.org/>

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