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The future of forestry

"THE ability of a country to follow sustainable development paths is determined to a large extent by the capacity of its people and its institutions …"

This statement is taken from Chapter 37 of Agenda 21, the blueprint for a sustainable future produced by the Earth Summit in 1992. It might seem blindingly obvious, even tautological. But more than a decade on, the international community continues to grapple with the theory and practice of capacity-building in sustainable development, and how it can best assist countries to do it.

The better definitions of capacity-building contain three elements: the creation of an enabling environment with appropriate policy and legal frameworks; organisational development, including within communities; and human resources development. Where should a capacity-building program start? Training the individual is certainly important, and a sizeable share of overseas development assistance has been deployed to provide higher-education opportunities. ITTO is no exception to this: in

ITTO

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Design Justine Underwood
Database Manami Ohshima

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International Tropical Timber Organization
International Organizations Center – 5th Floor
Pacifico-Yokohama, 1–1–1 Minato Mirai, Nishi-ku
Yokohama 220–0012 Japan
t 81–45–223 1110
f 81–45–223 1111
tfu@itto.or.jp
www.itto.or.jp

Cover image Young Indonesian foresters learn about ITTO's criteria and indicators (see article page 6). *Photo: Rukmantara*

... Editorial continued

this edition we present examples of the Organization's training outreach to forestry professionals and timber-sector workers. For example, ITTO has formed a partnership with Fundação Floresta Tropical to train mainly Amazonian forest-sector workers in reduced impact logging (RIL; page 3). ITTO also recently convened three regional training workshops aimed at developing the cadres of forest-auditing specialists that will be needed if forest certification is to expand in the tropics (page 14). In another training program, ITTO worked with the Association of Indonesian Forest Concession Holders to introduce ITTO's *Criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of natural tropical forests* to 230 forest concession workers. Yet another project is assisting in the development and delivery of an education package in Bolivia aimed at forestry professionals wishing to improve their skills and qualifications.

These training efforts have achieved considerable success but they can't do the job on their own. The successful sustainable forest management (SFM) graduate of today will join the ranks of the unemployed tomorrow if the country is in political turmoil, or its institutions are dysfunctional, or the prices of forest goods and services are so low that the forests are converted to agriculture.

Several authors refer to the context within which capacity-building takes place. Rukmantara, for example, writes that: "abrupt changes in national government policies [in Indonesia] have … increased the uncertainties faced by forest-based industries, with the effect of reducing the commitment of such industries to SFM". The decentralisation of government there has also had an impact, because regional institutions don't yet have the capacity to oversee the sector effectively. In Bolivia, Achà and Guevara interpret a recent fall-off in demand for the forest specialisation course being offered by San Símon University's School of Forest Sciences as a consequence of increased economic uncertainty in the forest sector. On the other hand, Dykstra and Elias write that conditions seem right for greater uptake of RIL in the Brazilian Amazon; companies are placing a premium on holders of RIL certificates and the Brazilian government is also taking advantage of the training to ensure that its officers have the necessary skills to monitor forest operations.

Ngantou and his co-authors (page 11) and Mimbimi (page 32) address the need for more capacity-building in civil-society groups in Africa. Mimbimi, for example, laments that: "few efforts are being made to train marginalised minorities such as pygmies, women and youth in the complexities of modern forest resource management, even though these are just the sorts of people who need the training most". Ngantou et al. recommend, among other things, "the strengthening of the role of the private sector and civil society in partnerships for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems".

One thing about capacity-building is that it requires commitment. People are great learners, but we can still take years to master a new skill. Graduate trainees—whether in government, the private sector or civil society—must be encouraged to continually improve. For this they need the active support of their institutions and peers, the opportunity to make (and correct) mistakes, the power to effect change, and the prospect of fair reward for honest work.

For the modern tropical SFM trainee, this sort of environment is probably quite rare; with a few notable exceptions, the tropical forest sectors have not yet matured sufficiently to create it and, in some countries, political, economic and market uncertainties may delay the coming-of-age for a long time. There's a sort of circularity in this: without the human and institutional resources the sector won't develop, but the human and institutional resources may not be available until it does.

Fortunately for the forests, this hasn't deterred the emergence of committed foresters: SFM remains the goal of the enlightened in the private sector, in governments and in community groups. Such people are the sector's greatest hope for the future: the international community should support them by providing more opportunities for self-improvement, and by shaping the international policy environment so they can do their jobs.

Alastair Sarre

RIL becomes real in Brazil

An innovative ITTO-funded training project has taught loggers, foresters and forestry trainers the how and why of reduced impact logging

by Dennis P. Dykstra[1] and Elias[2]

[1]International forestry consultant

Blue Ox Forestry

9770 SW Vista Place
Portland, Oregon 97225, USA

dennisdykstra@blueoxforestry.com

[2]Professor of Forest Harvesting

Bogor Agricultural University

PO Box 168, Bogor 16001
Indonesia

el-ros@bogor.wasantara.net.id

Fresh start: participants and instructors in a RIL training course at the FFT training centre warm up with a round of questions and answers before donning their safety gear and heading to the field for a day of training on RIL techniques. *Photo: D. Dykstra*

REDUCED impact logging (RIL)—logging practices employed to reduce the environmental and social impacts associated with industrial timber harvesting[1]—appears to be a concept whose time has come. While acknowledging that by itself RIL cannot guarantee the sustainability of tropical forests, most tropical foresters and conservation advocates seem to agree that sustainable forest management cannot be achieved without it. For example, two of the priority actions recommended by the International Tropical Timber Council for adoption in all ITTO producer countries are to:

- apply reduced impact logging; and
- train the workforce, including supervisors, in reduced impact logging.

But in spite of widespread acceptance at the policy level, relatively few loggers working in tropical forests use RIL technologies. Many of those who resist converting from higher-impact 'conventional' logging argue that RIL is too expensive or too cumbersome, or that it requires specialised equipment and highly skilled workers who are generally not available (Putz et al. 2000).

How can the uptake of RIL be encouraged? In 1997, the Council approved a project (ITTO PROJECT PD 45/97 REV.1 (F)) proposed by the Government of Brazil to train forest operators from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean in the theory and practice of RIL. The project, which operated from 1998–2000, was implemented by Fundação Floresta Tropical (FFT), a subsidiary of the Tropical Forest Foundation (TFF; *see box*), with additional support from Brazilian government agencies, universities, NGOs and industry sources. The target audience included professional foresters, logging supervisors, operations managers and forestry trainers, with the expectation that after these people had completed the training they would become advocates for and trainers of RIL in their home regions. All of the courses were held at the FFT training site in Brazil's eastern Amazon, but they emphasised methods for adapting RIL technologies to other forest conditions in the region.

The training courses developed for the project emphasised fieldwork and the development of practical skills but also provided sufficient background on the principles of forest management so that the trainees could understand not only the 'how' but also the 'why' of RIL. Each course was 18 days in length, divided into three stages:

- **Stage 1** (1 day): held in Belém after the arrival of the participants. This day was occupied with lectures introducing the theoretical, practical and legal aspects of tropical forest management;
- Stage 2 (16 days): held at the FFT training site located at Fazenda Cauaxi. This forest is owned by Cikel Brasil Verde S/A, a company that produces sawnwood and plywood certified under the principles and criteria of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The forest is located near the town of Ulianopólis in the eastern part of the State of Pará, about 450 km by road southeast of Belém. During the training period each participant rotated through all activities as part of a RIL crew. The work included: 1) ***pre-harvesting activities***—definition of harvesting blocks, line cutting, forest inventory, vine cutting, and the establishment of permanent sample plots; 2) ***harvest planning***—layout and construction of secondary roads and log decks, data processing and map-making, harvest-tree selection and marking, and skidtrail planning and layout; 3) ***harvesting activities***—felling, skidding and log deck operations; and (4) ***post-harvesting activities***—assessing the results of logging operations, conducting silvicultural treatments, and monitoring the permanent sample plots and other indicators; and
- **Stage 3** (1 day): the participants returned to Belém to evaluate the course and the trainers and to exchange ideas about improving RIL methods and tropical forest management in general.

[1]*For descriptions of RIL techniques and their application, see* TFU *11/2 (2001).*

Less damage: author Elias sits on the stump of a tree felled using directional felling techniques during a RIL training exercise. *Photo: D. Dykstra*

Project results

In 2003 we carried out an ex-post evaluation of the project, visiting the project site, interviewing a number of stakeholders, and examining the documentation. By almost any measure, the project was a success. When it concluded in mid-2000, 138 persons had been trained, 44% more than anticipated in the project proposal. Of these, 119 were from Brazil, 18 from other countries in the region, and one from Africa. Trainees logged a total of 1250 hectares of forest using RIL techniques. Because the project was intended to prepare a cadre of trained professionals who would carry the training back to their own regions, several training manuals and a set of graphical aids were prepared and tested during the courses. The primary training manual, in Portuguese, was also translated into Spanish.

Pupo … told us that forestry enterprises are giving priority in hiring to holders of RIL training certificates issued by the project, which he interprets as recognition by the industry that people who have had this training are far more skilled than those who have not …

The training project also managed to catch the imagination of the Brazilian people; a number of articles describing the project and its objectives appeared in Brazilian newspapers, environmental bulletins and websites. By 2000 both ITTO and FFT had become well known throughout the Amazon, thus marking a step forward for another of the ITTO Objective 2000 priority actions: that of raising public awareness that timber harvesting can be consistent with the sustainability of tropical forests.

The Tropical Forest Foundation

The Tropical Forest Foundation (TFF), an NGO based in Alexandria, Virginia, USA, was founded in 1995. It has been working since 1995 with its subsidiary Fundação Floresta Tropical (FFT) and ITTO to train loggers and their supervisors in both *how* to do reduced impact logging and also *why* it is important. According to FFT Executive Director Johan Zweede: "It's absolutely essential that the training be done in the field, using up-to-date logging equipment and methods, and that every trainee learns every aspect of planning, inventory, logging and assessment of results". Although forestry enterprises in the Brazilian Amazon were initially sceptical about whether RIL would prove feasible, the adoption of RIL has steadily increased as loggers have attended training courses and their skills in the new techniques have been proven on the ground.

During our visit to Brazil in connection with the ex-post evaluation, we had the opportunity to visit the FFT training site and to interview representatives of the forest industry, research institutes, government agencies, universities and NGO*s* who were familiar with the project and who were able to offer opinions regarding its impact on forestry in the Brazilian Amazon.

For example, according to Roberto Pupo, Vice President of AIMEX, a timber industry association based in Belém, companies are beginning to recognise that it is good business to adopt RIL. This has come slowly because of the natural scepticism that exists when any new set of practices is introduced. Pupo told us: "Once FFT was able to prove the economic viability of its practices [see, for example, Holmes et al. 2000], and could point to the full adoption of RIL [and subsequent FSC certification] by Cikel, FFT's host company, interest within the industry grew rapidly".

Pupo also told us that forestry enterprises are giving priority in hiring to holders of RIL training certificates issued by the project, which he interprets as recognition by the industry that people who have had this training are far more skilled than those who have not, whether they are forest engineers or technicians, or labourers such as sawyers and skidder operators.

The drive toward forest certification has had an important positive influence on the demand for RIL training because it is widely recognised that a major impediment to certification is the lack of qualified labourers and supervisors. Natalino Silva, a well-known forestry scientist based in Belém, told us that the training offered under the project "is regarded as the *de facto* standard for meeting RIL requirements related to certification". He pointed to the fact that as of July 2003, ten forestry enterprises in the Brazilian Amazon with a total of slightly more than 400 000 hectares of forest had been certified under FSC. Nine of these enterprises, with 80% of the total area certified, have utilised the RIL training offered by the project.

We were told by Rocia Oliveira of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency that the Government of Brazil is hoping to establish a network of RIL training centres throughout the Amazon. The training courses offered by these centres would be based on the ITTO/FFT program and the network would have a

New forest: the training courses conducted under the project incorporate a variety of silvicultural treatments as well as reduced impact logging. Here a 'vine tangle' of about 1000 m^2 has been cleared and then planted with several native timber species. All such planted areas involve a mixture of high-value and fast-growing trees. The tree with darker leaves near the centre of the photo is mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*). *Photo: D. Dykstra*

coordinating unit modelled on FFT that would be responsible for training and auditing the trainers in all of the centres. A new ITTO training project (PD 206/03 REV.1 ((F)) initiated this year, again with FFT as the implementing agency, will provide a transition that should bring this network closer to reality.

Four technical schools and one university in the Brazilian Amazon are all using ITTO/FFT training for their forestry students. Maximilian Steinbrenner of the Federal Rural University for Amazonia (UFRA) told us that the training offered by the ITTO/FFT program provides a thorough field practicum for the university's students, serving as an excellent adjunct to their regular coursework.

Enabling conditions

Inevitably, the success of any new idea depends at least partially on the presence of conditions that make the idea viable. According to Adalberto Veríssimo of IMAZON, a non-governmental organisation working on forest policy issues in the Amazon, over the past few years much has changed within the country to remove incentives for forest clearing and to encourage the adoption of better forest practices. An example of one such enabling condition is the development and implementation of new regulations requiring that forest management plans be prepared and approved for all forest areas that are subject to industrial harvesting. IBAMA, the government agency charged with regulating forestry activities, has recently begun implementing procedures to monitor forest management operations through a continuous program of auditing, and many of IBAMA's auditors have now attended ITTO/FFT training courses.

Internationalising the effort

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the project is that it attracted so few foreign participants—only 14% of the total compared to the 30% anticipated in the project proposal. Undoubtedly a major reason for this was the cost of travel, which had to be borne by the participants or by a sponsoring government agency or forestry enterprise. To some extent this may be overcome by the establishment of an ITTO-funded RIL training centre in Guyana, which is currently in preparation, and by the use of other sources of funding, such as ITTO fellowships, to allow individuals to travel to the training centres.

The overall conclusion of our evaluation is that the project has made a significant and lasting contribution to the advancement of sustainable forest management in Brazil. Its contribution to the region as a whole was less than might have been wished, but even so this project is one that other countries and other regions would do well to emulate. The successor project alluded to above will enable the good work already done in Brazil to continue and consolidate.

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Disclosure: *Dennis Dykstra is a member of the board of the Tropical Forest Foundation.*

Repairing the road to SFM

Sustainable forest management remains an important goal in Indonesia, but capacity-building and institution-strengthening must be complemented by a more coherent policy environment at the different levels of government

by Rukmantara

ITTO Project Manager

(PD 42/00 Rev.1 (F))

APHI, Manggala Wanabakti Block IV, 9th Flr, Jl. Gatot Subroto-Senayan Jakarta 10270 Indonesia

trukmantara@hotmail.com

Learning by doing: employees of concessionaires learn the fundamentals of sustainable forest management during a 'training the trainers' field exercise. *Photo: Rukmantara*

IT was interesting to read 'The road to sustainability' by Rodolfo Peralta and Juan Pablo Baldiviezo (*TFU* 13/1 2003) and to see the similarities in the approaches being taken in Bolivia and Indonesia to build a road towards sustainable forest management (SFM). In Bolivia, strengthening the capacity of the public and private forest sectors is seen as a key to achieving sustainable forest management. The same is true in Indonesia.

'The training of trainers for SFM', an ITTO project (PD 42/00 REV.1 (F)) that commenced in 2001 and concluded in September 2003, aimed to improve the capacity of the private sector to practice SFM by training trainers in the application of the *ITTO Criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of natural tropical forests* (C&I) at the level of the forest management unit (FMU). It also aimed to identify roadblocks on the way to SFM and to recommend ways round these. The project was implemented by the Association of Indonesian Forest Concession Holders (APHI).

Project design

The project was designed to improve the capacity of forest managers to undertake SFM and to prepare for forest certification assessment. The training curriculum comprised two modules: achieving sustainable forest management; and forest certification. In the first of these, the ITTO *Manual for the application of criteria and indicators for sustainable management of natural tropical forests* was used as the main reference. In the forest certification module, the curriculum stressed self-assessment and decision-making processes by which concessionaires could examine the readiness of their FMUs for forest certification. Both courses used field activities and discussion to convey concepts and practices.

At the conclusion of the training activities, workshops were convened in various regions of Indonesia to identify local constraints to SFM; each produced regional papers that were presented at a national multi-stakeholder workshop held 15–16 August 2003. This was very useful in enabling a dialogue among forest stakeholders on how to overcome the constraints to SFM and how its practice could best contribute to national economic, social and environmental goals.

Project findings

During its two years, the project provided training for 230 individuals, mostly employees of logging companies working at the FMU level, in several regions of the country. This number was somewhat lower than originally envisaged (400+), due partly to the major restructuring that has been happening in the sector: in 2000, about 400 companies were operating legally across the country; in early 2003, this number had shrunk to only about 100. Nevertheless, these remaining companies are interested in introducing SFM and pursuing certification, as demonstrated by their willingness to make workers available for the training programs.

The applicability of ITTO C&I in Indonesia

The project analysed the applicability of the ITTO C&I on the ground in Indonesia. It found that they deliver useful information on the overarching elements of SFM, including the important role of national policies in supporting SFM and the importance of management strategies that enable the participation of local communities in forest management.

However, the design and implementation of SFM depends on biophysical and social circumstances, which vary widely within Indonesia, and therefore some adjustments are needed to apply the C&I in the field here. Moreover, some indicators are not relevant in the Indonesian context.

ITTO Project PD 42/00 Rev. 1 (F) was financed by the governments of Japan and Korea.

Lessons learned

The project found that both progress toward SFM and the readiness for forest certification among forest concessionaires are moving forward slowly in Indonesia. Major roadblocks to faster progress include the weakness of many institutions at various levels of government, the high level of taxes and other fees on forest-generated revenues, and the link between weak governance and low commitment to SFM by forest managers. The project heard and facilitated a major debate between government, communities and forest concessionaires about the need to establish enabling conditions at the national level if SFM is to be achieved on a large scale. Some of these are described below.

Clear understanding of SFM needed

Stakeholders do not yet share a common view on the what, how and who of sustainable forest management. One of the most critical issues debated was how to ensure that the economic and financial benefits of SFM are distributed impartially.

In general, the project noted that building an understanding of SFM among stakeholders is a dynamic process that should be facilitated continuously. Finding a way to meet stakeholders' expectations is also a key issue in making more progress towards SFM; such expectations must be clarified, reconciled with those of others, and integrated into forest management strategies. This point is made in the ITTO C&I but applying it in the field is problematic because of the wide divergence of views and expectations.

SFM needs strong government commitment

Inconsistent forest policies at different levels of government, and over time, create confusion among forest concessionaires and other managers and in recent years have hindered the implementation of established management plans and cycles. The net effect has been to accelerate the deterioration of forest management practices.

To foster SFM at the FMU level, governments should formulate clear policies and rules on the following:

Improving FMU security (forest legislation): consistently and clearly defined government policies concerning forest-area land-use and managed forest area security are essential. Policies are needed to avoid overlapping in both tenure and land-use objectives: unclear definitions of land-use have arisen in the country's present era of decentralisation, with many regencies (local government units within provinces) not fully recognising existing nationally designated land-uses. Management objectives for FMUs must therefore be adjusted to suit new local policies. Abrupt changes in national government policies have also increased the uncertainties faced by forest-based industries, with the effect of reducing the commitment of such industries to SFM. For example, the reduction of the size of all FMUs to a maximum of 100 000 hectares caused havoc to the cutting cycles and cutting volumes set in management plans. The 'soft landing' rule (under which timber harvesting levels were decreased by more than 60% of total volume a year) also posed difficulties to producers; most say it caused a 'crash landing' in the industry. And the decentralisation of the process by which small-scale operators were granted forest concessions caused conflicts on the ground because such concessions often overlapped with those being managed by the existing forest companies.

Strengthening institutional capacities: the capacity and capability of the government institutions have declined under decentralisation, reducing monitoring performance and increasing the bureaucracy of public services. The high transaction costs caused by weaknesses in the institutional framework are inevitably shouldered at the FMU level and reduce the financial viability of SFM.

Developing the economic framework: SFM is a long and risky process and needs considerable investment by business. Schemes that provide incentives for SFM (and disincentives for unsustainable practices) are needed to ensure that such investments are forthcoming. Financial impediments—in the form of taxes and other non-tax expenses—act as a severe disincentive to SFM. Under decentralisation, regional governments and regencies have been adding their own fees to those collected by the national government, causing major disruptions to the cashflows of some concessions.

Moreover, it is clear that the market price for logs is inadequate in the current environment to meet the costs of SFM and provide reasonable returns to the various stakeholders, including concessionaires. This problem is widespread, with concessionaires in all regions of Indonesia now reporting that production costs are exceeding the local market price for the logs. Prices are being undercut by illegal logging, and revenues are being further eroded by the over-expansion of non-relevant government fees.

SFM requires the strong commitment of concessionaires: while governments need to create policy conditions conducive to SFM by establishing a well-structured regulatory, institutional and economic framework, the forest manager must also be committed to bringing about SFM. The project identified a strong linkage between government commitment and the commitment shown by the forest manager towards SFM; concessionaires are less likely to pursue SFM if government policies do not encourage it.

Conclusion and recommendations

The implementation of SFM is a long road. Concessionaires and other forest managers must play their part by improving their forest management practices and by acknowledging the rights of other stakeholders and working with them to find mutually acceptable solutions. But their ability to do so inevitably depends on the economic and financial viability of the SFM endeavour: for that, strong support is needed from governments (at all levels, including international) and the marketplace.

The implementation of the training-of-trainers project has been a useful exercise, both in extending SFM principles to field-based forest operators and in analysing the impediments to SFM in Indonesia. To ensure that the benefits of the project are not lost we recommend that:

- the understanding of stakeholders towards SFM be continuously and consistently improved through training, education and other relevant activities. Such activities should be targeted at concessionaires and communities, but also at government officials in regencies and provinces;
- as part of the formulation of a new national forest policy (as advocated by the ITTO Mission on Achieving Sustainable Forest Management in Indonesia, which was conducted in 2000), a review be undertaken to identify the policy conditions under which SFM would be enabled and encouraged; and
- an analysis be carried out on the size of the economic rent possible from SFM and its equitable distribution among stakeholders. The results of such a study will depend heavily on prevailing market prices: the analysis should therefore also recommend ways of increasing market price to adequately reflect the costs of management.

ITTO PROJECT PD 42/00 REV. 1 (F) was financed by the governments of Japan and Korea.

When foresters have a higher calling

An ITTO project is assisting a forestry school to provide an education program to foresters wishing to strengthen their skills in sustainable forest management planning and practice

by Victor Hugo Achá G.[1] and Ruben Guevara[2]

[1]Coordinator

ITTO-VMARNDF-ESFOR-UMSS Project PD 63/97 Rev 3 (F)

pembt@supernet.com.bo

[2]ITTO Regional Officer

Latin America

itto.la@uol.com.br

BOLIVIA presently leads the world in its area of certified natural tropical forests. Of the 7 million hectares of natural forest currently under management plans in forest concessions, local social group areas and native community lands, 1.1 million hectares are certified.

This situation is the result of an inter-institutional effort, undertaken with the invaluable participation and support of the country's forest professionals. Nevertheless, both the area of certified forest and that under management plans are just a fraction of what could be achieved in Bolivia: the country has a total of 53 million hectares of natural tropical forests and a continuing need for greater capacity at all levels, including the professional level.

The decision to pursue sustainable forest management as a development strategy in Bolivia began to materialise in 1996 through the promulgation of a new forest law. That same year, an ITTO technical mission to Bolivia highlighted the need for qualified forest professionals under the new forest regime. Its report stated: "The new Forest Law requires that forest management plans should be developed for each concession; forest concessions should be harvested under sustainable yield regimes; and vulnerable areas within forest concessions should be protected. In order to meet these requirements, it is essential to ensure the availability of trained personnel at all levels". The Mission estimated that 1240 forest engineers and 1760 senior forest technicians would be required in Bolivia by 2005. However, in 2003 we have only a fraction of these: about 190 forest engineers and 400 senior forest technicians.

The School of Forest Sciences (ESFOR) at the San Simón University (UMSS) has for many years provided education and training for students wishing to become senior forest technicians and forest engineers. Until recently, however, it did not offer a similar service to enable these foresters to qualify as forest specialists; *Figure 1* shows where 'specialists' sit in the hierarchy of forestry education in Bolivia and which professionals could apply to be trained as specialists. Given the ITTO Mission's report, ESFOR recognised this gap and decided to strengthen its capacity to provide training

Students walking along one of the dendrology tracks in the Sacta Valley

to tropical forest management specialists. To this end, it submitted a project proposal to ITTO (PD 63/97 REV. 3 (F): 'Specialisation program for forest technicians in sustainable tropical forest management in Bolivia'), which, having been approved and financed by the International Tropical Timber Council, is now under implementation by ESFOR in collaboration with the Vice-Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources in Bolivia.

Topics covered by the specialisation program

In planning the program, ESFOR conducted a series of consultations with the country's main forest stakeholders—government agencies, non-government organisations, forest industry, foresters, etc—about their human resource training needs. The current curriculum for the specialisation program (shown in the table) is based on their suggestions and modified after later feedback.

The course's Module I introduces currently available technical tools (ie GIS, GPS, remote sensing). These are applied in Module II, particularly in relation to data-gathering in the preparation of the forest management instruments (eg forest management plans) required under Bolivian law. Module III includes important aspects related to the operationalisation of the plans and the subsequent sale of the products obtained from forest management activities; these include reduced impact logging, forest marketing and the evaluation of forest operations. To date, three training cycles

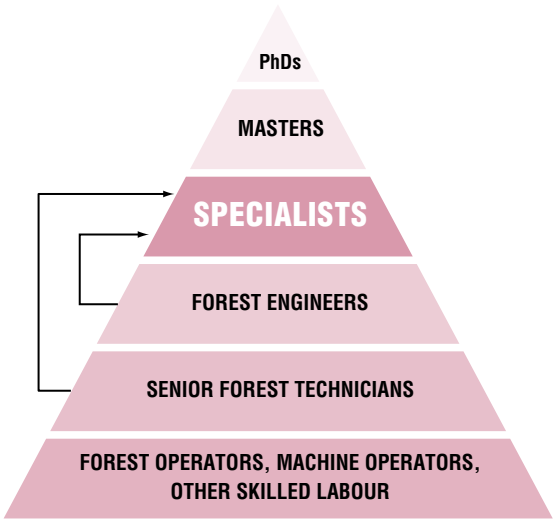
Modular learning

Specialisation program modules on sustainable tropical forest management in Bolivia

Module I (virtual)	*Geographic information systems (1 month)* • Statistics and mapping • Geographic information systems (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS) • Remote sensing and photo-interpretation
Module II (virtual)	*Forest management planning (1 month)* • Forest inventories • Management plans • Forest surveys and annual forest operational plans
Module III (virtual)	*Sustainable forest management administration (1 month)* • Forest harvesting • Marketing and commercialisation • ITTO guidelines, forest audits and forest certification
Classroom education	1 month – reaffirming concepts learned in the virtual modules
Guided work	3 months – practical work in an area of interest to the student

Academic mountain

Figure 1: Academic degrees recognised by the Bolivian university system (the arrows indicate the professionals that can be accepted as students for ESFOR's Specialisation Program)



have been undertaken, commencing in September 2001, September 2002 and August 2003 respectively; the program for each new cycle has been revised based on feedback from students, staff and other key stakeholders.

The course provides a broad theoretical base, but the practical component is an essential part of the curriculum. Each thematic component is complemented by knowledge-reinforcement activities, both at the office and field levels, in the different areas under management. For example, the forest certification course given in the first training cycle included an activity for the application of the Bolivian Standards for Forest Certification in a forest belonging to the Chiquitan Indigenous communities of Santa Monica in the Department of Santa Cruz; in this way the community was given practical suggestions for an actual certification process in accordance with the certification body's standards. Similarly, the practicum that each specialisation program student must undertake applies practical aspects of a given thematic component for the resolution of specific problems encountered by forest companies, rural communities or indigenous forest communities throughout the country.

Development of modalities

A first specialisation program was implemented in September 2001 under a 'classroom education' model, which required students to attend classes on a full-time basis for 44 weeks. A total of 29 professionals (mainly senior forest technicians and forest engineers from different parts of Bolivia) participated in the course. In order to maintain the recognised excellent educational standards of ESFOR, the project secured, through various agreements, the participation of more than 30 instructors from the best forest institutions in Bolivia. Cooperating institutions included, among others, the USAID-funded BOLFOR project and the Bolivian Forest Superintendence (Superintendencia Forestal).

An in-depth study implemented by the project on the requirements for post-graduate training in tropical forest management indicated clearly that many professionals were very interested in doing the course but were unable to do so if they were required to take leave from their jobs. Most expressed a preference for a 'semi-classroom-based' training model, whereby most of the course would be conducted remotely and students would be able to continue to work as they pursued their studies. *Figure 2* shows the preferences expressed by respondents to the study.

In order to satisfy this demand, the project organised a second course cycle using a semi-classroom-based training model, still with a duration of 44 weeks but with students able to spend most of their time at their place of work; students were only required to be present on campus or in field camps for five days every month. At those times, the students travelled to Cochabamba (ESFOR's location), to the ESFOR/UMSS teaching forest in the Sacta Valley, and to other tropical forest areas of the country, where they were able to reinforce their knowledge through field practices, problem-solving exercises, evaluations and a series of supplementary academic exercises; in the remaining time they were able to apply what they were learning to their own work environments. This cycle began in September 2002 with almost double the number of students (*Figure 3* shows the participation of students in the first and second cycles of the specialisation program). In addition to the printed and interactive computer-based materials that were prepared for the training modules in this cycle, the course generated an ongoing interaction between the students and the program's teaching staff through the use of email, fax and telephone communication.

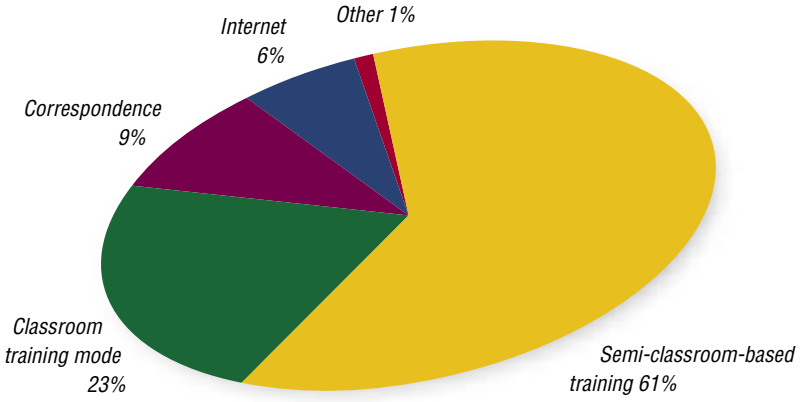
In order to benefit a larger number of forest professionals in Bolivia and in the region, the program is now running a third, 'virtual' training cycle which requires students to participate for the equivalent of seven months full-time over the course of a full year, but with the greatest proportion of this time invested in a teaching-learning modality using the internet in their home locations; most classes are accessible online at any time with the use of a password. Another variant being introduced in this training cycle is the consolidation of the field practicum component into a single, continuous, face-to-face training stage of 30 days of fieldwork (which would reduce the total time commitment needed).

New challenges?

The objective of the third training cycle is to train at least a further 150 specialists in sustainable tropical forest management. Contrary to forecasts, however, only eleven students have registered so far. This is due partly to the fact that in this cycle new enrolments are allowed at three different dates in

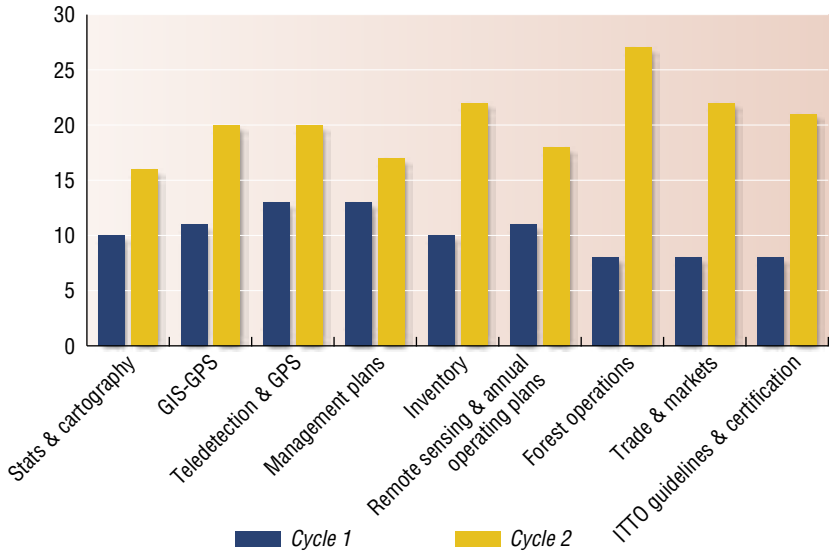
Learning modes

Figure 2: Course participation modes requested by Bolivian professionals for the Specialisation Program on Sustainable Tropical Forest Management



Cyclical interest

Figure 3: Number of participants in the first and second cycles of ESFOR's Specialisation Program



Students involved in photo-interpretation activities in one of the Program settings

the year and a number of professionals, including from other countries in the region, are expected to sign up in coming months (as of late November 2003, 25 additional students had pre-registered, including five foreign nationals).

Nevertheless, the sudden dip in numbers is worrying and points to one of the hazards of capacity-building in the forest sector: political and economic uncertainty. The greater part of the fall-off can be attributed to a number of factors outside the control of ESFOR: in particular, the current political situation in Bolivia has added uncertainty to the economy and therefore to investments in forest-related activities, reducing the ability and willingness of companies and governmental institutions to invest in further education. Since many potential students in the specialisation program need the support of their employers to undertake the course, this (hopefully temporary) lack of support has had a drastic effect on enrolments. The same applies to independent professionals, those foresters who are self-employed as consultants or in one-person operations: the current uncertainty in the sector makes them reluctant to invest in education.

There may be another reason for the fall-off, too: the forest sector in Bolivia is undergoing a tremendous transformation, with new forest-use scenarios emerging. The land area granted to forest concessions for timber production has not increased much in the last few years. In contrast, the volume of non-timber products extracted from those concessions is increasing rapidly, to the extent that the value of exports of non-timber products may soon surpass that of timber. Other activities are also gaining ground, including ecotourism, payments for carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, community forestry and similar services, indicating that forest specialists need to expand their array of skills, particularly those pertaining to socioeconomic aspects of forests. Those companies not adjusting rapidly to these trends are having difficulties, to the point that some are not paying their concession fees to the government on time. With their existence in doubt, investing in human resource development is perhaps not a priority for such companies. The challenge for ESFOR and the project is to demonstrate to such companies that their adaptation and survival relies precisely in transforming their human resources so as to take advantage of these changes and to emerge as winners rather than as losers.

Concluding remarks

Given the relative success of efforts to achieve sustainable forest management in Bolivia, the recent fall-off in demand for training should be viewed with concern by all those who promote sustainable forest management as an important and viable activity. The country has laid out an ambitious development plan in which sustainable forest management will play a vital role, but if the plan is to be realised then training efforts must grow, not shrink. Largely as a result of the ITTO project, ESFOR is in a strong position to expand its work in training the forest workforces of today and tomorrow, including those charged with managing the Earth's largest and arguably most important ecosystem, the Amazon Basin.

ITTO PROJECT PD 63/97 REV. 3 (F) was financed by the Government of Japan. Detailed information on the third training cycle is posted at www.postgrado esfor.edu.bo

Translated from the Spanish by Claudia Adan.

Other training

In addition to the post-graduate specialisation program, the project is playing a significant role in training ESFOR's undergraduate students, as well as providing other short courses for the benefit of larger groups of professionals. For example, to date the project has assisted in the training of about 240 students in a range of areas covered by the curricula of ESFOR's undergraduate senior forest technicians and forest engineering programs. Moreover, 550 people have participated in tropical forestry short courses, conferences and other events organised by the project. The most recent major event was a national workshop attended by more than 50 persons to adapt ITTO´s *Criteria and indicators for sustainable management of natural tropical forests* to Bolivian conditions at the forest management unit level.

Paths to partnerships in central Africa

A review of experiences in forest management partnerships in the Congo Basin should lead to the strengthening of collaborative work there

by Daniel Ngantou[1], Cléto Ndikumagenge[2], Samuel Makon Wehiong[3] and Kenneth Angu Angu[4]

[1]Regional Director

IUCN Regional Office for Central Africa

Yaounde, Cameroon; daniel.ngantou@iucn.org

[2]Coordinator, Support Programme for the CEFDHAC

IUCN Regional Office for Central Africa

Yaounde, Cameroon; cleto.ndikuma@iucn.org

[3]International consultant

Yaounde, Cameroon; makons1@iccnet.cm

[4]Technical Assistant to the Coordinator of the Support Programme for the CEFDHAC

IUCN Regional Office for Central Africa

Yaounde, Cameroon; Kenneth.angu@iucn.org

WITH a surface area of almost 204 million hectares, the moist forests of the Congo Basin comprise the second-largest contiguous stretch of tropical forest on the planet (the largest being in the Amazon Basin). Most of this forest occurs in five countries: Cameroon (19.6 million hectares), Gabon (17.9 million hectares), The Republic of Congo (19.5 million hectares), The Central African Republic (29.9 million hectares) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (109 million hectares).

Engagement: forest concessionaires should be engaged as partners to improve forest management, particularly in the context of transboundary conservation reserves. *Photo: C. Ndikumagenege*

The annual rate of deforestation for the decade 1991–2000 is estimated to have been in the range 0.1% or less in Congo, Gabon and the Central African Republic, 0.4% in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and 0.9% in Cameroon (FAO 2001). The main causes of this deforestation include the use of forested land for agriculture (slash-and-burn, for example), the activities of extractive industries such as mining and logging, the creation and extension of towns, and the building of new roads. About 8% of the surface area of the five countries (15 million hectares) is in declared protected areas.

Timber harvesting is one of the most important economic activities of these countries. However, total production has declined in the region in recent years, from an estimated 8.5 million m^3 in 2000 to 7.6 million m^3 in 2002, notably because of decreases in Gabon, the Republic of Congo and Cameroon (production increased slightly over the period in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo; ITTO 2003).

In an attempt to increase the uptake of sustainable forest management principles and the contribution of the timber sector to development in central Africa, ITTO decided (through Council Decision 10(XXXII)) to review and assess the experiences of partnerships among various organisations in the region. The decision was made at the request of Congo Basin countries in the context of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, a Type II initiative announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in August/September 2002. Without being exhaustive, this article highlights some of the major findings of the study, which was executed by IUCN, the facilitating agency of the Conference on Central African Moist-Forest Ecosystems (Conférence sur les écosystèmes de forêts denses et humides d'Afrique Centrale—CEFDHAC).

The multinational study was carried out between April and August 2003. It aimed to analyse and illustrate partnership experiences in forest management in Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, with particular emphasis on:

- activities financed by ITTO as well as others funded by the French Development Agency, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF);
- the impact of commercial logging on local populations and transboundary sites; and
- the degree of implementation of ITTO policy initiatives at the national level and in forest management units.

Methodology

Following discussions between IUCN, CEFHDAC and ITTO, the following methodology was used to carry out the study:

- first, documents on partnerships and forest management in each of the five countries were compiled. This acquainted each group of consultants with the subject matter and the involvement of ITTO and relevant partners in forest management;
- a harmonisation meeting was then convened in Douala, Cameroon, on 9–10 April 2003. This meeting, which involved the main consultants in each country plus an international consultant and IUCN/CEFDHAC, aimed to: encourage the exchange of experiences, especially on the management of forest resources, between national consultants, the international consultant and the facilitating agency of CEFHDAC; and harmonise the understanding of key concepts, ITTO policy initiatives and approaches, and the methodology to be used;

- third, national workshops were convened by national consultants to comment on and validate the findings of national reports. This was a very important part of the process because it gave all stakeholders the opportunity to provide input;
- the national workshops were followed by the organisation of a regional workshop (reported in *TFU* 13/3) in which the national reports of all five countries were presented, discussed and amended. This provided the raw material from which the international consultant and IUCN/CEFDHAC wrote a synthesised regional report aimed at improving the management of forest concessions, reinforcing existing partnerships and creating new ones. Participants in the workshop included representatives of government, non-government organisations (NGOs), logging companies, local and indigenous populations, and forestry and research institutions; and
- the last phase was the integration of inputs gathered from the workshop and field trip into the final report.

Types of forest management partnerships and experiences

The study found a range of different partnership structures in the sub-region. They included: partnerships between national governments, between government and the private sector, between government and regional and international organisations, between government, international organisations and local communities, and between international organisations and logging companies. Some of these are described below.

With ITTO: partnerships between ITTO and the five countries and various other stakeholders have developed a large number of projects across a wide range of relevant activities, including forest inventory, the pilot management of forest and transboundary reserves, forest stratification and cartography, agroforestry, the building of capacity in training institutions, support for improving forest management, the promotion of sustainable use and of reforestation, the restoration of degraded forests, increasing the capacity to conserve and valorise non-timber forest products, and institutional capacity-building.

With WWF: partnerships between states in the Congo Basin and WWF are essentially in the domain of conservation and the management of biological diversity. WWF generally executes projects funded by bilateral and multilateral donors;

With WCS: WCS is involved in projects undertaking rural development, conservation and the preservation of the environment, more especially within the context of the sustainable use of protected areas. One of its projects is in partnership with ITTO;

With the French Development Agency: the French Development Agency is a partner in all five countries, generally in the sustainable management of forest resources. It also provides loans to concession-holders in countries like Gabon.

Other partnerships

Many other regional and global organisations are involved in partnerships in the region. The list provided here is not exhaustive but indicates the kind of partnerships that each pursues.

UNDP develops partnerships at three levels: at the global and national levels, where it facilitates the establishment and functioning of consultation initiatives, and at the regional level, where it is supporting the development of a regional strategic action plan for biological conservation. **IUCN – the World Conservation Union** favours partnerships between all actors involved in conservation: states, NGOs, and other affiliated bodies. CEFDHAC (also known as the Brazzaville Process) is a forum for consultation between all actors (governments, private sector, local and indigenous populations, parliamentarians, NGOs, research institutions, civil society, etc) involved in conservation and sustainable use as well as the equitable management of Central African forest ecosystems. The **African Timber Organization**, an intergovernmental organisation, is focusing predominantly on the establishment of a Pan-African certification scheme. For example, it recently collaborated with ITTO in the development and publishing of the ATO/ITTO *Principles, criteria and indicators for the sustainable forest management of African natural tropical forests* and is now implementing a substantial ITTO project designed to build capacity to implement these at the national level in African member countries (including the five Congo Basin countries). The **Conference of Ministers in Charge of Central African Forests** (COMIFAC) is a body that studies, consults and takes decisions on matters concerning the sustainable management and conservation of Central African forests. The **Central African Regional Programme for the Environment** (CARPE), a USAID regional initiative, aims to fight deforestation and the loss of biological diversity in Central Africa.

Other newly established partnerships in the region include the **New Partnership for Africa's Development** (NEPAD), the **Congo Basin Forest Partnership** (as mentioned previously), and the **Regional Programme for Environmental Information** (PRGIE).

Lessons learned

Despite many deficiencies in the exploitation of natural resources, especially forest resources, the study showed that all five countries are presently endowed with forestry and legislative policies that favour the sustainable management of forest resources. However, the real problems lie with their implementation in the field, especially because most countries have not developed the necessary human resources, strategies, tools and financial mechanisms to implement these policies.

The study also noted:

- a marked difference between the development of forest management tools by the administration and their application in the field by logging companies;
- a general tendency to move towards the adoption of certification as a tool for sustainable management and for combating illegal exploitation (although certification processes are not well advanced in the region);
- the control and monitoring of management work (the function of states) is inadequate because of the poor organisation of some forest administrations and the lack or poor quality of human, financial and material resources;
- forest management as presently being practiced has positive and negative impacts which must be understood; and
- the idea of partnerships for sustainable forest management is relatively new in Central Africa and their implementation should be monitored.

Recommendations

The recommendations given here are not exhaustive, but indicate the kinds of actions that were proposed by the regional workshop in Douala. At the national level, participants recommended:

- the development of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for forest management in Congo Basin countries;
- the development of a coordination mechanism for partnership and conflict management at all levels in each country;
- the establishment, development and capitalisation of management tools;
- the strengthening of the role of the private sector and civil society in partnerships for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems; and
- adapting the management of forest concessions to the sub-regional and regional context of establishing tranboundary protected areas.

At the sub-regional level, the workshop proposed that:

- sub-regional institutions like COMIFAC and CEFDHAC should be supported to develop key areas of sub-regional cooperation such as forest policies, conservation-development programs, respect for the rights and interests of local and indigenous populations, etc. Similarly, these institutions should be supported to establish thematic regional working groups on issues such as transboundary conservation reserves, critical sites for conservation and development, the management of transboundary animal populations, and the management of fragile ecosystems, including the Atlantic and montane forests and coastal ecosystems;
- regional forest training programs should be strengthened, especially in the domain of forest management, woodworking and industrialisation, the community management of natural resources, conflict resolution linked to the management of forest resources, the domestication of valuable forest species, the study of medicinal plants, the promotion of good governance in forest management, and the development of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism in all five countries;
- mechanisms that favour the promotion of partnerships and strategies that will attenuate conflict linked to natural resource management should be supported;
- forest management tools should be developed, resourced and implemented;
- the role of the private sector and civil society in sustainable forest management should be strengthened; and
- the development of ecotourism should be supported, especially through the establishment of regional consultation mechanisms between partners to develop a common strategy for tourism development (although not before evaluating existing natural and human potentials).

Future directions

The study has paved the way for the development of new projects to promote partnerships for sustainable forest management. One of these would focus on the management of forest concessions in the context of a transboundary conservation area. In addition to achieving goals in international relations and nature conservation, such cooperation would help create an environment in which experiences in the development of management plans and the definition of sub-regional norms could be shared and harmonised. For example, through its project work, ITTO could assist the 42 concessions contiguous to the Odzala-Minkébé-Dja National Park—a tri-national park shared by Congo, Gabon and Cameroon—to move towards sustainable forest management. Another project to help build the institution capacity for sustainable forest management in some specific countries (such as the Democratic Republic of Congo) would complement the ITTO project (PD 124/01) now being implemented by ATO.

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Training local auditors

ITTO begins a process for developing capacity in tropical countries for the auditing the implementation of the ITTO criteria & indicators

by Hanna Nikinmaa and Jussi Lounasvuori

Indufor Oy, Töölönkatu 11 A
FIN-00100 Helsinki, Finland
Fax 358–9–135 2552
indufor@indufor.fi
www.indufor.fi

THE development of auditing systems for the *ITTO Criteria and indicators for sustainable management of natural tropical forests* (C&I) and the training of auditors can provide several benefits to tropical forestry. They help bring the C&I to the level of practical forest management planning, implementation and monitoring and encourage the development of feasible national/regional level adaptations of the requirements of sustainable forest management (SFM). In addition, auditing provides credible information on ecological, social and economic aspects of forest management, giving feedback for forest management unit (FMU)-level planning and implementation as well as to national-level reporting.

The development of auditing capacity at national and regional levels is therefore essential. With this in mind, ITTO commissioned Indufor Oy to assist in developing a training package and in conducting three training courses (one each in English, French and Spanish) on auditing systems for the ITTO C&I. ITTO also contracted consultants at the regional level to assist in conducting the courses, including from Sustainable Ecosystems International Corporation in the Philippines, STCP Engenharia de Projetos Ltda in Brazil, and CRESA Forêt-Bois in Cameroon.

The implementation of the activity took place in seven phases: 1) development of training material; 2) testing of the material and training arrangements in a pilot course in Asia (in English); 3) revision of training material; 4) translation of training material into Spanish and French; 5) training course in Brazil (in Spanish); 6) training course in Cameroon (in French); and 7) finalisation of training package (September 2003).

Training package

The training package comprises a comprehensive set of transparencies (in PowerPoint format), and instructions and materials for workshop instructors and participants. Documents supplied included the ITTO C&I, the *Reporting format for the ITTO C&I at the forest management unit level*, and the *Framework for an auditing system for ITTO's C&I*. The first set of materials was tested in a training course held in Surigao City, the Philippines on 24–28 February 2003 and a modified version was used in the second (28 April–2 May 2003 in São José do Rio Claro, Mato Grosso, Brazil) and third (Kribi, Cameroon, 8–12 September 2003) courses. The final English and Spanish packages are practically identical, whereas in the French version the *ATO/ITTO Principles, criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of natural African forests* (PCI) were used instead of the ITTO C&I as audit requirements.

Courses

A total of 53 mostly forestry professionals from 24 countries participated in the three courses; most had been involved in development initiatives related to SFM and had some familiarity with C&I and certification. Eighty-eight percent of trainees were from government agencies, 8% from the private sector and 4% from research and education institutions. This heavily weighted breakdown is explained by the fact that participants were nominated by governments; greater participation of the private and research/educational sectors should be encouraged in the future.

The training courses were designed to mimic the real-life auditing process in an FMU. The FMUs hosting the courses were: the Surigao Development Corporation concession area in Surigao del Sur, the Philippines; Guavirá Industrial e Agroflorestal Ltda (a company-owned forest) in Mato Grosso, Brazil; and the MMG Sarl concession in Lokoundjé-Nyong near Kribi, Cameroon. The training involved the following steps:

- introduction to the audit process within the ITTO C&I context;
- presentation of the pilot FMU hosting the audit exercise;
- planning of the audit and lists of verification indicators to be audited;
- collection of the audit evidence in the selected FMU through interviews, document review and field observations;
- evaluation of the audit evidence; and
- presentation of the audit results.

Participants worked in two groups during the first two courses and three smaller groups (4–5 members in each) during the third.

In general, course participants were highly motivated to study the auditing systems and techniques within the framework of the ITTO C&I. The approach of voluntary auditing was new to many and they felt it could be adapted to the monitoring practices of their own organisations. Implementing an auditing system was also seen as a useful tool for encouraging the implementation of C&I for SFM by different organisations, as it obliges them to find practical ways of applying each criterion and indicator in order to provide a basis for performance-monitoring. The participants expressed a hope that the capacity-building approach would continue within the ITTO framework and that there would be improved contact between participating organisations at the regional level.

Participants were generally satisfied with the course material and presentations. The group work was particularly appreciated, although the schedule was considered too tight. Participants also pointed out that the length of the course did not allow a thorough audit of an FMU.

Conclusions

C&I: producer countries and professionals are highly appreciative of the initiatives that ITTO has undertaken in the development of C&I and the organisation of regional seminars, workshops and training courses. However, the

procedures for the implementation of the C&I in practical forest management are not yet adequately defined. Each country has to develop appropriate procedures for implementing the C&I and ITTO is supporting these processes through regional cooperation and training. Many participants wished for better coordination between ITTO's initiatives towards SFM and the rules and regulations of national forest administrations. This could be accomplished by closer contacts with the ministries and government officials responsible for the implementation of national forest policies. The appointment of the ITTO regional officers (one for Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Brazil, and another for Africa, based in Gabon) was highly appreciated by participants and seen as a step towards the more efficient implementation of the C&I.

Auditing systems: the approach of the training courses was to concentrate on auditing systems and techniques rather than certification. This was well justified because it allowed the participants to understand the potential of an auditing system to help the internal development of management in an FMU and the promotion of SFM at local or national levels, in addition to its role in second- or third-party auditing.

The development of certification arrangements should be taken as a separate initiative when adequate procedures for the implementation and monitoring of SFM have already been put in place. However, the situation varies between countries and regions and participants from Asia and Latin America expressed the need for feasible certification arrangements in the near future. The ITTO C&I are well adapted to the collection of information and the identification of trends on the performance of forest management at the FMU level, but they are general and should not be seen as certification requirements. Most ITTO producing member countries are still in a very initial stage regarding certification arrangements and the first task should be the development of standards at a national or regional level.

Both the ITTO C&I and ATO/ITTO PCI (in the ten African member countries) provide an appropriate framework for the development of certification standards. The participants were generally not fully familiar with the ITTO C&I or ATO/ITTO PCI before the training course; such training courses therefore play an important role in developing an understanding among professionals of auditing practice and the potential benefits of implementating the C&I. Implementation guidelines approved by member countries for the ITTO C&I and the ATO/ITTO PCI could also improve this understanding.

Capacity-building in auditing: participants in each course were highly motivated and most said they could apply the learned techniques directly in their current work. However, many considered it difficult to disseminate the know-how or introduce changes in their monitoring systems efficiently without the political support of the ministries in charge of forest administration. Closer cooperation between ITTO and national ministries was called for, either directly or through the recently appointed ITTO regional officers. The training courses were considered an excellent step for capacity-building in the implementation and auditing of SFM, but further training on the implementation of C&I and auditing would be required (with the continued assistance of ITTO).

It is clear that the assessment of SFM requires excellent knowledge of local forestry, ecology, socioeconomic structures and cultures and that the auditing of it cannot be fully credible without an adequate network of local auditors. Measures should be taken to strengthen the establishment of local/regional auditing services in the near future.

Recommendations for ITTO

Based on the outcomes of the training activities, the project made the following recommendations to ITTO:

- develop practical implementation guidelines to help incorporate the C&I into forest management planning and monitoring in public and private-sector organisations;
- develop further training in cooperation with regional/national institutions on the implementation of the ITTO C&I and the training of forest auditors;
- conduct three more regional courses on the auditing of the ITTO C&I to establish a critical mass of trained trainers in each country and to integrate the auditing of SFM in existing national forestry curricula and training programs;
- assist in building capacity on a continuous or programmatic basis rather than through short projects. ITTO should aim to develop a network of experts with a thorough understanding of regional/local conditions in forest management as well as competence in the implementation of C&I and the auditing of these;
- ensure that ministries in charge of forest administration be informed of and understand the potential benefits related to the implementation of the C&I and auditing systems; and
- maintain and expand its direct links with private-sector organisations by providing further training to forest managers on ITTO C&I implementation and auditing.

The auditing training packages will be available on the ITTO website (www.itto.or.jp) early in 2004.

Council outcomes

Council delivers a further US$7.6 million for field action in tropical forests

ITTO'S transboundary conservation program received a boost with the financing of a project that will link the Pulong Tau National Park in Sarawak, Malaysia with the Kayan Mentarang National Park in Indonesia.

The project was one of more than 36 projects, pre-projects and other activities financed to the amount of US$7.6 million in grants by the International Tropical Timber Council at its 35th Session, held 3–8 November 2003.

New chum: the delegate for Nigeria, which recently became a member of ITTO, makes a point during the 35th Session of the Council. *Photo: L. Mead, Earth Negotiations Bulletin*

Under the new transboundary conservation project, the Sarawak Government will extend the 65 000-hectare Pulong Tau National Park to cover an area of about 165 000 hectares, including some ecologically important forests and Sarawak's highest mountain, Mt Murad. The extension will also join the park to the 1.3 million-hectare Kayan Mentarang National Park (the management of which is also supported by ITTO) on the Indonesian side of the border. The new project will be implemented by the Sarawak Forestry Department in collaboration with local communities.

The establishment of the new transboundary park will improve protection for several endangered species including Bulwer's pheasant, the clouded leopard and the Sumatran rhinoceros, while also working with local communities to manage the wider rural landscape and increasing transborder cooperation on issues such as illegal trade and immigration. ITTO's transboundary conservation program is providing protection to more than 10 million hectares of tropical forest in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Another project approved and financed by Council this week will test an innovative approach to plantations in Ghana in which native and exotic species are grown in mixes to provide a range of forest products and services. Another project, in Colombia, will work with rural communities to increase the benefits accruing to them from sustainable forest management. And another, in Venezuela, will upgrade and strengthen the national forest statistics information system there.

Also at the Session the Council approved a work program setting out the Organization's activities for 2004–2005. Besides managing its large program of field projects, in the next two years the Organization will, among other things, conduct ten national workshops to promote the implementation of its *Guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests*, convene a workshop to strengthen the capacity in Bolivia, Brazil and Peru to implement the recent listing of mahogany on the CITES Appendix II (see also page 23), co-sponsor an international symposium on the impacts of forest certification on developing countries, organise forums to promote private investment in forest management and forest industry, and cooperate with FAO on the development and dissemination of guidelines for improving law compliance in the forest sector.

The majority of funds for the work program, as well as for projects and pre-projects, were provided at this session by the governments of Japan, the United States and Switzerland, while the governments of Norway, the Republic of Korea, Finland, Australia and Sweden also made contributions. Funds were also mobilised from the Organization's Bali Partnership Fund and Special Account.

Details of the approved and financed projects, pre-projects and activities are available on the ITTO website (www.itto.or.jp).

Civil society group wants greater role for communities

Forest communities should no longer be considered passive participants but rather leading decision-makers in the fate of tropical forests, according to a civil-society group participating in the 35th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council.

The Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG), which was formed in 2002 to provide advice to the Council, comprises representatives of a range of non-governmental organisations with interests in tropical forests. Its expressed

aim is to provide an opportunity for local voices and experiences to be heard in the Council, particularly on the equity dimensions of the tropical timber trade.

Yati Bun, a spokesperson for CSAG, said that indigenous and other communities now legally own as private property or officially administer at least 22% of all tropical forests, and this percentage is expected to increase greatly.

"Indigenous and other communities currently own as private property approximately three times as much forest as do private individuals and firms, and communities actively manage approximately two times the amount of tropical forest as in public protected areas globally," he said.

The policy environment, however, was not yet accommodating this change in ownership, he said.

"ITTO and most governments are not yet organised to reflect this new reality and are not playing the supportive role that these forest owners merit and need to continue conserving the world's tropical forests."

Mr Bun pointed to the continuing decline in the international trade of primary tropical timber products and the implications of this for the management of tropical forests.

"The only major, and growing, sources of investment for the sustainable use of tropical natural forests are communities themselves and payments for ecosystem services," he said.

"Unfortunately, producer governments and ITTO are not yet best equipped to orient and encourage this new trade and finance so that they serve the interests of people and the sustainable management of the resource."

On behalf of CSAG, Mr Bun urged ITTO to recognise the role of indigenous and other forest communities as tropical forest owners and managers and to "further strengthen its role in helping forest trade contribute to the livelihoods of these local people".

He also called on ITTO to carry out pilot projects to help assess the dynamism and economic efficiency of community producers and the obstacles they face in fully integrating with domestic and international markets and trade of tropical forest products and services.

Drawing attention to preparations under way for the negotiation of the successor agreement to the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994 (see page 19), Mr Bun urged a revision of the proposed objectives of the new agreement to "demonstrate and show an understanding of the role of indigenous and other communities as critical, yet under-supported, actors".

Mr Bun announced that CSAG had elected a new co-chair, representing producer countries. He is Mr Alberto Chincilla, Executive Director of the Central American Indigenous and Peasant Coordinator of Communal Agroforestry (facilitador@acicafoc.org). Mr Bun himself would act as alternate co-chair for producer countries, and Mr Andy White, of Forest Trends (awhite@forest-trends.org), would continue to serve as co-chair representing consumer countries.

Tropical timber trade speaks on downturn, illegal activities

The tropical timber trade has not yet turned the economic corner and continues to suffer from low prices, according to a spokesperson for the trade.

In a statement made at the 35th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council, the spokesperson for the Trade Advisory Group (TAG), Mr Barney Chan, said 2003 has been a difficult year for the trade.

"Demand for tropical timber has been severely affected in many of the major markets as the world economies struggled to shake off economic recession," he said.

"SARS and the Middle East conflicts have all had a serious impact on consumer confidence and this has affected the timber trade. Currency fluctuations have also made trading difficult and currency hedging has become an even more important skill in the timber business.

"While we have seen encouraging signs of improvement in the prices for logs and sawnwood in some producing regions, the tropical plywood sector is still reeling from desperately low prices. At these price levels mills are either cutting back on production or even being forced to close. The consequences of this have been serious job losses in the sector."

Mr Chan condemned those loggers and traders who engage in illegal activities, and said a relatively small number of rogue traders were having a damaging effect on the majority of traders who operated within the law.

"It concerns us that discussions on illegal logging are becoming increasingly politicised," he said. "There appears to be a rush to judgment, to indict all of industry for the illegal activities of a few. This is wrong. If we continue down this path, the future of the tropical timber trade is at risk."

Mr Chan urged Council members to involve the private sector as they pursue ways of combating illegal activities.

"Industry must be an equal partner in this pursuit. Industry has been remiss in answering some of the absurd allegations that surround the very real problem of illegal logging. We have left unanswered charges of gross negligence. We do so no longer."

Mr Chan pointed out that producing and consuming countries have systems in place that account for the purchasing and inventory of raw materials and products. Domestic industry and the international trade operate on a system of permits, certificates and receipts, he said. The TAG proposed that ITTO consider a review and audit of such

continued next page

existing industry systems to identify areas for improvement. This idea was subsequently included in ITTO's biennial work program, although it awaits funding and further discussion within Council.

In a related initiative, the Council also approved and provided funding to support the participation of and contribution of the TAG and its sister body, CSAG, in Council sessions, including the organisation of a panel at the 36th Session (in July 2004) to debate illegal logging and trade.

In noting that preparations are under way for the negotiation of the successor agreement to the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994, Mr Chan said that TAG members thought the present agreement had served the Organization well.

"The Council has, over the years, proved that it can be flexible and move with the times as new issues arise," he said.

"The process of negotiation and consensus-building that has developed in the Organization is unique in the international community and ITTO has a well-deserved reputation for being an action-oriented body. Our view is that if it is not broken, do not fix it."

The TAG is an informal grouping established to provide input to ITTO's policy and project work. It is open to anyone with an interest in the tropical timber trade, including representatives of tropical forest industries, timber exporters and importers, timber trade and industry consultants, and trade and industry associations. For more information contact Mr Barney Chan, sta@sta.org.my

Indian timber market emerges as prospect for tropical timber sector

India is emerging as a major importer of tropical timber, according to an ITTO survey presented at the 35th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council.

The survey, which was commissioned by ITTO and carried out by the Roman Forum (a consultancy firm), examines the current supply and demand status of the Indian timber market and the market opportunities in India for the tropical timber sectors of other ITTO member countries.

India's annual industrial roundwood imports, mostly of tropical hardwoods, have tripled in the last five years and now exceed 2 million m^3 per year, according to the report. Demand for imported tropical timber is expected to continue to grow and could approach 10 million m^3 by the end of the decade.

The survey team carried out in-depth reviews of wood usage in 15 major urban centres in India, as well as an appraisal of timber consumption in rural areas. It estimated that total industrial roundwood consumption in the country would exceed 70 million m^3 per year by the end of the decade, while domestic supply would fall short of this figure by an estimated 14 million m^3. This shortfall could be met in large part by the tropical timber trade—provided it could compete successfully against a range of substitute products.

According to Dr Maharaj Muthoo, who presented the survey results to the Council on behalf of the Roman Forum, the increasing demand for timber in India is due to the resurgence of the domestic economy, which is poised to grow at over 6% per annum, and the rapid expansion of middle and upper income groups. Moreover, intensive construction activity is being spurred by lucrative housing schemes and rapid urbanisation, with the urban population expected to grow to 345 million in the next decade.

Timber supply, on the other hand, is constrained by the massive consumption of wood for fuel and other rural needs, the degradation of natural forests, and restrictions on timber harvesting in order to conserve remaining forests for environmental services.

Nevertheless, Dr Muthoo warned that tropical timber producers must meet a range of challenges if they are to penetrate this rapidly growing market.

"Unlike most other commodities, the Indian timber market is disorganised and dispersed," he said. "This weakness is already allowing inroads by plastics, aluminium and steel in construction and furniture, which could amount to around 25% of wood volumes".

In addition, said Dr Muthoo, knowledge of the timber sector is poor due to weaknesses in the national forest sector and its statistical system, threatening the success of timber marketing efforts in the country.

"The system is so outdated that the timber traders, constructors and consumers have no source of reliable and timely timber market intelligence and economic information to turn to," he said.

"However, these challenge can be converted into opportunities by modernising the statistical system and by further reducing the tariff and non-tariff barriers for facilitating imports and market diversification."

'Review of the Indian Timber Market' (PPD 49/02 (M)) is part of ITTO's ongoing program to bring more transparency to the tropical timber trade and to report on trends, prospects, constraints and opportunities for the trade. It is currently available in draft form from Mr. Amha bin Buang, Assistant Director of Economic Information and Market Intelligence; eimi@itto.or.jp. The TFU will publish an article based on the final report (available in January 2004) in 2004.

Countries debate the merits of a new agreement

PrepCom II has prepared the ground for some intriguing negotiations in 2004 to create a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994

THE second session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom II) for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the 1994 International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA, 1994) was held 10–12 November 2003, in Yokohama, Japan. Approximately 100 participants attended the session, representing member countries, potential members, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations.

Over the course of three days delegates reviewed the draft working document of the successor agreement with a view to clarifying the elements therein, posing questions and presenting their views on the text. In the end, delegates produced a final draft text that will serve as the basis for discussion at the United Nations Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the ITTA, 1994, to be held 26–30 July 2004 in Geneva.

In spite of an earth tremor that shook the ground beneath their feet in the concluding hours of PrepCom II, delegates nevertheless retained the solid footing they had established for themselves throughout the session. In the end, delegates were successful in forging a working document that will serve as the basis for negotiations at July's UN Conference in Geneva. Insofar as PrepCom II allowed a space for countries to clearly articulate their concerns and negotiating positions and register these in the draft working document, the session can be deemed a success. However, characterising PrepCom II as such is not to gloss over the fact that country positions are still quite divergent on issues such as financial arrangements and renaming the organisation.

Insofar as PrepCom II allowed a space for countries to clearly articulate their concerns and negotiating positions and register these in the draft working document, the session can be deemed a success.

Finances

On the heels of the introduction of a biennial work program and the move to biennial budgeting, PrepCom delegates proposed major changes to the ITTA's financial provisions. Under the current structure, project and policy activities are funded primarily through voluntary funds. It is argued by some producing and consuming members that funding for these activities should come from stable, assessed member contributions instead of unpredictable voluntary contributions.

As a result, delegates tabled several proposals for funding under the new ITTA. Two of them envision assessed contributions from members for biennial work program policy and project work. Some involve linking assessments to gross domestic product (GDP), per capita GDP, or the United Nations scale of assessments. While this latter option would substantially increase the resource base of the Organization, it is unpalatable to many countries.

Additionally, actors have demonstrated a common commitment to streamlining ITTO, and much debate focused on ways to enhance the efficiency of the Organization. Some donor countries insisted on reducing costs by cutting the number of Council meetings to one per year, while producers opposed this outright and later countered with a proposal for allowing special sessions conducted at the request of caucuses. The outcomes of these decisions will play a major part in determining if the Organization will have a sound resource base that would fully support the Agreement's objectives.

Renaming ITTO

Even though the scope of the agreement may not drift far from ITTA, 1994, there may be a major change in how delegates view the Organization's future role in the international policy domain. There were a number of interventions made by delegates to rename the Organization as the International Tropical Forest Products Organization or the International Tropical Forest Organization. Such requests were in line with the intention to modify the scope of the Agreement and reflect efforts to move sustainable forest management policy higher up on the international political agenda, and to change the nature of the forest debate. Changing the name of the Organization is also an opportunity for the membership to refashion the Organization's scope in order to keep up with changing times while at the same time ensuring that the Organization maintains its original purpose.

Clearly, the negotiations provide an opportunity to improve what is already a strong agreement and what some have called the flagship commodity agreement. At the same time, disagreements among ITTO's membership remain to be solved. Several participants have also indicated that the negotiation process has been slow and have suggested that a single negotiating conference may not suffice to complete the negotiations as scheduled. In any case, PrepCom II's accomplishments, namely the production of a sound and thorough working document for the UN conference, bode well for the negotiations in July.

Modified from the summary report prepared by the Earth Negotiations Bulletin, *Volume 24 No 24. The full text can be reviewed at www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/prepcom2/*

Bolivian woods could find a niche in the German parquet market

by Jhony Zapata

PhD candidate

Technische Universität München
Forestry Department

Germany

zapata@bwgp.forst.tu-muenchen.de

Jhony.ZapataAndia@fao.org

GERMANY is the leading market for parquet in Europe. It consumed 22.3 million m² of it in 2001, almost one-quarter of Europe's total consumption of that wood product and 75% more than in 1991. About 1.8 million m³ of raw wood was used to meet the 2001 consumption level, 0.8 million m³ of which were hardwood. Parquet is commonly used as flooring in houses (condominiums, single-family houses, etc) and institutional buildings (hotel lobbies, gyms, meeting halls, etc).

Three types of parquet are consumed in Germany: multi-layer, solid and mosaic[1]. *Figure 1* shows that German parquet consumption shifted to multi-layer parquet in the 1990s, a trend that is expected to continue. The share of multi-layer parquet in total parquet consumption increased from 48% in 1991 to 73% in 2001, mostly at the expense of mosaic parquet.

German parquet imports

Germany imports most of its parquet: in 2001 it imported 16.3 million m², which was 73% of total parquet consumption. Import volumes grew 127% between 1991 and 2001, mostly in multi-layer parquet, which jumped from 60% of total imports in 1991 to 76% in 2001.

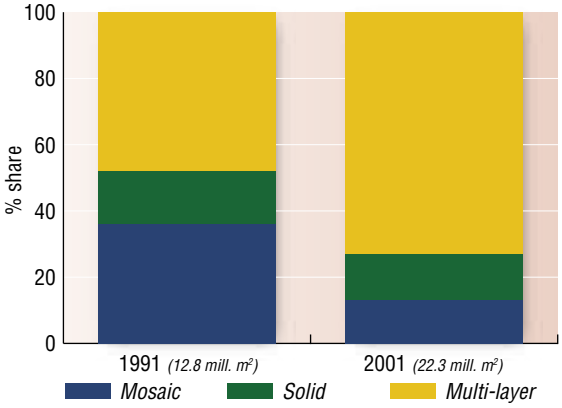
Figure 2 shows that Eastern Europe (34%, notably Poland) and Scandinavian countries (24%, notably Sweden) are the main suppliers of imported parquet, particularly multi-layer; imports from these countries increased strongly between 1991 and 2001. Figure 2 also shows that although parquet imports from tropical countries increased from 1.2 million m² in 1991 to 1.75 million m² in 2001, they decreased in relative terms (from 17% to 11%). Multi-layer parquet made 95% of total parquet imports from tropical countries in 2001, up from 38% in 1991, with solid parquet making up most of the balance. Average unit values for total imported parquet in 2001 were €18.1/m² for multi-layer, €11.5/m² for solid and €8.6/m² for mosaic parquet.

Figure 3 shows that in 2001 three countries accounted for 97% of Germany's tropical parquet imports in 2001, all of them Asian; the remaining 3% of tropical imports were distributed between 17 other countries. About 0.27 million m² of parquet were also manufactured in Germany from tropical timber; Germany therefore consumed a total of about 2 million m² of tropical parquet in 2001. This means that, assuming no exports from Germany, tropical parquet held a 12% share of total parquet consumption in Germany in that year.

[1] *Multi-layer parquet consists of parquet panels composed of two or more layers of wood (or wood-based material) with a top layer of hardwood (the wear layer).*

Multi-layer gets thicker

Figure 1: German parquet consumption, by parquet type



Good woods

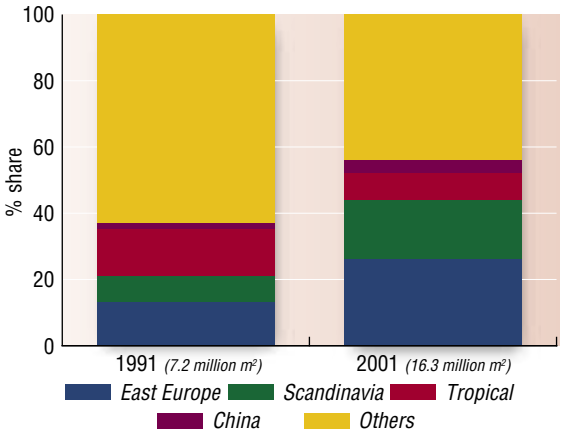
Table 1: Some lesser-known tropical timber species of Bolivia with similar (or higher) density to European oak

INTERNATIONAL TRADE NAME	Botanical name of described species	Density (g/cm³) 12% M.C.	Shrinkage (β) in %			Hardness[a]
			Radial (βr)	Tangential (βt)	Volumetric (βv)	Janka-Hardness (N/mm²)
European oak	***Quercus robur (Q. petrea)***	**0.43–0.96**	**4.0–4.6**	**7.8–10.0**	**12.6–15.6**	**45**
Cumarú	*Dipteryx odorata*	0.96	5.5	8.2	13.6	160
Aroeira, Urunday	*Astronium urundeuva*	1.22	3.7	7.5	12.5	141
Curupay	*Anadenanthera colubrina* *Anadenanthera macrocarpa*	1.02	4.2	8.4	12.7	195
Baitoa/Santo Domingo, Boxwood, White Goncalo Alves	*Phyllostylon rhamnoides*	0.95	3.4	8.2	12.1	134
Peroba rosa, Gabetillo, Araracanga, Red peroba, Rosa peroba	*Aspidosperma polyneuron*	0.89	5.5	8.7	13.9	128
Partridge, Coffee-wood	*Caesalpinia pluviosa*	1.05	2.3	6.0	9.8	163
Santa Maria, Jacareuba, American sapelli	*Calophyllum brasiliense*	0.66	5.1	8.3	13.2	73
Jatobá, Courbaril, Brazilian cherry	*Hymenaea courbaril*	0.95	4.2	7.4	11.2	133
Ipé, Lapacho	*Tabebuia impetiginosa*	0.98	3.3	5.6	10.0	140
Tarara, Canary wood	*Centrolobium microchaete*	0.60–0.75	4.0	6.2	10.2	107
Nargusta, Tanimbuca	*Terminalia amazonica*	0.80	5.3	9.1	13.8	89
Albarco, Jequitiba	*Cariniana estrellensis*	0.68	4.4	7.2	11.5	72

[a] *The Janka-Hardness (JH) was measured tangentially. For comparability purposes, units were converted from kg/cm² to N/mm².*

Tropical imports shrink

Figure 2: Suppliers of parquet to Germany



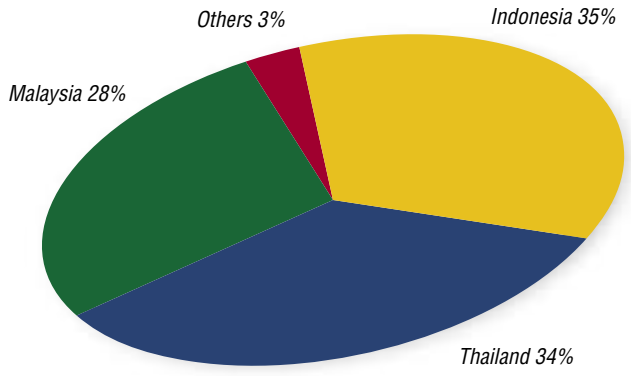
Consumption of tropical wood

The declining share of tropical wood in the German parquet market can be attributed to two main factors: a deteriorating environmental image as a result of anti-tropical wood campaigns and, until recently, a fashion trend towards light-coloured wood (such as beech). This latter factor at least is changing: middle and darker colours such as those exhibited by many tropical timbers are becoming popular again. Many European manufacturers are staining light-coloured woods to adapt to this trend, but tropical timbers, with often superior technical properties, could also capture market share, particularly if produced in sustainably managed forests.

The most common tropical species in the German parquet market are merbau (*Intsia spp*), doussié (*Afzelia spp*), kambala/iroko (*Chlorophora excelsa*) and wengé (*Millettia laurentii*), while a few Latin American species such as ipé (*Tabebuia impetiginosa*) and jatoba (*Hymenaea coubaril*) have also found favour lately. This suggests potential for the introduction of other Latin American timber species whose technical characteristics (density, hardness, workability, etc) are comparable to those currently used.

Asia dominates tropical supply

Figure 3: Tropical parquet imports (% of 1.75 million m²), 2001



Between July and November 2002, I conducted a study of the market potential in the German parquet industry of lesser-known tropical timber species (LKS) produced in sustainable managed forests in Bolivia. The study, funded by an ITTO fellowship, consisted of interviewing the main parquet manufacturers in Germany on issues related to the suitability of such species for parquet production in their enterprises. Technical documents with information on twelve selected Bolivian tropical timber species were compiled and given to the manufacturers; all twelve have similar or higher density than European oak (*Quercus robur* and *Q. petrea*), the most common hardwood timber used for parquetry in Germany (*Table 1* shows some other wood characteristics for these species, and for European oak (in bold)). *Table 2* shows the estimated availability of the species in terms of their potential production in Bolivia under sustainable forest management.

I surveyed seventeen parquet manufacturers representing more than 85% of the total German parquet production. *Table 3* shows the species most frequently identified by respondents as having potential in the German parquet sector.

Would-be's

Table 2: Potential production of 12 selected wood species in Bolivia *(raw wood)*

REGION	AREA *(million hectares)*	Estimated volume of 12 selected species DBH>MCD[a]		Estimated potential production under sustainable forest management	
		m³/hectare	Total *(million m³)*	m³/hectare[b]	million *m³/year*
Amazon	8.8	7.9	48.8	0.40	2.44
Bajo Paraguá	3.8	5.7	15.2	0.29	0.76
Chiquitanía	6.3	11.8	51.9	0.59	2.60
Choré	1.6	5.2	5.9	0.26	0.29
Guarayos	4.2	6.0	17.6	0.30	0.88
Pre-Andean Amazon	4.1	7.6	21.9	0.38	1.09
TOTAL	**28.8**	–	**161.4**	–	**8.07[b]**

[a] *DBH = diameter at breast height ; MCD = minimum cutting diameter;* [b] *Managed area per year equivalent to 1/20th of total area.*
[b] *The total production from the total area currently under forest management plans in Bolivia is 0.55 million m³/year.*

When asked to identify the most important factors that would favour the introduction of Bolivian parquet species, about half the manufacturers surveyed mentioned technical properties (eg density, hardness, workability, etc) as most important *(see Figure 4)*. Around 60% reckoned that the most important factor limiting the introduction of Bolivian parquet species was lack of demand *(see Figure 5)*. This suggests the need for the more aggressive promotion of tropical timber species in the German parquet market. The environmental image of tropical timber was identified as a secondary reason, although two-thirds of those surveyed agreed that they would use as a marketing tool the fact that the Bolivian supply would most likely be certified as from sustainably managed forests.

The survey included other questions soliciting views on factors affecting demand, fashion trends, the positioning of

tropical timber, supply requirements and other issues. The results are being analysed and will form part of the author's doctoral thesis.

Final remarks

Ideally, the timber produced and marketed from managed natural tropical forests should reflect the forest structure and species diversity of those forests. Most available tropical timber species have not yet been introduced to the international market—but must be if sustainable forest management is to be financially viable in such forests. Identifying niches for timbers derived from sustainably managed forests could be a first step in the clever marketing needed to increase the acceptance of these unknown but often very useful and attractive timbers. The German parquet market may be one of these.

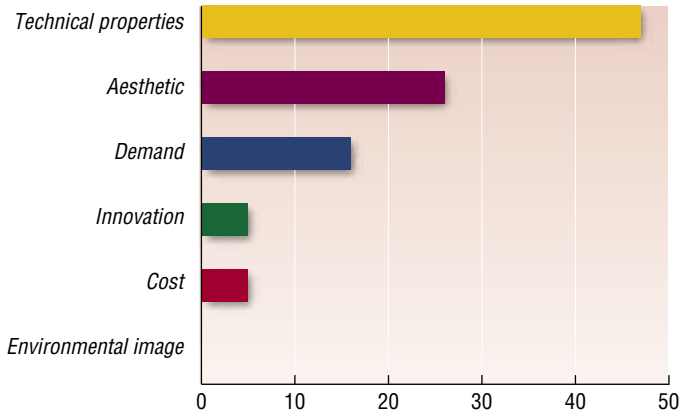
Most favoured

Table 3: Most-selected Latin American species by German parquet manufacturers

TRADE NAME	LATIN NAME	Selection frequency *(% of 17 manufacturers)*
Patridge	*Caesalpina pluviosa*	65
Ipé	*Tabebuia impetiginosa*	41
Jatoba	*Hymenea courbaril*	41
Santa María	*Calophyllum brasiliense*	24
Curupay	*Anadenanthera colubrina*	18
Boxwood	*Phyllostylon rhamnoides*	18

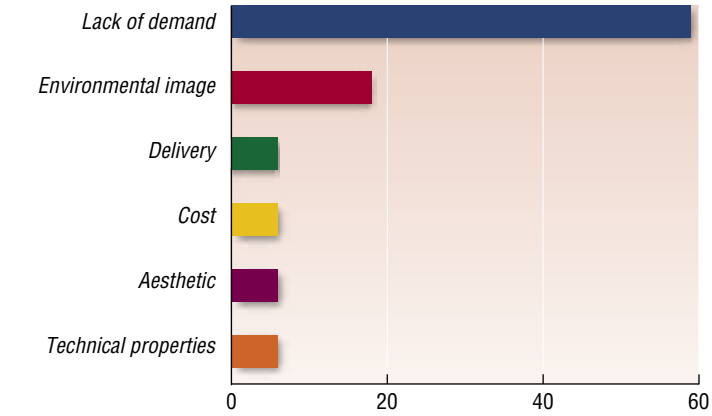
Going for it

Figure 4: Factors favouring the introduction of Bolivian parquet species, in the opinion of German parquet manufacturers (% of respondents)



Going against it

Figure 5: Factors limiting the introduction of Bolivian parquet species, in the opinion of German parquet manufacturers (% of respondents)



ITTO Fellowships offered

ITTO offers fellowships through the Freezailah Fellowship Fund to promote human resource development and to strengthen professional expertise in member countries in tropical forestry and related disciplines. The goal is to promote the sustainable management of tropical forests, the efficient use and processing of tropical timber, and better economic information about the international trade in tropical timber.

Eligible activities include:

- participation in short-term training courses, training internships, study tours, lecture/demonstration tours and international/regional conferences;
- technical document preparation, publication and dissemination, such as manuals and mongraphs; and
- post-graduate studies.

Priority areas: eligible activities aim to develop human resources and professional expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- improving the transparency of the tropical timber market;
- improving the marketing and distribution of tropical timber species from sustainably managed sources;
- improving market access for tropical timber exports from sustainably managed sources;
- securing the tropical timber resource base;
- improving the tropical timber resource base, including through the application of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management;
- enhancing technical, financial and human capacities to manage the tropical timber resource base;
- promoting increased and further processing of tropical timber from sustainably managed sources;
- improving the marketing and standardisation of tropical timber exports; and
- improving the efficiency of tropical timber processing.

In any of the above, the following are relevant:

- enhancing public relations, awareness and education;
- improving statistics;
- research and development; and
- sharing information, knowledge and technology.

Selection criteria: Fellowship applications will be assessed against the following selection criteria (in no priority order):

- consistency of the proposed activity with the Program's objective and priority areas;
- qualifications of the applicant to undertake the proposed fellowship activity;
- the potential of the skills and knowledge acquired or advanced under the fellowship activity to lead to wider applications and benefits nationally and internationally; and
- reasonableness of costs in relation to the proposed fellowship activity.

The maximum amount for a fellowship grant is US$10 000. Only nationals of ITTO member countries are eligible to apply. The next deadline for applications is **7 May 2004** for activities that will begin no sooner than 1 September 2004. Applications will be appraised in July 2004.

Further details and application forms (in English, French or Spanish) are available from Dr Chisato Aoki, Fellowship Program, ITTO; Fax 81–45–223 1111; fellowship@itto.or.jp (see page 2 for ITTO's postal address).

The CITES Appendix II listing of mahogany comes into force

AT its 12th meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) decided to include neotropical populations of *Swietenia macrophylla* (mahogany) in Appendix II of the Convention with the annotation 'Designates logs, sawnwood, veneer sheets and plywood'.

This inclusion came into effect on 15 November 2003; previously, mahogany logs, sawnwood and veneer had been listed in Appendix III by some range states, which meant that internationally traded mahogany needed to be accompanied by export permits from those range states or by certificates of origin from other countries. The requirements are tighter in Appendix II: international trade of products derived from the species is only permitted if accompanied by permits or certificates issued by nominated national authorities in the country of export or re-export that attest to the legality of the product and the sustainability of the species (as described below).

In October 2003, the CITES Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group met in Belém, Brazil (with ITTO support). It recommended (among other things) that the CITES Secretariat circulate a notification to CITES parties to clarify the practical implications of the inclusion of mahogany in Appendix II. The most salient points of the notification, which was issued on 12 November 2003, were:

An export permit may be granted only if the Management Authority … is satisfied that the specimens to be exported were acquired legally and if the Scientific Authority … has advised that the export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species.

- international trade in specimens of Appendix-II species may be authorised by the granting of an export permit or re-export certificate in accordance with Article IV of the Convention. An export permit may be granted only if the Management Authority (as designated by the country considering the export or re-export) is satisfied that the specimens to be exported were acquired legally and if the Scientific Authority (as designated by the country considering the export or re-export) has advised that the export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. A re-export certificate may be granted only if the Management Authority is satisfied that the specimens were imported in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;
- specimens transferred from one Appendix to another are subject to the provisions applying to them at the time of export or re-export. Therefore, from 15 November 2003, the requirements of Article IV shall apply to the export or re-export of logs, sawnwood, veneer sheets and plywood of *Swietenia macrophylla*. Any re-export of such specimens from that date may be authorized only under the provisions of Article IV, even if they had been imported as Appendix-III specimens in accordance with Article V;
- certificates of origin, export permits or re-export certificates referring to *Swietenia macrophylla* as a species included in Appendix III issued in compliance with Article V may be used for export before 15 November 2003. Importing countries should accept Appendix-III documents for specimens of *Swietenia macrophylla* only if the export has taken place before that date;
- re-export certificates issued on or after 15 November 2003 for specimens that had been imported under the provisions relating to Appendix-III species should refer to either the export permit or the certificate of origin with which the specimens concerned were imported;
- international trade of any logs, sawnwood or veneer of *Swietenia macrophylla* acquired before the Appendix-III listing took effect on 16 November 1995, or non-veneer plywood (eg blockboard) acquired before 15 November 2003 ('pre-Convention specimens') requires a special certificate that indicates the precise date of acquisition or contains a statement that acquisition occurred before the Convention became applicable to the specimen;
- CITES provides definitions of the terms 'logs', 'sawnwood', and 'veneer sheets' based on the tariff classifications in the Harmonized System (HS) of the World Customs Organization. The term 'plywood' has not been formally defined, but it is expected that the CITES Plants Committee will provide final recommendations regarding the definition of this term based on the HS definition at its meeting in February 2004. The preferred unit of measure for plywood is square metres, since it usually only contains one outer veneer of mahogany;
- confiscated specimens of mahogany should be disposed of in the best manner possible to benefit enforcement and administration of the Convention. Steps should be taken to ensure that the person responsible for the offence does not receive financial or other gain from the disposal;
- specimens of *Swietenia macrophylla* that have been confiscated as a result of attempts to import or export them illegally and that have subsequently been sold by the Management Authority, having satisfied itself that this would not be detrimental to the survival of the species, should, for the purposes of issuing export permits or re-export certificates, be deemed to have been obtained in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and with the laws of the state for the protection of fauna and flora. Such permits and certificates should clearly indicate that the specimens are confiscated specimens.

The full text of the notification to the parties can be obtained from the CITES Secretariat in Geneva, Fax 41–22–797 3417; cites@unep.ch; www.cites.org

ITTO will be hosting a workshop in early 2004 to assist major range states in meeting the requirements of the Appendix-II listing of mahogany. For more information contact: Dr Steve Johnson, itto-stats@itto.or.jp

Forestry schools in Central Africa reviewed

Workshop on Teacher Training in Forest Concession Management

17–21 February 2003
Kribi, Cameroon

For more than a decade the countries of the Congo Basin have been striving for the sustainable management of forest concessions. Several reforms have been initiated at both the institutional and legislative levels, and the first management plans for forest concessions have been drafted according to newly developed technical standards of sustainable management. In addition, some managers of forest concessions have undertaken their own initiatives with a view to achieving forest certification.

But the full realisation of such ambitions depends largely on the availability of foresters to undertake the tasks demanded of sustainable forest management. A priority, then, is to improve the training of future forest concession managers. To that effect, the Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale d'Afrique centrale (Network of Central African Institutions of Forest and Environmental Training, RIFFEAC) and ITTO have initiated a process for updating training in forest management in Central African schools of forestry.

The process started with a workshop on teacher training in forest concession management last February in Kribi. This gave the teachers in charge of forest management training an opportunity to analyse the current level of the lessons given, identify weaknesses, explore options for improving education and commit themselves to update the courses. Some 20 forestry teachers attended the workshop from six countries in the region.

Progress report

Progress was made during the Kribi workshop, particularly in relation to the following.

The need to improve training in forest management: participants discussed ideas and practices in forest management, including the challenges of integrating the social and environmental components of forest concession management. The following topics were debated: the status of forest management in the countries of Central Africa; the impacts of logging; tools for the sustainable management of forest concessions; and the monitoring and assessment of the environmental and social sustainability of forest concession management. Through this exercise participants were made aware of the ways in which knowledge and practices in forest management had evolved over the last ten years.

Analysis of the current situation: participants assessed the extent to which new knowledge and practices in forest management are already integrated in training programs. Through this exercise the participants were made aware of the gaps existing between the current contents of training programs and the developments in knowledge and practices in forest management. It was pointed out, for example, that current training did not sufficiently take into account the environmental and social components of forest concession management. Indeed, aspects relating to the methods for assessing environmental impacts, geographic information systems, forest and environmental audits, standards of management, communication, participative management, data processing, etc, were not included in the training programs of most forestry schools. Moreover, teaching staff were themselves rarely afforded the opportunity to update their knowledge and teaching skills through further training.

The search for solutions: this analysis of the current situation aroused the interest of participants and reinforced their determination to act in order to improve training in forest management. Various options were explored, either at the level of each school, or via RIFFEAC. The possibility was also raised of establishing a platform of cooperation between the private sector, the public sector and forestry educational institutions to update training in forest concession management. Participants agreed on the following strategic main lines: development of a model training program in forest management and the management of forest concessions; updating the courses relating to forest management; and reinforcing the capacities of teachers in charge of training activities.

The process will continue. The three strategic main lines identified were used in the development of a project proposal to support the process initiated during the workshop. This project proposal was submitted to ITTO by the Government of Gabon and received funding from the International Tropical Timber Council last May (ITTO PROJECT PD 189/03 REV.1 (I); see *TFU* 13/3, page 19).

The first lessons

The Kribi workshop was not an end in itself, but a way of kick-starting a process; it benefited from some excellent dynamics between participants, which are perhaps rarely achieved in workshop settings. The workshop's success is linked to the fact that ITTO's offer to provide funding and other support enabled the initiation of a process that had already been planned within the RIFFEAC framework. Indeed, almost two years ago RIFFEAC undertook to update the courses and to reinforce the capacities of the teachers. Therefore, ITTO's offer was perceived as an opportunity to implement the network's operational plan in general and, in particular, to tackle the priority needs of training identified during evaluations carried out in 2002.

Success is also attributable to the specific approach followed in carrying out the workshop. According to the 'active' methodology adopted, the workshop instructors were asked to create conditions that would encourage the teachers to become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses regarding the issues discussed, to help them build on their strengths, and to acquire new skills in order to improve the quality of the lessons on forest management taught in their respective institutions. The workshop agenda was drawn up specifically to address these concerns.

Another factor worth mentioning is the group spirit that developed during the workshop. The distinctions between disciplines prevailing in the setting up of the RIFFEAC's subjects' working groups (GTT) were overlooked in favour of

establishing common ground for specialists in forest sciences and technology and teachers of social sciences (economics, sociology, anthropology, archaeology, etc). The management of forest concessions is no longer a field reserved for 'foresters', but is now open to other disciplines. With the ITTO project now starting, forest management training in Central Africa is poised to advance more rapidly towards sustainability.

Reported by Jean-Claude Nguinguiri (ITTO Regional Officer) and Richard Eba'a Atyi (ATO/ITTO Project Coordinator).

Mega-forestry congress stresses sustainable forest management

XII World Forestry Congress

21–28 September 2003
Quebec City, Canada

The World Forestry Congress, which is held every six years, is an excellent opportunity for foresters to find out about forestry issues in other countries and to network with colleagues from around the world. More than 4000 people from over 140 countries attended this session, which had a general theme of 'forests, source of life'. It comprised plenary, theme, ecoregional, special and general sessions, as well as open fora, side-events and a very large and impressive exhibition. ITTO hosted a side-event attended by about 160 people to debate sustainable forest management in the tropics; Canadian forester David Boucher (also a former chair of the International Tropical Timber Council) moderated the side-event and Duncan Poore was its keynote speaker. As is the usual practice, at its conclusion the Congress issued a motherhood statement which lays out a vision for forests and urges the 'world community' to undertake measures to achieve it.

A detailed account of the event can be found at www.iisd.ca/sd/wfc12/. The final statement can be downloaded from www.cfm2003.org/en/index.php.

Protected area action plan agreed

V World Parks Congress

8–17 September 2003
Durban, South Africa

Another large congress that took place in the second half of 2003, the World Parks Congress, attracted more than 2700 delegates. Convened by IUCN in cooperation with the Government of South Africa, the Congress delivered three main outputs: the Durban Accord and Action Plan, which are a (non-legally binding) high-level vision statement for protected areas and an outline of implementation mechanisms; 32 recommendations, approved by workshops during the Congress; and a message to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The theme of the Congress was 'benefits beyond boundaries', which was interpreted by delegates in a variety of ways. Perhaps most importantly, many stressed that local and indigenous communities both inside and outside protected areas should be enabled to participate in and benefit from biodiversity conservation rather than be treated as threats, as has often been the case. Thus, the Durban Action Plan includes the following goal: "the rights of Indigenous peoples, mobile peoples and local communities recognized and guaranteed in relation to natural resources and biodiversity conservation". Moreover, conservation professionals are realising that while totally protected areas may serve as the core of a conservation strategy, what happens in the wider landscape can have a profound influence on the survival of species and ecosystems. Another of the goals of the Durban Action Plan, therefore, was: "a global system of protected areas linked to surrounding landscapes and seascapes achieved".

Transboundary conservation, an area of special interest and involvement for ITTO, received plenty of attention and support from delegates. One of the challenges listed in the Durban Action Plan is that protected areas are too often not linked to development planning, land-use and other resource management decision-making systems beyond their boundaries, and particularly in transboundary situations requiring the harmonisation of approaches across political boundaries. Several actions were proposed to address this, including to:

- create new and promote existing transboundary protected areas for communities separated by national borders, including corridors of connectivity for mobile Indigenous peoples who have traditionally migrated across borders; and
- promote regional agreements and governance structures to support transboundary protected areas and management of transboundary resources, such as river basins, that support protected areas.

One of the Congress's recommendations was to create a global network to support the development of transboundary conservation initiatives. A related website, the Global Transboundary Protected Areas Network, was launched during the Congress; it can be viewed at www.tbpa.net. ITTO also joined with IUCN and others to launch a portfolio of information and case-studies on transboundary conservation initiatives.

Other products of the Congress included: the production of a draft *State of the world's protected areas*; the launch of a protected areas learning network, a web-based knowledge management tool for protected area managers and stakeholders; outputs on Africa's protected areas, including a recommendation on Africa's protected areas and the *Durban consensus on African protected areas for the new millennium*; and a handbook on managing protected areas in the 21st century, which will collate case-studies, models and lessons learned during the Congress.

More information is available at www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/wpc2003/

Recent editions

Edited by Alastair Sarre

Gabus, A. (ed.) 2003.* L'économie mondiale face au climat: à responsabilités accrues, opportunités nouvelles. *L'Harmattan, Paris, France. 276 p. ISBN 2 7475 5050 8

For more information contact André Gabus at agabus@bluewin.ch or visit www.mysunrise.ch/users/agabus/eff'endi/carbon/carbcorn.html.

This book will be useful to foresters wishing to introduce themselves to tomorrow's business of carbon stock management. After a short account of the enhanced greenhouse effect as a physical phenomenon, the book provides a discourse on the political economy of climate policy. Ways and means of climate change mitigation are shown as both economic constraints and business opportunities. Prospects for institutional, economic and in particular technological changes are depicted in scenarios. The publication includes numerous boxes, technical notes and basic documents in an appendix, a glossary and an index. It should prove to be a useful reference for the non-English-speaking reader, offering detailed information on the global 'climate economy' often available only in Shakespeare's language.

Modified from text provided by the author.

Saigal, S., Arora, H. & Rizvi, S. 2002.* The new foresters: the role of private enterprise in the Indian forestry sector. *International Institute of Environment and Development, London, UK. ISBN 1 899825 89 4

Available from: *Earthprint Ltd, Orders Department, PO Box 119, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 4TP, United Kingdom; www.earthprint.com; orders@earthprint.co.uk or Ecotech Services (India), B-2 Local Shopping Complex, MMTC/STC Colony, Geetanjali Enclave, New Delhi 110 017, India; Tel 91–11–656 9791/2/3; Fax 91–11–656 9794; ecotech@del2.vsnl.net.in*

In India, local communities are increasingly being involved in the protection and management of government forests through a joint forest management program, which started on a pilot scale in the early 1990s and has now spread to over 18% of forest lands. The study presented in this book examines this important phase in Indian forestry. It offers an approach to addressing some of the major challenges facing the Indian forestry sector by examining the potential contribution of the private sector (interpreted in this study to comprise all those who engage in commercial activities concerning forest goods and services, including individuals, community groups, informal-sector groups, and large-scale corporate bodies) to sustainable forestry and forest-based livelihoods. It is one of five country studies commissioned under the International Institute for Environment and Development's project 'Instruments for sustainable private sector forestry'.

Adapted from the book's executive summary.

Prasad, R., Kotwal, P., Chandurkar, D., Jadhav, Y., Horo, N.V. & Dugaya, D. 2002.* Manual for operationalising criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management at forest management unit level in India. *IIFM & ITTO, Bhopal, India and Yokohama, Japan. ISBN 81 7969 001 6

Available from: *Information Officer, ITTO, Tel 81–45–223 1110; Fax 81–45–223 1111; itto@itto.or.jp; www.itto.or.jp*

This training manual, a product of ITTO PROJECT PD 37/00 REV. 1 (F), is a pioneering attempt to encourage the application of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management (C&I) in India. It contains two modules. Part A, 'Sensitisation', introduces the user to the C&I process in India, presenting a conceptual background and framework to C&I, various worldwide initiatives related to C&I, and issues relating to India's forest situation. Part B, 'Operationalisation', provides a detailed description of C&I at the forest management unit level and a methodology for reporting. Each criterion contains several indicators that are sub-divided into those that are quantifiable and those that are qualitative; the quantitative indicators are provided with formats for reporting and measurement.

Adapted from the Manual's executive summary.

Appanah, S., Castañeda, F. & Durst, P. 2003.* Practical guidelines for the assessment, monitoring and reporting on national level criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in dry forests in Asia. *RAP Publications 2003/05. FORSPA and FAO, Bangkok, Thailand. ISBN 974 7946 40 8

Available from: *Patrick Durst, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 39 Phra Atit Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand; Tel 66–2–697 4000; Fax 66–2–697 4445; Patrick.Durst@fao.org*

This is an instruction book on the process of collecting and assembling national-level information and reporting on criteria and indicators for dry forests in Asia. It provides tools or detailed information on a) formulating aspects to be assessed for each individual indicator; b) how to obtain, compile and process the relevant information; c) identifying the means used for data collection; and d) the periodicity of measurement and measurement units to be used.

Adapted from the book's executive summary.

Tropical and topical

Edited by Alastair Sarre

Trade data come in (slowly)

The Secretariat's Steven Johnson presented 'Elements of the Annual Review and Assessment of the World Timber Situation 2003' at the 35th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council held in Yokohama last November (see page 16 for an account of the session). He reported that the total value of consumer imports of all tropical timber products would continue the trend of recent years and remain stable or increase slightly in 2003. The two components of this total trade value continued to converge, with the value of secondary processed wood products (SPWPs) in consumer imports increasing while the value of primary products remained stable. He also noted that the overall role of natural tropical forests in the supply of timber products was declining: natural forests accounted for 80% of the wood in all timber products in 1991 but only about 40% in 2003, as most SPWPs and a growing proportion of primary products are based on plantation wood. Nevertheless, natural tropical forests were still the major suppliers of wood raw materials in many producer countries. Dr Johnson noted the continuing poor performance of many member countries in the provision of data on timber production and trade, although Bolivia, Ghana, Honduras, Togo and Suriname all provided good-quality information. The 2003 *Annual Review* will be finalised and published (in English, French and Spanish) in the first half of 2004; write to itto-stats@itto.or.jp to pre-order a copy.

Purchasing guidelines

The Danish Environmental Protection Agency in the Ministry of the Environment has released environmental guidelines for the purchase of tropical timber. Recently translated into English from the original Danish, these guidelines aim to "make it easier for public and semi-public institutions to ensure that the tropical timber they purchase is produced in a legal and sustainable manner".

According to the guidelines, most tropical timber "has good natural durability, making it suited for and environmentally friendly in the outdoor environment, without impregnation with preservatives, etc. In addition, a lot of tropical timber has a number of aesthetic qualities and great strength". It makes reference to less well-known wood types "that are easier to obtain [than some popular species] from legal and sustainable forest management [and] are often equally well suited [to the same uses]. … Purchasers can therefore help protect forests by requesting wood with particular technical properties and appearance, instead of just asking for wood from one or a few particular species."

To ensure legality, the guidelines recommend that buyers make the following stipulations (as a minimum): that the producer has had the necessary rights and permits to carry out logging of the given tree species, grades and dimensions; that the producer has fulfilled all relevant national legislation regarding forest management and the effects of forest management on people and the environment; that any due taxes and duties have been paid; and that all statutory declarations and permits from the authorities have been obtained. The guidelines also make recommendations for ensuring the sustainability of forest management.

The publication 'Purchasing tropical timber: environmental guidelines' (English version) can be downloaded at www.frontlinien.dk/ukindex.asp

Don't worry about short-term impacts

Writing in *Biodiversity and Conservation* (12: 1445–1453, 2003), Fredericksen and Putz suggest that forest management prescriptions that insist on the minimisation of disturbance and canopy gaps—the "'gap-phase regeneration' paradigm"—"is disturbing in the light of accumulating evidence for the importance of cataclysmic natural and anthropogenic disturbances in many tropical forests". They say that regardless of how logging is conducted, its primary impacts are minor compared to secondary impacts such as the increased access to the forest by colonists and poachers and the increased vulnerability of many forests to fire. Moreover, many high-value species, including *Swietenia macrophylla* (mahogany), *Cedrela* species and *Shorea leprosula* (light red meranti) require higher levels of disturbance than are typically created under minimal impact regimes and when logging intensities are low. The authors suggest that conservationists should focus less on the short-term impacts of logging and more on managing commercially productive forests that are protected from wildfires, poaching and conversion. Such managed forests "will still retain a large proportion of their pre-harvest biodiversity, much more than would be retained if they were to be converted to cattle pastures, agricultural fields, or pulpwood plantations".

Forest fiscal discussion

The World Bank's Program on Forests (PROFOR) convened an International Workshop on Reform of Forest Fiscal Systems on 19–21 October 2003 in Washington, DC, USA. The workshop was intended to provide a forum for frank discussion on the political economy of forest fiscal reforms. Participants from seven countries—Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Ghana, Honduras, Indonesia and Nicaragua—in government and the private sector shared their experiences. Beyond considering forest fiscal systems for efficient revenue collection and maximisation, the workshop looked at forest fiscal instruments as tools to promote sustainable forest management and broader societal goals including poverty reduction, gender equality and good governance.

A summary of the workshop can be downloaded at www.profor.info/pdf/FFSbriefingnote.pdf, ***or*** *contact Laura Ivers, Communications Officer, PROFOR, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20433 USA; Tel 1–202–473 2396; Fax 1–202–522 1142; laivers@worldbank.org*

Noticeboard

Community forestry network in China

The Forestry and Society Network, established in 1992, is a nationwide community forestry network in China designed to collect, disseminate and exchange experiences, models and other relevant information on community forestry. Its English-language website is now available at www.cfnetwork.com.cn

For more information contact: *Professor Li Weichang, Forestry and Society Network Coordinator, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Wan Shou Shan, 100091, Beijing, China; Tel 86–10–62888530; Fax 86–10–62882317; liweich@public3.bta.net.cn*

Private-sector experiences on show

The Forest Department of Peninsular Malaysia is currently implementing an ITTO project (PD 48/99) designed to facilitate access to and promote the use of data, information and experiences on examples of successful forest management at the forest management unit level. Under the project, a global survey has been conducted and a study of forest concession management undertaken in each of the three tropical regions (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean). The survey involved both information-gathering through questionnaires and field visits to selected concessions for the compilation of detailed case-studies. The findings of the project will be presented at the *International Conference on Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests: Private-sector Experiences*, to be held 13–15 April 2004 in Kuala Lumpur. Contact details are given on page 30.

Timber yield toolbox

The UK Department for International Development and the Oxford Forestry Institute (OFI) have developed an Excel-based tool for regulating forest timber yield in mixed tropical forest "using minimal data". According to OFI, the tool, called Myrlin (Methods of Yield Regulation with Limited Information),"will be particularly useful for obtaining a reasonable estimate of a sustainable yield when the only data available is a single inventory". The software is available for free download at www.myrlin.org, or contact Ms Nell Baker, OFI, Department of Plant Sciences, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3RB, UK; Tel 44–1865–724333; nell.baker@ntlworld.com

Colombian forest policy update

The Colombian National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) recently published a policy document (No 3237) with the aim of stimulating commercial reforestation in Colombia. CONPES papers are prepared by teams from both public and private sectors and are tools for the budgeting and implementation of national policies. In recent years such policies have focused on natural forest conservation, but reforestation has recently been receiving more attention. A PDF version of 'Policy to stimulate commercial reforestation in Colombia' (in Spanish) can be downloaded at www.dnp.gov.co/ArchivosWeb/Conpes/3237.pdf.

At the same time, the Colombian government is taking steps to develop a National Competitiveness Agreement aimed at stimulating timber industry development. Currently the forestry sector contributes only 0.2% of gross national product, despite the country's large area of natural forest and considerable potential for reforestation. A draft of the agreement has been released to encourage dialogue on the issue; copies and more information could be obtained from pmhurtado@minambiente.gov.co.

Reported by Antonio Villa Lopera

Peru forest strategy

Another document published recently (September 2003) is Peru's National Forest Development Strategy, 2002–2021. The document has been prepared to encourage rural development and sustainable forest management and to act as a guiding tool for national forest policy. Copies can be downloaded at www.endf.org.pe or obtained from: Eng José Dancé Caballero, Av. Pablo Carriquiry No 315, Lima 27, Peru; endf@endf.org.pe

Fellowships awarded

Twenty-six fellowships worth US$156 000 were awarded at the 35th Session of International Tropical Timber Council in November 2003. Awardees were:

Ms Michele Geovana Pontin (Brazil), to undertake a masters program in wood science; **Mr Sérgio de Mattos Fonseca** (Brazil), to undertake a postgraduate program in environmental science; **Mr Clair René Banga** (Cameroon), to undertake a masters program in techniques and methods of enviornmental information management; **Mr Appolinaire Nankam** (Cameroon), to undertake the same masters program as Mr Banga; **Mr Benjamin Ndzelen Serkfem** (Cameroon), to undertake a masters program in environment and development education; **Ms Xiaohui Wang** (China), to attend a short course on forest management; **Ms Mónica Concepción Salazar Oviedo** (Colombia), to undertake a masters program in tropical agroforestry; **Mr Hamleth Valois Cuesta** (Colombia), to undertake a course in tropical dendrology; **Mr Jean-Pierre Kampé** (Congo), to do a masters degree in natural science and agronomy; **Mr Samuel Asirifi Boateng** (Ghana), to do a training course on forest productivity; **Mr Ernest Gordon Foli** (Ghana), to conduct PhD research on silvicultural interventions in tropical moist forest in Ghana; **Dr Raquel Simone Thomas** (Guyana), to attend a short training course on project management; **Dr M. Sujatha** (India); to attend a short training course on land degradation and sustainable rural livelihoods; **Dr Kulvia Singh Bangarwa** (India), to participate in the 1st World Congress of Agroforestry; **Mr Eddy Nurtjahya** (Indonesia), to conduct PhD research on the revegetation of tin-mined land using mixed local tree species on Bangka Island; **Ms Enny Widyati** (Indonesia), to conduct PhD research on sulphur phytoremediation using pulp sludge and plant-microbe interactions to accelerate the revegetation of coal-mined land; **Mr Maung Maung Than** (Myanmar), to conduct PhD research on plant ecology in a restored mangrove ecosystem; **Mr Shiva Kumar Wagle** (Nepal), to conduct masters research on people's perceptions of integrated resource conservation; **Mr Bhim Nath Acharya** (Nepal), to undertake masters research on markets for timber and non-timber products from community-managed forests; **Mr Ramón José Chiari López** (Panama), to undertake work on a masters thesis on forest harvest planning in plantation forests; **Mr Michael Taketo Jonathan** (Papua New Guinea), to attend a short course on managing conflict in community-based forestry; **Mr Moisés Pascual Acevedo Mallque** (Peru), to prepare a document systematising information on 100 Peruvian timbers; **Ms Myralyn Aguda Abasolo** (Philippines), to prepare a masters thesis in plant genetic resources conservation and management; **Dr Kudzo Atsu Guelly** (Togo), to prepare a document on the geographic distribution and domestication of the timber species *Pentadesma butyracea*; **Mr Kossi Adjossou** (Togo), to prepare documents for a study on biodiversity conservation in riparian forests in Togo; and **Ms Osmary Zoraida Araque** (Venezuela), to prepare a masters thesis on the anatomy of a family of lianas and its implications for forest management.

Biodiversity monitoring and assessment techniques

20 April–31 May 2004 **Los Baños, the Philippines**
19 April–30 May 2005
Cost: US$3780 **Language: English**

This course deals with monitoring and assessment techniques, surveys and methods, procedures, data analysis, and the interpretation of long-term biodiversity data. It offers a wide range of topics covering the scope and relevance of biodiversity in terrestrial ecosystems, planning and approaches in assessing and monitoring biodiversity, genetic and population inventory methods, fauna and floral inventory, single and multi-species inventory, ecosystem and landscape diversity inventory, and the analysis and interpretation of biodiversity data and information.

Contact details below.

Application of GIS in natural resource policy research

11–24 May 2004 **Los Baños, the Philippines**
10–23 May 2005
Cost: US$1575 **Language: English**

This course provides administrators, managers, experts and other professionals in the fields of natural resource policy research with the knowledge to include geographic and temporal dimensions in their policy recommendations and strategies. The participants are expected to gain skills in the use of geographic information systems (GIS) data in policy assessment and resource management alternatives. The course will comprise lectures, discussions and hands-on computer exercises.

Contact details below.

Study tour on forestry and environment training management

11–24 May 2004 **Various locations in the Philippines**
10–23 May 2005
Cost: US$4500 **Language: English**

This tour is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the participants on the diverse aspects of training management through visits and observation tours of various training institutions and agencies in the Philippines. It is focused on interaction and the sharing of experiences with different government and non-government training organisations in the field of forest resource conservation and environmental stability. To make the study tour more experiential, participants will also have the rare opportunity of interviewing local community leaders and members who became active role-players in forestry and environment training activities as participants and/or resource persons.

Contact details below.

Forest products marketing

1 June–12 July 2004 **Los Baños, the Philippines**
7 June–18 July 2005
Cost: US$3780 **Language: English**

This course will open up business opportunities for forest products by equipping participants with knowledge on environment/green and global marketing issues and market research. It will also explore how to develop a marketing information system and prepare a marketing plan.

Contact details below.

Agroforestry for sustainable development

1 June–12 July 2004 **Los Baños, the Philippines**
7 June–18 July 2005
Cost: US$3780 **Language: English**

This course, which is designed for agroforestry officers, social foresters and extension, rural and upland development workers, will operationalise the concepts of sustainable development through the art, science and practice of agroforestry. It will also demonstrate the approaches, methods and techniques involved in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating agroforestry projects, and address issues of food security, woodfuel productivity, livelihoods, and rehabilitation of degraded lands.

Contact details below.

Geomatics for natural resource management

6 July–16 August 2004 **Los Baños, the Philippines**
5 July–15 August 2005
Cost: US$3780 **Language: English**

This course introduces the background, concepts, principles and application of geomatics in natural resource management. It covers topics such as data acquisition and management; mapping technologies; advances in surveying and mapping using global positioning systems (GPS); field surveying exercises, and data input and GIS mapping. It also focuses on the watershed as the basic management unit in natural resource management. It aims to enable the participants to integrate geomatics technology into the daily operation and decision-making functions of an organisation.

For all above courses, contact: *The Director, Training Center for Tropical Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability (TREES), College of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of the Philippines Los Baños, PO Box 434, College, Laguna 4031, Philippines; Tel 63–49–536 2268; Fax 63–49–536 3340; trees@laguna.net; www.apafri.org/trees/index.htm*

Sustainable forestry in tropical ecosystems: field experience in Ghana, West Africa

16 July–7 August 2004 **Ghana**
Cost: NAU tuition: $768 (estimated);
Course fee: $1200

The School of Forestry at the Northern Arizona University (NAU) is offering a 3-week short course (field exploration) in sustainable forest management practices for tropical ecosystems in Ghana, West Africa. The course is taught in cooperation with local educators and research colleagues, including time in both dry and wet tropical forest ecosystems.

Contact: *Dr Mike Wagner, NAU School of Forestry, PO Box 15018, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5018, USA; Mike.Wagner@nau.edu; or Dr Paul Bosu, Forestry Research Institute of Ghana, PO Box 63, KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana; ppb2@dana.ucc.nau.edu; www.for.nau.edu/shortcourses/tropicalforestry/*

International Seminar on Watershed Management

22June–7 July 2004 **Wisconsin, USA**
Cost: US$4000 **Language: English**

Organised jointly by the University of Wisconsin and USDA Forest Service International Programs, this seminar offers a mix of instruction and facilitated discussions to engage participants on critical global and regional watershed management issues, emphasising innovative approaches to watersheds to work across a wide range of biophysical and socioeconomic settings. Particular attention will be given to the management of watersheds in developing and newly emerging market economies.

For more information go to www.fs.fed.us/global/is/welcome.htm

International Field Course on Wildlands and Protected Area Management

6 July–8 August 2004
Cost: US$4,950 **Language: Spanish**

Co-hosted by the Center for Protected Area Management and Training at Colorado State University and USDA Forest Service International Programs, this course, held entirely in Spanish, presents key concepts, principles and methods of protected area management while emphasising field-based practical exercises. Participants will interact extensively with local resource users, various local, state and federal agencies, collaborating private conservation organisations, and other citizen groups involved in natural resource management. This interaction will provide participants with hands-on experience in solving complex biodiversity conservation and natural resource use and management problems.

For more information go to www.fs.fed.us/global/is/welcome.htm

International Seminar on Protected Area Management

5–21August 2004 **Western USA**
Cost: US$4750 **Language: English**

Designed for senior level planners and managers of nationally significant protected areas worldwide, this integrated, state-of-the-art course examines strategies to conserve the world's most special places. Sponsored by USDA Forest Service International Programs and the universities of Montana, Idaho and Colorado State, the seminar will evaluate policies and institutional arrangements that sustain both people and natural resources.

By featuring these courses, ITTO doesn't necessarily endorse them. Potential applicants are advised to obtain further information about the courses of interest and the institutions offering them.

Meetings

24–27 February 2004. Global Workshop on Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies and Capacity Building for Sustainable Forest Management. Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. A country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Sponsored by ITTO. ***Contact: Jean Noël Marien, Workshop Secretariat, Tel 242–23 2592 or 94 3184; Fax 242–94 4795; ur10@calva.com***

2–4 March 2004. FAO/ ITTO International Expert Consultation on Criteria and Indicators. Cebu City, the Philippines. By invitation only. ***Contact: Eva Müller or Steve Johnson, ITTO Secretariat; Tel 81–45–223 1110; Fax 81–45–223 1111; itto@itto.or.jp; www.itto.or.jp***

2–5 March 2004. ITTO International Workshop on Environmental Economics of Tropical Forest and Green Policy—Planning and Budgeting. Beijing, China. ITTO PROJECT PD 39/98. ***Contact: Mr Hou Yuanzhao or Ms Wu Shuirong, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing 100091, China; Fax 86–10–6288 4836; houyuanzhao@163.net; yuling@forestry.ac.cn***

17–19 March 2004. **World of Wood**. Anaheim, California, USA. ***Contact:*** *International Wood Products Association, 4214 King Street West, Alexandria, VA 22302 USA; Tel 1–703–820 6696; Fax 1–703– 820 8550; info@iwpawood.org; www.iwpawood.org/ convention.html*

29–31 March 2004. **International Conference on Utility Line Structures**. Fort Collins, USA. ***Contact:*** *Lisa Nelson, Conference Technical Director, EDM International, Inc, 4001 Automation Way, Fort Collins CO 80525–3479 USA; Tel 1–970–204 5001; Fax 1–970–204 4007; LNelson@edmlink.com*

30 March–4 April 2004. **19th Annual Symposium of the United States Regional Association of the International Association for Landscape Ecology: Transdisciplinary Challenges in Landscape Ecology**. ***Contact:*** *Nita Tallent-Halsell, Research Environmental Scientist, Landscape Ecology Branch, Environmental Sciences Division, 944 E Harmon Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89119 USA; Tel 1–702–798 2567; tallent-halsell.nita@epa.gov; www.usiale.org/lasvegas2004/*

11–18 April 2004. **Southern Brazil Forestry Tour**. Curitiba, Brazil. ***Contact:*** *Mark Willhite, Fax 1–503–695 6419; bwillhite@juno.com*

12–14 April 2004. **Management of Tropical Dry Forest Woodlands and Savannas: Assessment, Silviculture, Scenarios**. Brasilia, Brazil. IUFRO 4.00.00. ***Contact:*** *Professor Dr José Imaña Encinas, University of Brasilia, Forestry Department Caixa Postal 04357, 70919-970, Brasilia, DF, Brazil; Tel 55–61–2736026; Fax 55–61–3470631; iufro@unb.br*

13–15 April 2004. International Conference on Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests: Private-sector Experiences. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. ***Contact: Mr Kamaruzaman Ali Budin, ITTO International Conference Secretariat, Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, 50660 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Tel 603–26962571; Fax 603–26925657; kamaruzaman@forestry.gov.my***

21–23 April 2004. **3rd International Symposium on Sustainable Management of Forest Resources—SIMFOR 2004**. IUFRO 1.00.00, 2.00.00. Pinar del Rio, Cuba. ***Contact:*** *C. Fernando Hernández Martínez; Tel 82–779363; Fax 82–779353*

27–30 April 2004. Interlaken Workshop on Decentralisation, Federal Systems in Forestry and National Forest Programmes. Interlaken, Switzerland. A country-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests. ITTO is a collaborating agency. ***Contact: Ms Sopie Rossé, Forest-Environment Team, Intercooperation, Maulbeerstr. 10, CH-3001 Bern, Switzerland; Tel 41–31–382 0861; Fax 41–31–382 3605; srosse@intercooperation.ch***

3–14 May 2004. **4th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests**. Geneva, Switzerland. ***Contact:*** *Mia Söderlund, UNFF Secretariat; Tel 1–212–963 3262; Fax 1–212–963 4260; unff@un.org; www.un.org/esa/ forests.htm*

20–22 May 2004. **International Conference on Economics of Sustainable Forest Management**. Toronto, Canada. ***Contact:*** *Shashi Kant, Conference Secretariat; Tel 1–416–978 6196; Fax 1–416–978 3834; shashi.kant@utoronto.ca; www.forestry.utoronto.ca/socio_ economic/icesfm/*

9–11 June 2004. **Applications of Satatistics, Information Systems and Computers in Natural Resources Monitoring and Management**. Taipei, Taiwan Province of China. ***Contact:*** *Dr Bing T. Guan; btguan@ntu.edu.tw; http: //ccms.ntu.edu.t/~btguan/*

24–26 June 2004. **Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Abrupt Climate Change: Positive Options and Robust Policy**. Paris, France. ***Contact:*** *Michael Obersteiner, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, A-2361 Laxenburg, Austria; Tel 43–2236–8070; Fax 43–2236–71 313; www.iiasa.ac.at/~oberstei/ ff/index.html?sb=1; oberstei@iiasa.ac.at*

26–29 June 2004. **Forest Genetics and Climate Change**. IUFRO 7.01.04. Vernon, Canada. ***Contact:*** *Alvin Yanchuk; Tel 1–250–387 3338; Fax 1–250–387 0046; alvin.yanchuk@gems4.gov.bc.ca*

27 June–2 July 2004. **1st World Congress of Agroforestry: Working Together for Sustainable Land-Use Systems**. Orlando, Florida, USA. ***Contact:*** *Mandy Padgett, Office of Conferences & Institutes, PO Box 110750, Gainesville, Florida 32611-0750, USA; mrpadgett@mail.ifas.ufl.edu; http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/ wca*

27 June–3 July 2004. **The Evaluation of Forest Policies and Programmes**. Epinal, Vosges, France. ***Contact:*** *Gérard Buttoud (Science program), French Institute of Forestry, Agricultural and Environmental Engineering (ENGREF); buttoud@engref.fr; Brita Pajari (other issues), European Forest Institute; brita.pajari@efi.fi*

20–23 July 2004. 36th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council. Interlaken, Switzerland. ***Contact: Collins Ahadome; Tel 81–45–223 1110; Fax 81–45–223 1111; itto@itto.or.jp; www.itto.or.jp***

26–30 July 2004. UN Conference (1st Part) for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the ITTA, 1994. Geneva, Switzerland. ***Contact: Collins Ahadome; Tel 81–45– 223 1110; Fax 81–45–223 1111; itto@itto.or.jp; www.itto.or.jp***

1–10 August 2004. **2nd Worldwide Symposium on Gender and Forestry**. Arusha, Tanzania. IUFRO 6.18.00. ***Contact:*** *Ann-Merete Furuberg, Depart2ment of Forestry and Natural Resources, Hedmark College, N-2256 Grue Finnskog, Norway; Tel 47–9016 3092; Fax 47–6294 5753; merete.furuberg@hedmark-f.kommune.no*

15–20 August 2004. **Forest Diversity and Resistance to Native and Exotic Pest Insects**. IUFRO 7.03.07. Hammer Springs, New Zealand. ***Contact:*** *Andrew Liebhold, Northeastern Research Station, USDA Forest Service, 180 Canfield St, Morgantown, WV 26505, USA; Fax 1–304–285 1505; aliebhold@fs.fed.us; http: //iufro.boku.ac.at/iufro/*

15–21 August 2004. **XII International Congress of Entomology**. Brisbane, Australia. ***Contact:*** *Ashley Gordon, Congress Director; Ashley@ccm.com.au; www.ccm.com.au/icoe/ index.html*

1–2 September 2004. **Forest Information Technology Congress and Exhibition**. Jyväskylä, Finland. ***Contact:*** *Finpro Marketing Oy, Porkkalankatu 1, FIN-00181 Helsinki, Finland; forestit@finpro.fi; www.forestit.net*

27–30 September 2004. **The Economics and Management of High Productivity Plantations**. Lugo, Galicia, Spain. IUFRO 4.04.06. ***Contact:*** *Juan Gabriel Alvarez; Tel 34–982–252303;* ***or*** *Chris Goulding, New Zealand Forest Research Institute, Private Bag 3020, Sala Street, Rotorua, New Zealand; Tel 64–7–343 5641; Fax 64–7–348 0952; www.lugo.usc.es/iufro/*

17–21 November 2004. **International Symposium on Ecological Restoration**. Santa Clara City, Cuba. ***Contact:*** *Grecia Montalvo, Empresa Nacional para la Protección de la Flora y la Fauna, Carretera Central km 306, Banda Placetas, Santa Clara, Villa Clara, Cuba Cp: 50 100; Fax 53–42–208430; sisre@ccb.civc.inf.cu or grecia_montalvo@yahoo.es*

17–25 November 2004. **People and Nature: Making a Difference.** 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress. Bangkok, Thailand. ***Contact:*** *Ursula Hiltbrunner, IUCN – The World Conservation Union, 28 rue Mauvernay, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland; Tel 41–22–999 0232; Fax 41–22–999 0020; www.iucn.org; ursula.hiltbrunner@iucn.org*

22–25 November 2004. **International Conference on Multipurpose Trees in the Tropics: Assessment, Growth and Management**. Jodhpur, India. ***Contact:*** *Dr V.P. Tewari, Organising Secretary; Tel 91–291–272 2588; Fax 91–291–272 2764; vptewari@afri.res.in*

13–18 December 2004. 37th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council. Yokohama, Japan. ***Contact: Collins Ahadome; Tel 81–45–223 1110; Fax 81–45–223 1111; itto@itto.or.jp; www.itto.or.jp***

28 February–5 March 2005. **17th Commonwealth Forestry Conference: Forestry's Contribution to Poverty Reduction**. Colombo, Sri Lanka. ***Contact:*** *Conservator General of Forests, Sampathpaya, PO Box 3, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka; Tel 94–1–286 6616; Fax 94–1–286 6633; forlib@sltnet.lk*

huge communication challenge for outsiders. Very often, the use of an interpreter can completely transform the message and create confusion and distrust. I have observed just such a situation between the village community of Ebondje, inside the Lokoundjé Forest Management Unit in Kribi, south Cameroon, and the experts of an international cooperation agency. The result was that the local community later rejected other training organised for its benefit.

The waltz of new concepts: local communities should be strongly involved in any process that affects the management of and access to resources on which they depend. It is important, therefore, that they have a good understanding of the process and the ideas underpinning it. But concepts abound: think, for example, about SFM, certification, auditing, criteria and indicators or—the latest—ecosystem management. How can these be explained to villagers? What do they really mean? The result of so many buzzwords, each of which comes with its own rather fuzzy definition (and some with several definitions), is confusion; communities get the sense that many outsiders are not really sure what they're doing. Rationalising the terminology might help: in certification, for example, we have the stepwise approach, the phased approach and the modular approach: are these interesting concepts equal, equivalent, comparable or compatible? Such a large range of tunes makes it difficult for local communities to understand the music.

Red tape: the labyrinth that must be negotiated by communities to secure funds for training is too bureaucratic and complicated; consequently, most projects to develop capacity in the forestry sector are designed without civil-society participation. Very often, it seems, good governance is just on paper, or for other people.

ITTO's role

What role can ITTO play to improve the situation? I have conducted two ITTO workshops in Cameroon on capacity-building related to criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of natural tropical forests, in collaboration with Don Widjewardana (Samgmelima regional workshop, February 2001) and Dr Marie Mbolo (Kribi national workshop, January 2003). These workshops were effective in reaching both government and private-sector officials; this was, indeed, their aim. But without complementary efforts to inform civil-society actors and to increase their capacity to understand and engage in forest management processes, ITTO's efforts in this regard will leave the job half-done.

Excluding local communities from capacity-building widens the gap between civil society and the government and private sectors and creates frustrations in those communities.

We may face the same problem during the six years of implementation of the ITTO/ATO project (PD 120/01 REV.2 (M)), which aims to promote the application of the ATO/ITTO PC&I by training up to 600 specialists. This project is

The result of so many buzzwords, each of which comes with its own rather fuzzy definition (and some with several definitions), is confusion; communities get the sense that many outsiders are not really sure what they're doing.

necessary and valuable, but it needs to be complemented by similar efforts to reach civil-society actors. Likewise, ITTO projects that do help build capacity at the local community level—of which there are several—need to be strengthened and supported in the long term.

From where I stand, building the capacity of Africa's civil society is a crucial issue that ITTO must address. The Civil Society Advisory Group, which was set up to advise the International Tropical Timber Council and comprises representatives of a range of non-governmental organisations with interests in tropical forests, should take up this issue and bring it to the attention of the Council. In fact I am wondering: if ITTO—with its ability to stimulate ground-level action in Africa and empower local organisations—doesn't do it, who else will? I fear that if it doesn't, Africa's natural forest management will remain a beautiful road to heaven, paved with nice concepts that are inaccessible to our grassroots' organisations.

Out on a limb

Not enough attention is being paid to building forest management capacity within Africa's civil society

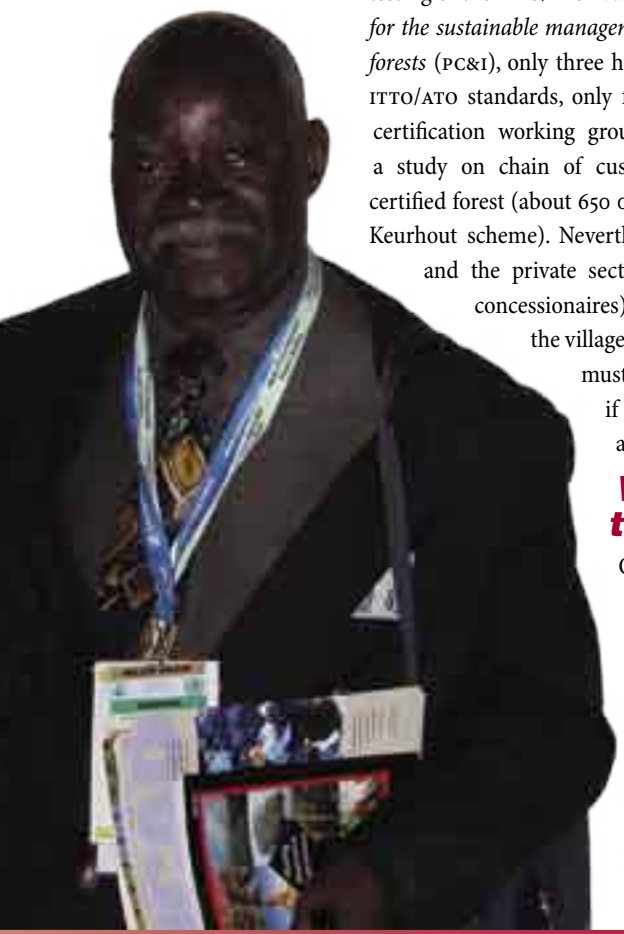
by Parfait Mimbimi Esono

BP 14897, Yaoundé, Cameroon
akung34@hotmail.com

IN 1992, we brought home from the Rio Summit two concepts—sustainable forest management (SFM), and certification—whose application is now apparently indispensable. More than ten years on, however, neither has made much advance in West or Central Africa. There are many reasons for this, but one that rarely gets much international air time relates to the capacity of ordinary people—civil society—to understand the concepts, apply them and, most importantly, benefit from their application. The big question, therefore, is this: what can be done to build the capacity of stakeholders in civil society?

I have written previously (*TFU* 13/3, page 19) about the limited progress being made towards certification in Africa. Capacity is not just lacking in civil society, but in government and the private sector as well: of the 14 African Timber Organization member states, which together represent 237 million hectares of natural tropical forest, only five have carried out field-testing of the ITTO/ATO *Principles, criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of African natural tropical forests* (PC&I), only three have national norms adapted to ITTO/ATO standards, only four have operational national certification working groups, only one is carrying out a study on chain of custody, and only Gabon has a certified forest (about 650 000 hectares certified under the Keurhout scheme). Nevertheless, capacity in government and the private sector (meaning the larger forest concessionaires) is still far greater than that in the villages and other communities which must inevitably play a pivotal role if SFM and certification are to be achieved at a significant scale.

... despite the presence of so many organisations, few efforts are being made to train marginalised minorities such as pygmies, women and youth in the complexities of modern forest resource management, even though these are just the sorts of people who need the training most.



Who are we talking about?

Civil-society stakeholders in the African forest sector include:

- intermediary organisations active at the local level, such as local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), cooperatives, federations of community organisations, and local NGO networks; and
- grassroots organisations such as producer associations, associations of natural resource users, professional associations, and community banks.

Apart from ITTO, many international and regional organisations are active in the region, including the Central African Regional Programme for the Environment (CARPE), the UK Department of International Development, the Center for International Forestry Research, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Wide Fund for Nature, IUCN, ACDI/VOCA, the Wildlife Conservation Society, the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), and others (some of which are described on pages 11–13). But despite the presence of so many organisations, few efforts are being made to train marginalised minorities such as pygmies, women and youth in the complexities of modern forest resource management, even though these are just the sorts of people who need the training most. Their technical, professional and material capacities must be strengthened to facilitate their participation in and influence on decision-making about the resources they use and rely on.

Indeed, many development agencies have serious difficulties in collaborating with grassroots' civil-society organisations and in enabling their empowerment in forest management. Some of the reasons for these difficulties are described below.

Obstacles

The inability of foreign forestry experts to communicate with local communities: to conduct any training you need to speak the language of your trainee; you need to be able to get your messages across and to evaluate the degree to which training was 'taken onboard'. Consequently, foreign experts with little or no knowledge of local community languages are ill-equipped to carry out training in Africa's rural communities. There are more than 280 tribes in Cameroon, for example: such cultural and linguistic diversity presents a

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