

# *the* Courier

the magazine of ACP-EU  
development cooperation

Ghana

Tropical Forests

Italy

Jean-Robert Goulonganga

Bea Diallo





This little girl in Ghana is about three years old, and she is already learning to help out. This very usefulness may be a hindrance to her, because, as she progresses in school, she is much more likely to drop out than her brother. She will probably stay at home and help run the family. The Education Ministry is trying to target this imbalance, and has established a Girls' Education Unit, with special workshops, where girls can meet successful women in science and technology, and get extra tuition and encouragement.

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### Cover

Front: a large fig tree (*Ficus*) left unfelled in logged-over forest in the high altitude Mau region on the western flank of Kenya's Rift Valley

Back: bright red fruits of *Pseudobotrya* in Korup rainforest, Cameroon

Photographs: Glyn Davies

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T h e A C P - E U C o u r i e r

is the main publication of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Union. The EU provides ACP countries with preferential access to EU markets and substantial development assistance (some two to three billion Euros a year). The ACP and EU cooperate at a political level and engage in a continuous political dialogue: in trade, to promote the integration of the ACP countries into the world economy; and in development assistance, with the clear objective of promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty.



# Jean-Robert Goulongana

## New Secretary General of the ACP Group



**"The ACPs have made huge strides in negotiation and initiative"**

There was an unusually harmonious atmosphere surrounding the appointment of the new Secretary General of the ACP Group last November at the ACP Council of Ministers in Santo Domingo. Gabon's Jean-Robert Goulongana had little difficulty in attracting the votes needed to secure his election. Hardly surprising, really, since this is a man who is entirely at home in the diplomatic arena, having served as his country's Ambassador to several different European capitals, most recently to Brussels, which was obviously a great advantage to him. His active involvement in the recent negotiations gives this legal expert a perfect understanding of the stakes involved in the ACP-EU partnership. After his official investiture on 1 March, he has wasted no time in getting to grips with the most important issues.

The new agreement concluded with the European Union means that the ACP Group is forced to redefine new priorities for the future.

"We have numerous priorities. First, there is the restructuring of the Secretariat. The Council of Ministers decided in Santo Domingo that the ACP Secretariat should be reorganised, so we need to draw up an administrative chart re-defining the roles to reflect the new agreement we have just made with the European Union and which also enable us to give the ACP Group a more prominent position on the international stage. We are working to a fairly tight deadline, in that we have to present a report to the Council of Ministers in Fiji in June. We also have to implement the Plan of Action and the Santo Domingo Declaration adopted by the ACP Heads of State last November, which obviously entails a certain amount of urgent action, in particular sectoral

meetings at ministerial level and making contact with other parts of the world, because globalisation compels us to forge links with other economic and political entities. Thirdly, we must take action to implement the new ACP-EU cooperation agreement, particularly with respect to trade and programming. This requires a good deal of preparatory work and meetings between trade ministers and representatives of regional cooperative organisations involved in the negotiation and implementation of these agreements. Since the basic principles of our funding programmes have changed somewhat, it is also vital that we prepare those in charge of expenditure at local and national level for the new procedures. So, as you can see, our mandate requires us to implement a whole range of important, high-priority measures and actions.

Although the Lomé Convention contained much that was good on a conceptual and theoretical level, it was not always put into practice very effectively. How do you propose to improve this under the new agreement?

Your question raises two issues. The first is that EU aid to ACP countries under the Lomé Convention has indeed not always been effective, in the sense that most of these countries have not seen any real benefit from the advantages contained in this agreement and in particular from the non-reciprocal trade preferences. Some would even claim that, after more or less 30 years of cooperation with the EU, ACP countries have not managed to develop at all. We should play down the significance of this sort of analytical generalisation, how-



ever, which obviously takes no account of the situations in specific ACP countries. We must recognise that, thanks to the Lomé Convention, many countries have managed to put in place basic economic and social infrastructures, which would have been impossible without EU support. The second point concerning efficiency relates to the implementation of the Convention itself. It has been difficult to put the Convention into practice owing to the weight and complexity of the procedures set up in some areas. One of the aims of the new partnership agreement is precisely to simplify these procedures and to speed up disbursement of resources because, as you know, we were left with quite a high level of unused funds. Simplification of the procedures, faster rates of disbursement and decentralisation of the Commission, giving power to its delegations on the ground and to local authorities, will lead to better results.

Yet the debate about simplifying procedures has been going on for several years, without anything being done to change things - is there really any hope of a swift end to operational problems of this kind?

I believe there is, because so much goodwill already exists on both sides. The EU has expressed its willingness, and I see no reason to doubt its sincerity. We all recognise that the procedures are cumbersome and complicated, and that centralisation of power in Brussels does nothing to facilitate rapid and efficient application of the Convention. So I see this expression of willingness to reform as a good sign for the future. Moreover, from now on it is up to the ACP-EU Joint Council of Ministers to revise procedures when it sees that improvements are needed. All matters relating to implementation and procedures are now the remit of this Joint Council, which can act to remove these obstacles far more efficiently and with far more flexibility than has been the case in the past. So there is good cause for optimism thanks to these points. It would perhaps be jumping the gun to say now that things are going to change overnight, but I think that within two to five years we will certainly see clear improvements.

It's one thing to alter procedures, but quite another to increase the capacity of ACP countries to absorb funds by giving them a better understanding of the mechanisms of the agreement. What is proposed in this respect?

You've just hit on a point of fundamental importance, and this is why we have allocated resources from our budget to increasing the capacities of ACP countries to enable them to manage the procedures better and act swiftly at their end. Of course, this will mean investing in training and improvement programmes, and we have already taken steps to implement such measures.

The new agreement makes way for a future partnership which is more open to non-state actors. How easy do you think it will be to achieve this?

It won't be easy, for we start from the premise that a pluralistic society has evolved with the emergence of new social forces, such as civil society or the private sector, and these must be taken into consideration - but how will these new actors play their part in implementing the new agreement? It is important that, in the first instance, we can identify in each country the organisations most representative of civil society, with the guarantee that they operate democratically and are managed in a sound and open manner. The new agreement provides for two sorts of participation by non-governmental actors: they will be consulted as the development strategies are drawn up, but they will also be involved in defining and implementing programmes and projects which directly affect them. To achieve this, there must be a dialogue with local authorities and the Commission.

Do you feel that the ACP States are philosophically ready for the decentralisation of aid?

Decentralisation already exists in terms of support given to local authorities. Some funding goes directly to decentralised administrations and organisations. However, we need to ensure that all these various initiatives do not work against each other, but are coordinated to form a cohesive strategy -



and I think that the government remains the best organ for this and for ensuring that funds are put to good use. Although the ACP States might have had reservations to begin with - and understandably so in many cases, owing to the lack of structure and representativeness in civil society - these doubts have receded somewhat today, and dialogue between the government and these new actors is improving all the time.

The ACP group has for a long time managed to maintain its cohesion despite the diversity of its member States. Do you not feel that some of the trends in the new agreement are likely to gradually erode this unity?

The ACP Group derives its strength from its name, its cohesion and the solidarity of its members, who are all well aware of this fact. When it came to defining the negotiation mandate, there was actually an intense debate on this matter, since the States were afraid that regionalisation of cooperation might endanger the unity of the ACP Group. We have now, however, established that this unity must be safeguarded at all costs, while at the same time recognising that the ACP Group is made up of individual regions and countries each with its own very specific characteristics. We need to take this diversity into account, therefore, without this undermining the cohesion and unity of the Group. The fact that we have talked about positive differentiation shows that this is indeed possible.

It is often said that the ACP Group's sole *raison d'être* derives from its relations with the EU. How can this Group position itself on the international stage in relation to other players, while at the same time preserving its special relationship with the EU?

We have forged a particularly close partnership with the EU, a special relationship which goes back many years. Yet we have to reconcile this relationship with the fact that today there are other significant economic entities on the world stage whose assistance we also need. We currently have an

exemption request submitted to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), for example, which its members must accept by consensus, and we cannot obtain their support if we do not have good relations with them. Without wishing to undermine our relationship with the EU, we also need to join forces with other partners to make them aware of our problems and encourage them to fight our corner.

The ACP Group also gets accused of having largely left it up to the EU to suggest ways of improving cooperation. How can the ACPs' capacity for initiative be strengthened in future?

Having taken part in the recent negotiations, I can assure you that things have really changed. Several innovations have come about as a direct result of ACP initiative, particularly with respect to trade and cooperation funding. Thirty years ago, this would not have been the case, but today we can confidently say that the ACP countries have made huge strides, not only in terms of negotiation but also in terms of initiative.

What is your view on good governance, the issue which caused so much controversy during the negotiations?

My view is that all the ACP countries are committed to stamping out the curse of corruption. The problem arose out of an initial misunderstanding of the exact meaning of the concepts, whereby good governance became erroneously synonymous with fighting corruption. This is clearly reductive, since good governance encompasses much more than this. Furthermore, they wanted to make good governance an essential element of the new Convention, which further complicated the discussion. I believe that the ACP negotiators were right to point out that democracy, the rule of law etc, already constituted good governance, and that to add a fourth element made no sense because it was already provided for. On the other hand, in cases where serious corruption is known to exist, the new agreement allows for consultations to be held, leading to the possibility of imposing sanctions.

**Kenneth Karl**



# The devil is in the detail

**Dorothy Morrissey talks to **Glenys Kinnock**, Labour MEP for Wales and doughty champion of fair play in development affairs, about the ACP-EU partnership agreement concluded in Brussels in February this year**

Glenys Kinnock, Labour MEP for Wales - one of the most active and outspoken Members of the European Parliament - is deeply committed to development affairs. She is a member of the European Parliament's Development and Cooperation Committee, and Vice-President of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly. She made a substantial contribution to the negotiations on the post-Lomé agreement, as rapporteur of a working group set up by the ACP-EU Joint Assembly to examine the future of the new partnership. The report, which was passed unanimously at the recent Joint Assembly in Abuja, is the first reflection on the agreement.

She calls the agreement "a success, warts and all," while recognising that some aspects need to be clarified. Consensus and compromise were reached, although the negotiations had started off with quite diverging points of view.

On the trade aspect, she believes things had to change, especially because of WTO compliance.

"Very clearly for both sides there was never an option to have a long-term waiver."

But she is adamant that free trade areas are not the only option on offer. "The mandate is very clear on the need to have other options as well as free trade areas (FTAs). "It shouldn't be FTAs or nothing, but a menu of options."

Up to now, she says, the Commission hasn't specified the options.

"I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing, and that is generally the view of the ACP too. There are ambiguities, things open to interpretation and clarification "but as things evolve I don't think it would have been wise for either side to say there was only one set of options. There is a possibility for those countries who find it is not the avenue they wish to take, to explore other possibilities."

The WTO doesn't stipulate that the only option (other than preferential market access which will

continue to be offered to Least Developed Countries) is the only possibility.

"That is part of a discussion still going on in the WTO and was a huge sticking point in Seattle. FTA agreements are what the Commission wants but countries such as some in the Caribbean who do not qualify for the levels of market access they had in the past - they quite rightly say they have to explore other options."

Kinnock has high praise for both sides, saying they "negotiated hard, and many would have anticipated at the outset that the ACP would not have had the capacity to do what they did. They showed quite brilliant negotiating skills, particularly in the trade group."

## **The Seattle effect**

The final negotiations took place in the immediate aftermath of the breakdown of WTO talks in Seattle. Did this have an effect? "I think it strengthened the resolve of the ACP negotiators to make sure that they weren't corralled with just one option. Numerically the ACP group is very strong, so their trade experts would have looked very carefully at what happened, especially at the impasse on market access, the definition of 'essentially all'... which we are still waiting for."

Final negotiations also took place during the EU's trade talks with South Africa, which, she believes, cast a shadow. During these talks, "the Member States kept back-tracking on agreements they had already made. The South African trade agreement is a blueprint, and not a very happy one in terms of how far Member States were prepared to go to protect their own vested interests, especially in agriculture." The lesson was not lost on the ACP group, she believes.

"It was in that context too that the ACPs had to negotiate, because they knew that if it was a narrow agreement the Council would renege."

**"We've got a blueprint but it is still in its infancy - now the tough talking has to take place."**



## Migration

The European Parliament was also concerned about the evolution of the migration issue during the negotiations. "The introduction of this right at the very end was an appalling initiative, and endangered the whole agreement. To have come so far and to be taking the final step, and then throw in an enormous difficulty. Will this issue be re-opened? ...it worries me."

The issue of migration was always on the agenda, but in a human rights sense, which she considers correct. The EU was mandated by the Council to include a clause on migration in all agreements with third countries.

"The European Parliament needs to look at this very carefully. South Africans rejected the clause in their agreement, but they still feel very worried about it."

The Council (Justice and Home Affairs) needs to tread very carefully: "this is a contractual long-term partnership with ACP countries, and hopefully they won't be persuaded to re-introduce this in the rigorous way that they did in the December meeting."

The ACP group made very clear that they would not have it: "it was so important that the ACP were prepared to walk away from the whole thing."

## Conditionality

The new agreement contains innovations in the area of good governance and an approach to corruption. Kinnoek feels it right to insist on the absence of corruption and fraud.

"We have to be very clear that we expect transparency and accountability, and they must also expect that from us. That kind of conditionality is inevitable and will be demanded by the citizens we represent in Europe."

She stresses the need to take into account the capacity of the country; mistakes can often be due to lack of expertise rather than malpractice.

"We must understand that in many of the very poorest countries, the staff expertise may just not be there. I have just been in Angola where 75% of their civil servants only have primary education." Many offices do not have basic equipment. "If we say that certain types of auditing has to be done, we are going to have to help to fund that."

The Commission understands that, she believes,

but "one of the things that worries me with this new arrangement is that we are likely to put enormous pressure on ACP countries. We are going to have to simplify, make things more accessible, trust people more. We are certainly going to have to give more authority to delegations to work with governments, because those on the ground can see what the problems are. There is no single system which can be made to work in all countries."

The EU institutions are also being reformed. "This strengthens the ACPs because they can see that we also have these problems that need to be addressed."

"The budget control committee in the European Parliament is looking at development, and sometimes things haven't been done properly, or properly managed. I think that we as ACP and European parliamentarians need to understand this and work with the reform process. We need proper coordination, much more coherence between policies. We want trade to be fair trade as well as free trade."

## The budget debate

The European Development Fund is a separate budget from the EU budget: the Parliament does not exercise the same control. The Parliament and the Commission are united in their view that the EDF should be 'budgetised'.

"It is crazy to have two separate budgets. Having just one would lead to greater efficiency, and lessen the problems of duplication."

She is not optimistic, however, that the Council will relinquish its power on this, "and of course some Member States will not relinquish their ability to take the money back and put it in their own treasury if it's not committed and disbursed."

The new agreement points to a doubling of disbursement, to a rate of €3.5 billion per year. This will not be easy, especially if more staff and resources are not allocated.

Efficiency and transparency demand adequate staff levels, and at present she feels these are far too low. On average, to manage US\$10 million, there are 2.9 people in the Commission, compared with 4.3 in the World Bank and between four and nine in Member States.

"It must be made easier for the services. Already things are beginning to move, and I very much



hope that we can get agreement from the Council to give more power to the delegations."

During her recent visit to Angola, she was impressed by the delegation's management of "a very big and important programme" despite being very short-staffed.

### Civil society

Kinnock is pleased with the emphasis in the new agreement on working with NGOs, and the strong element on civil society. "But I still need to know exactly what we are going to do to deliver on that."

This parliamentarian has the interests of women and children particularly close to her heart, and spent 30 years as a school teacher, from secondary to kindergarten level (jokingly she says that working in the EP is not much different).

It is important that these two issues are treated in the new agreement.

"It is very difficult to identify children as a priority, because they don't appear in the treaties. In this agreement we have a strong reference to working with young people, to listening to their priorities. On gender too, there is a strong paragraph on women, which gives us the leverage we need."

This was not a feature of previous conventions, but human development is clearly seen as a priority in this agreement.

"Commission staff tended to be agronomists and economists, but now, thankfully, there is a much greater understanding of the need for human development, and its link to poverty eradication."

Conflict prevention and resolution is also dealt with, but needs to be developed and strengthened. "But it is there, and that is progress."

She feels that now is the time to sit down in working groups and hammer out the details.

"Some people are quite negative about the mandate, and you have to accept that there are deficiencies. We need now to redefine and expand what is there."

On the negotiations themselves, Kinnock cites the unity of the the ACP group, who, despite their different levels of development, and the distances dividing them, came to Brussels "with quite a clear view of what they wanted... whereas the Member States sat down and squabbled! Obviously the ACP group has different interests to pursue, their economies are at different stages, they are from different conti-



nents, they are not going to have a united view on everything. It is quite a remarkable achievement.

"I really hand it to the ACP negotiators. People underestimated their capability, and their capacity to turn things around on good governance, trade, and migration. The definitions we have are as much theirs as the EU's. I think that is a very healthy outcome of these negotiations."

She also has praise for the Commission.

"They have shown that they really want this to work, they want to get the best deal for the ACP. But they have to balance this with the sometimes inordinate pressure that the Member States put on them."

She stresses the mutual benefits.

"We have duties towards our partners but we also have a lot to gain from the markets we will be opening up with future agreements. It is not pure altruism."

"Lomé has been unique and a marvellous agreement, contract, and partnership. I think that what we have now does retain those essential elements. In some ways we have improved on the past, in simplicity and readability. This will make it more accessible in the long term. We look forward and we plan to make sure this is an improvement on the past. All that is required is political will. If that is there we can really make this work for millions of people."



# Is it Time for Regional Unity?



by Ava Gail Gardiner\*

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is working to meet the June 2000 deadline for the start of the CARICOM Single Market

and Economy (CSME).

The creation of a single currency has been delayed but the other elements to complete the CSME will take effect. But is CARICOM

ready to take this serious step?

The CARICOM Heads of Government, prompted by rapid changes affecting international politics and trade in the late 1980s, recommended the establishment of the CSME. Eleven years later, the assault of globalisation, as shown by the Banana War between the EU and the US, has inflicted heavy casualties on the region and CARICOM is now painstakingly devising a new strategy.

The 15-member group is deeply concerned that unless it moves to create the CSME, its market of 14 million people will continue to suffer under changes in the global economy and be left floundering in an arena dominated by trade bloc giants such as NAFTA and MERCOSUR.

The primary goal of the CSME is to remove the economic borders of CARICOM Member States and create a unified economic area. Dr. Edwin Carrington, Secretary General of CARICOM explained that "it will be possible to shift the region's focus to competitive production for both intra-regional and extra-regional markets... which should improve economic viability and standards of living across the Caribbean."

The Prime Minister of Barbados, Owen Arthur, one of the chief proponents of the CSME, emphasises that "national and regional consensus building must be at the heart of the New Community."





Not just a travel brochure.  
Will the CSME succeed in attracting  
international investors as well as holidaymakers?

### The Road Already Travelled

The 1973 Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community provided for the creation of two distinct legal entities - the Caribbean Community and the Caribbean Common Market. The focus of the Common Market was on intra-regional trade. Emulating the model adopted by the European Community, a customs union was established between CARICOM Member States. Customs duty between Member States was removed and a common external tariff put in place. CARICOM Members also agreed to eliminate quantitative restrictions (quotas) and other such measures. In the 1990s, limited steps were taken to make it easier for skills and services to move within the region, but these decisions have not yet been implemented.

The establishment of the CSME has given rise to major revision of the Treaty and these amendments are embodied in nine Protocols. The legal frame-

work of the CSME is now in its final stages as finishing touches are being applied to the last two Protocols on Dispute Settlement and Rules of Competition.

Protocol I has restructured the institutions and organs of the Community as well as the procedures for decision-making, voting and administration. It has removed the separation of the Common Market from the Community by integrating the Single Market. Other Protocols cover the movement of goods, services, labour and capital, and policies on industry, agriculture and transportation.

### Balancing Interests

Each CARICOM Member State manages its own import and export scheme, under the existing Common Market system. There are rules governing products under the Common Market, to ease exports between Member States. But there have still been problems.

As recently as October 1999, a trade dispute arose between Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Jamaica took issue with Trinidad and Tobago's practice of certifying goods produced in the countries' export zones as being of CARICOM origin, and thus exempt from duties when exported to member countries. This provoked heated debate throughout the region and is still under discussion. Mervin Assam, Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Trade has said that until the situation has been resolved, free-zone goods will not be allowed to enjoy CARICOM goods of origin status.

This controversy highlights the delicacy of the current negotiations. As Anthony Bryan, Professor at the University of Miami says: "looking at competition policy, rules of origin and market access are contentious and are critical to the viability of the CSME."

The underlying concern is that regionalism should not threaten national survival. Jamaica's Commerce Minister Philip Paulwell: "whereas we fully subscribe to CARICOM trade and the implications of globalisation, we must do all we can in the interest of the Jamaican producer and consumer."

### A Matter of Law

#### The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ)

The CCJ, although a prerequisite for the CSME, has been a thorn in the side of many CARICOM members. Originally conceived as a multi-faceted court to replace the British Privy Council as an appellate body, Member States finally agreed that the jurisdiction of the court will be restricted to the interpretation and enforcement of the CARICOM Treaty, ie as a forum for CARICOM dispute resolution.





On your marks,  
get set, go!  
People in the Caribbean  
are waiting to see what  
June 2000 will bring.  
Not everyone  
is convinced...

"It would be easier for us to agree that a Caribbean Court of Justice have original jurisdiction for matters pertaining to the Treaty than for other matters that have to do with its role as an appeal court that would require constitutional change," feels Basdeo Panday, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

Although decisions have been made on the Court's powers, some Member States still hold the view that the court should hear cases throughout the region, not just in its proposed headquarters in Port-of-Spain.

#### **An Uphill Climb**

Ambitious and timely though these efforts to establish the CSME may be, CARICOM will have to overcome problems in its attempts to harmonise the economic policies of its members. Governments will have to agree and implement measures such as maintaining international reserves to provide at least three months import cover. They will also be required to maintain debt service ratios below 15%, and to ensure exchange rate stability for periods of at least three years. This will not be easy in such an economically disparate community: the *per capita* income of Barbados (7,500 USD) is three times that of Jamaica and 30 times that of Haiti, for example.

While the planners of the CSME have been focusing on

elements that are working - eg CARICOM has created a customs union with common tariffs on imports from third countries and a regional capital market is encouraging cross-listing of stocks on the Barbadian, Jamaican and Trinidadian exchanges - some countries will benefit more than others. Some members may also be adversely affected by certain measures and a special protocol for particularly disadvantaged countries is envisaged to protect these countries.

While there may be drawbacks to further economic integration, as Owen Arthur emphasizes, the CSME is the Caribbean's best option.

"No one Caribbean society resting only upon the strength of its domestic market and resources will be able to sustain the developments which afford its citizens the prospects of an improved standard of living."

In addition to deepening regional cooperation CARICOM is also widening its sphere to other countries and has just signed a Free-Trade Agreement with the Dominican Republic.

In the recent Post-Lomé Agreement, Regional Economic Partnership Agreements (REPAS) are considered a key element in future trade relations between the EU and ACP countries. The CSME would provide an ideal environment for them.

The road towards economic

unity is long and winding, and as Mr. Arthur maintains, the CSME will only be completely achieved when the common currency is created.

"We already have one in the region, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States which already has its own currency and central bank, so we know that it can work. But this took the Europeans 40 years to achieve."

#### **CARICOM Member States**

**Antigua and Barbuda**

**The Bahamas**

**Barbados**

**Belize**

**Dominica**

**Grenada**

**Guyana**

**Haiti**

**Jamaica**

**Montserrat**

**St Kitts and Nevis**

**St Lucia**

**St Vincent and the  
Grenadines**

**Surinam**

**Trinidad and Tobago**

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# The Cairo Connection

**The EU-Africa Summit in April was the largest-ever meeting of African and European Heads of State. Sylvia Howe was there**

The most important thing about the Cairo Conference was that it took place.

It was the largest meeting of African and European Heads of State and senior politicians ever, and there is talk of holding it every three years. Everyone agreed on its importance and that it was and will be an opportunity for both sides to express their concerns and requirements.

Expectations and priorities were rather different - Africa wanted debt relief and trade concessions; the Europeans were more occupied by the issues of good governance, the rule of law, corruption, human rights, and regional cooperation and integration. Many Europeans spoke too of the imperative need for the end of conflict, seeing it as a direct cause of many of Africa's ills, and much of its poverty.

African leaders were honest with themselves and with the EU: a new attitude was voiced - that Africa is fully aware of its shortcomings, is responsible for itself and will direct itself to dealing with its own problems, of course with help from Europe.

Many spoke of working together, and accepted the need for a constructive partnership, but donor exasperation with progress was also in evidence.

Romano Prodi in his speech at the opening ceremony said that although "the past 40 years have seen the majority of African States making remarkable progress with establishing political, economic and social structures, and launching ambitious regional cooperation and integration processes... the transition to democracy is not achieved in the whole continent yet. Moreover one African in two continues to live in absolute poverty. We must be frank: despite the support provided by Europe, and the international organisations, the situation has not improved and expectations have not been met."

Leaders made their presence felt in different ways. President Ghaddafi of Libya came late on to the stage at the opening ceremony, while President Mubarak of Egypt was speaking, to fill the only empty chair in the semicircle of his peers. Once sitting, his enthusiastic greetings of his fellows attracted the attention of all present.

His meeting with Signor Prodi was apparently constructive, but generally he was highly critical of the West, and of their requirements - Africa does not need human rights, he maintained, we need water pumps...

They do, said Peter Hain of Britain, but they also need democracy and human rights. "Human rights make humans rich. "

## The Democracy Dividend

President Abasanjo of Nigeria expressed concern that democracy should pay visible dividends - people need to see the benefits. Commissioner Poul Nielson explained that, encouraged by Nigeria's progress towards democracy, the EU was now mobilising frozen funds for a 21 million Euro project to cover aid to 5,000 small activities in the delta: women, revitalising civil society, rural water activities and so on.

"Everyone talks about the peace dividend," he said, "but a democracy dividend is relevant too."

He also dealt with the issue of trade, and access to world markets: "it has been agreed that in less than five years, the least-developed countries will have duty- and quota-free access for 99% of commodities into our markets. "

## Corruption

This remains a very big fly in the ointment. Nielson called it a cancer, and was happy that the Post-Lomé negotiations and the new agreement deal with it openly.

"Corruption costs 17% of GDP in some countries," he said. "It has a direct relation to human rights, causing an erosion of the legitimacy of normal life. Of course this leads to loss of confidence."

## Debt relief for the poorest countries

He spoke of the need for "deeper, faster debt relief" and maintained that the EU had "done more than our share" and that he did not want to promise what he could not deliver. But he could in fact deliver quite a lot. He cited the new HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) assistance programme which has a budget of 27 billion dollars, the EU contribution being one billion euros. Member States



will also make bilateral contributions of their own.

"\$680 million has also gone into a trust fund, operated by the African Development Bank."

He was concerned that the focus should be on the poorest countries, and said that the EU would look at individual cases, and decide where and when to support their macro-economic situations. Middle income countries were more of a risk, because their debts caused an exponential increase in the cost of debt relief.

"Because they are richer, they are more debt worthy, and can attract larger loans, and funds from existing sources." He firmly countered any suggestion that the EU was not doing its share regarding development assistance.

"There is no comparison with our development assistance and that from other countries - even the largest. 55% of all official debt assistance comes from the EU and its Member States."

Individual Member States entered into the spirit of debt relief. President Chirac of France guaranteed debt forgiveness that would be up to 90% within three years. Gerhardt Schroeder of Germany offered 700 billion DM towards cancelling all debt from countries which - according to IMF and World Bank analysis - would qualify for access to the Cologne Debt Initiative. Morocco cancelled "all debt owed to Morocco by the least-developed African Countries and [lifted] all customs barriers for the goods imported from those countries".

#### **Foreign investment for Africa's economy**

It was agreed that it was necessary to attract foreign investment to Africa - at present only 1-2% of total world investments to sub-saharan Africa - and to strengthen the private sector and promote civil society in order to attain long term stability and order. "But doing something credibly attracts investment," said Poul Nielson. "Decent political systems, too, will change business neglect."

He pointed out that there is a system of cooperation between the EU and Africa that is already well-established, citing the post-Lomé negotiations and the new agreement, to be signed in June, and the new EU - South Africa Trade Agreement.

"We are moving beyond the donor/beneficiary relationship towards a contractual partnership."

#### **Humanitarian Aid**

As Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid he announced that the international community is sending 900,000 tons of food to Ethiopia via Djibouti, and was mobilising itself to help with the drought that had hit countries in the Horn of Africa. In the face of the familiar criticisms of Too Little Too Late, he said "There are people on site today, and we have released funds for well-planned and organised activity....we need to go deeper into the problem; food aid can't go on like this."

#### **Conclusions**

Although the summit did not sort out all problems to the satisfaction of everyone, nobody could realistically have expected it to do so. It did however, bring people together to discuss the complicated aspects of the needs of Africa and how EU-Africa cooperation can work towards addressing them.

"We have discovered something new, new possibilities," said Romano Prodi. Erastus JO Mwencha, the Secretary General of COMESA (the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) was also thinking positive: "We cannot continue to blame colonialism but must accept responsibility. We want to move forward. The 21st century will be Africa's century. We are the last frontier of development and we must move away from being beggars, and feed ourselves. No-one wants to live in poverty. I remain an optimist for Africa. There is international goodwill and we have identified common priorities." President Abasanjo of Nigeria called Europe and Africa's relationship until now "a marriage of convenience between two adolescent continents. We have both matured now and the need to talk has become an imperative for soul-searching encounters in which we renegotiate the prospects of the relationship we both want and cannot do without."

Commissioner Nielson added that "taking ownership of the situation is part of dealing with it... a partner that is more demanding in discussion is a better partner."

The Cairo Declaration and Plan of Action is available on the Web: [http://www.cc.cec/rapid/cgi/rapcgi.ksh?p\\_action.gettxt=gt&doc=PRES/00/9010|RAPID&lg=EN](http://www.cc.cec/rapid/cgi/rapcgi.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=PRES/00/9010|RAPID&lg=EN)



## Creative use of the private sector

Sylvia Howe meets **Marguerite Berger**, Chief of the Microenterprise Unit in the Sustainable Development Department of the InterAmerican Development Bank

The InterAmerican Bank was created in 1959 to help accelerate the economic and social development of its member countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Through its Social Entrepreneurship Program, the IDB provides loans and technical assistance to private organisations and public local development institutions at state, provincial or municipal levels.

The European Union has granted two special trust funds to the IDB to support microenterprise development in the region. The EEC Special Fund for the financing of Small Projects in Latin America was established in 1991 and has financed some 9 million euros for 19 projects.

The European Union Special Fund for Financing Microenterprises in Latin America, established in 1997, will provide the equivalent of some 18 million Euros for small projects over a three-year period. The Bank has become an international institution with 46 member countries, including nations from Europe and Asia. Its authorised capital is now \$101 billion. It was the first multilateral institution to finance social projects, to make global loans and to support microlending in the region.



### Significant development

In the English-speaking Caribbean there are fewer microfinance and microenterprise services than in the Dominican Republic, Haiti and in Latin America.

In the Dominican Republic two NGOs started up banks that are now running very well. In Haiti two private banks have just started up as a subdivision for microfinance. But in other areas, such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Tobago, Guyana, Barbados, we have seen significant developments - in particular in Guyana and Jamaica. As smaller economies, they have a massive base of customers to make microfinance a sustainable, profitable activity.

IDB's hope for the future is joint cooperation with the European Commission in the Caribbean area in microfinancing. The resources the Commission brings to that region are important; and our hope is to bring to the partnership our positive experience in Latin America.

About 21 years ago for example, we started one activity in Latin America. We called it the **Small Projects Programme (SPP)**, which provided soft loans and grants to NGOs to work with poor communities, particularly in countryside cooperatives.

This SPP was the first dealing direct with the private sector. Today our annual lending goes directly into infrastructure projects in the private sector. We are also involved with the **Multilateral Investment Fund**, a multi-country initiative created in 1993. Current members are the US, Japan, Spain, Portugal and Canada. Other European countries are joining. Its main activity is financing private sector development through private sector monies.

The IDB has two forms of capital to lend : government reserve funds, made up of contributions from IDB member states and which are a very small percentage of our loans. The rest of the funding of the IDB is raised through the sale of bonds, denominated in different currencies. A basket of currencies is used for financing projects in our borrowing countries. The interest rate charged is more than the interest rate paid to the bondholders, so the spread finances our budget and administration, and preparation of loans. The borrowing country can usually borrow cheaper and longer term from the IDB than from a private international bank. The IDB has a lending limit for each year or period of years; setting that limit ensures that defaulted debts are covered by member states. In this way the IDB has a triple A





Santa Ana, Islas Baru.  
Agriculture, fish and  
seafood

rating, only granted to the most financially secure institutions. What are your lending criteria?

To expand its lending the IDB is in capital and/or additional "call-able" capital so we reach an agreement with our member countries every five years. Member countries are all the borrowing countries - the 26 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, most European countries excluding Eastern Europe (except for Croatia and Serbia), and Israel and Japan. Other countries have applied to join such as China and Taiwan, but can only do so if the current members agree to an increase in the overall capital or sell them some of their shares.

Have all countries the same share percentage?

No, it varies, and is subject to negotiation. When the bank was founded, the United States was the main shareholder. Today it is still the

largest, with about 30%. The first loans were not approved till 1960 or 1961, since when the US share has decreased and the European share has increased. The Europeans were not involved originally and the Japanese also came in late. There has also been a shift in the countries the IDB finances.

The last agreement regarding replenishment of capital, (which includes the lending authorisation), gave a mandate that 40% of lending must be for social sectors. Now more is lent to projects on health care, education, violence prevention projects, urban development housing, environment, microenterprise, gender development and so on.

Who runs projects? How much are you involved?

The IDB does not get involved in the day to day running of the projects. We are the lender. We supervise the execution of the project. It is a closer relationship than with a normal bank but it is not like typical bilateral aid. There is a

field office in each borrowing country with perhaps four or five professional staff in the smallest ones, but it depends on the size of the country programme.

How much do you lend?

The normal level of approved lending over the last few years has been between six and seven billion dollars per year. Last year 10 billion dollars was approved; when the Asian crisis hit, the idea was to help the countries hardest hit with a fund to stabilise their financial sector, to be paid back over time, if they needed to draw on it.

Where does your funding come from?

Our funding is mostly from the bond issues which we call ordinary capital, ordinary lending funds, but we have another facility called the **Fund for Special Operations**. In the past, in order to have those funds, we had some extra contributions from member countries to support lower-interest longer-term loans for the poorer countries or for certain sector projects that target low-income. Such projects created repayments and 20 years ago we decided we would do some experimental programmes, targeting poor people in the non-governmental sector. This became the **Small Projects Programme (SPP)**. We financed cooperative development (especially in rural areas), or poor agricultural producers. We also financed urban microenterprise projects - businesses with fewer than 10 employees. Most of these employ between one and three people (family members), in what is often called the informal sector. There is much debate about the definitions



(see *The Courier* 178) but our philosophy has long been that microenterprise is part of the whole business sector. Why not encourage it to grow? The IDB also has small and medium-sized enterprise development programmes which overlap with microenterprise.

What is really interesting about the SPP is that the IDB has expanded the tools used to develop microenterprise in Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, one minor programme financed, in its first 10 years, an average of only eight million dollars a year. Then it grew dramatically in the early 90s to 25/30 million dollars but the resources we had available from these special funds started to decline.

Partnerships were sought with some IDB donor members. We were creating special trust funds where the donor country would donate to the IDB to use this programme. The idea was also to enhance our cooperation with donor countries interested, but sometimes inexperienced, in this area.

In its early days the IDB had an American trust fund, the **Social Progress Trust Fund**, with some support from Japan. But our biggest cooperation has been with the European Union - 15 million ECU for Latin America. That's why we are so keen to do some work together in the Caribbean, where it's really needed.

Our main donors have been Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, the EC, Japan and the United States. Now these trust funds are coming to an end, and the nature of our cooperation with the donors is changing. Donors have started to become involved directly through bilateral programmes or, in the case of the Commission, through regular finance

programmes in this sector in Latin America. We are trying to make it more coordinated not just "pass me the fund", but as joint programming and partnership instead.

Three years ago we started to assess the programme and did something new, which I call bench marking: looking at how other countries support microenterprise development, such as the bilateral programme, and also at how investors do it.

The Calvert Fund, for instance, in the United States, is a traditional Mutual Fund which puts money into socially-responsible investments and into Latin-American microenterprise development. In comparison, we found out that IDB was very slow, that we needed more partnerships and that we needed to broaden our approach to microenterprise development at the low-income level. Microcredit is not the only thing we want to do. We want to help build marketing arrangements: to offer micro-training counselling and business advice, and respond to the

need, at the poorest levels, for some basic community development activities, even social services such as day-care for women, so they can work and be more productive. We have created a simplified programme, with more open investment categories, but we were tougher on institutional sustainability.

### Innovation

The IDB has been looking at new types of projects since last year. Our programme is still dominated by microcredit and cooperative development but we are starting to get the word around that we are interested in innovative programmes. We call this new area the **Social Entrepreneurship**

**Programme:** financing business ventures with social impact or social responsibility.

Microcredit directly benefits low-income communities and we want to use this as a tool to attract the local business community and international businesses interested in partnerships. Entrepreneurship is innovative, so we must take some risks, support

Agriculture: livestock for meat, wool and hide near Combapata



Willie Heinz, IDB





Agroindustry - growing flowers for sale in Mondomo

experimentation and find the next microcredit.

Microcredit has moved a long way from being considered unsustainable (in lending money to poor people, which they would have great difficulty paying back). It is true that reaching the borrower used to be very expensive without today's technology. It still costs the most successful organisations the IDB works with in microcredit 15 to 20 cents to lend a dollar - a high figure considering how small the loans are: an average of \$500. But computers will reduce costs. Take Mexico: a group lends \$50, \$75 or \$100 to poor women streetvenders; the loan officer checks out the business in the street and puts this information into the computer overnight. They of course, have

a huge database of people they have lent to, so can tell if the person is a good risk; the decision to lend or not can be made by the next day. what percentage defaults?

In the good microfinance and microcredit programmes it is very low; usually below three per cent of outstanding loans make payments more than 30 days late. We feel comfortable financing organisations if it goes up to five per cent.

How do you try to ensure you are repaid?

It depends. For instance, there are solidarity groups of about five people who each get individual loans and they all guarantee each other's loan.

Our Social Entrepreneurship Programme is our low-income target programme. In 1989 we developed a way to get larger-scale projects for micro-credit; we called this, **Global Loans for Microenterprise**. The mainstream bank made loans to governments which channel the funds into the banking sector or finance companies, which are smaller, and work with general consumer finance. They were starting to get into financing people with small businesses (much of the population in Latin America and the Caribbean), and even credit unions in some countries. In Colombia they also developed a way for the government to channel funds directly to NGOs of the type that we were working with in other programmes. So far we have made 15 of those loans in nine different countries. In some countries, it was a fantastic instrument to bring this segment of potential clients to the notice of the banking sector and we started seeing other banks follow our example.

But in other countries it didn't work well because the banks tended to give larger loans (of about \$10,000) to their existing customers, instead of below \$1,000. The most recent loan of this type is in Bolivia, and we halved the funds. It was a \$50 million programme; half the funds are used to channel for micro-credit and the other half to create new kinds of business development services on the non-financial side. It also provides technical assistance to banks and those who want to get into this business but are not quite sure how.

### Not just a poverty focus

The multilateral investment fund mentioned earlier was started in 1993. It is a private-sector development fund, so reaching lower-income people is not its main objective. It can finance everything from a grant to an equity investment, and make loans at commercial rates, or concessional rates and provide guarantees.

The latest project MIF financed was Prodem, an NGO in Bolivia which created Banco Sol, its own commercial bank, to lend to microenterprise. Its average loan is \$800, and reaches street people. Prodem owned part of the shares of Banco Sol with private investors and has now decided to turn itself into a finance company to capture more investors from the private sector. We underwrote the sale of bonds for the first time.

The Multilateral Investment Fund financed this by purchasing some of the bonds, showing that you can use the private sector creatively. We also fund service centres for micro and small enterprises, small business start-ups, and training programmes.



# Devastation floods through south eastern Africa

by Dianne Rienstra

Those in Mozambique who believed the world would end in 2000 must have thought the prophecy was coming true in February. The heavens opened and unleashed the heaviest rains in southern Africa in 50 years. Raging floods were followed by Cyclone Eline with winds of 260 kms per hour.

Mozambique, the poorest country in the region, was worst hit - a particularly cruel twist of fate, as it was just enjoying the start of an internationally acclaimed economic recovery after the traumas of a long and bloody war. The people had their sights set on peace, child soldiers were disbanded and the foundation for a civil society had been carefully laid.

This renaissance ground to a halt when swollen rivers burst their banks, cutting a swathe up to 125 kms wide, swamping countless villages, and affecting about one million people. Main road and rail links to the capital, Maputo, were badly damaged. Xai-Xai, with its

population of 50,000, was one of the towns worst affected. It could take up to six months before the water recedes.

The world watched as journalists transmitted images of more than 28,000 survivors at Chaqualane, the biggest refugee camp, just north of Maputo. They were mainly women and children, huddled in the open, exposed to the rain. In Chibuto, Rosita was born above the churning floodwaters in a tree, where her mother had been clinging to life for almost a week. Mother and daughter were rescued by helicopter minutes after the birth.

## Aid agencies prepare for the worst

The rains, which began early February and continued into late March, hampered relief efforts and prolonged the suffering of thousands. Subsiding floodwaters have left many at risk from disease, especially malaria and cholera. Children and pregnant women already weakened by their ordeal are at highest risk,



Michael Curtis



and aid agencies are doing their best to prevent disease and preparing for worse to come.

Health workers reported more acute diarrhoea cases daily. At one point, 81 fresh cases of malaria were recorded in Maputo within 24 hours. According to the World Health Organisation, malaria, diarrhoea, bronchitis, conjunctivitis and acute malnutrition swept through camps where people shelter under tents and plastic sheeting. The floods devastated crops, and some 23,000 children under the age of five face severe malnutrition unless food supplies are properly planned. The death toll, estimated at 500 at the time of writing, is expected to climb as waters recede, exposing the real tragedy. Countless people have disappeared or been hurt.

Mozambique was making great progress in clearing land mines, but the floods have been a major setback on that front as well. The waters washed away buried mines in known minefields and dumped them... where? Land once declared free of the hidden killers now has to be cleared all over again.

In Botswana, about 25,000 people are affected, 4,000 homes/huts destroyed and numerous bridges and roads flooded. The relief operation consists of tents, blankets, kitchen sets and first aid kits.

### **Madagascar hit twice**

While the floods in Madagascar were not as devastating as those in Mozambique, Cyclone Eline was followed by Gloria, 10 days later, bringing two days of torrential rain. Huge tracts of the country are flooded.

Livestock and agriculture have been swept away. Rice paddies are buried under the mud.

More than 500,000 people have been displaced from coastal cities and villages. Even before the floods, children under three were undernourished to the point where their growth was stunted. Today, the situation is even grimmer. Aid workers estimate that

40,000 people need food immediately and that 200,000 will need subsistence until the next harvest. There are 1,000 cases of cholera a week and the mosquitoes are bringing malaria.

### **The EU responds**

Development and Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Poul Nielson visited Mozambique to see the damage and to assess needs. He announced more than € 25 million in aid, of which approximately € 10 million will be spent on emergency aid. In a meeting with Mozambican authorities, the Commissioner stressed the need for a well coordinated effort for a regeneration programme to make the critical link between emergency and development over the next three to four years.

"The European Union is committed to help for as long as need be. We are providing emergency relief and will continue to do so to avert hunger and epidemics in the short term," he said. "In the medium and long term, we will help Mozambique rebuild. We cannot let these people down after all they have been through."

The European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) reacted swiftly to the disaster, deploying technical assistance to Maputo to develop the EU response strategy in consultation with the government's UN-backed operational coordination initiative. ECHO-funded operations implemented by the Red Cross and NGO partners have now been under way for several weeks. In the wider context of the region, in addition to initial emergency funding for Botswana, ECHO has needs assessment teams in the field in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Madagascar.

The generous response from donors and the general public to an appeal in the immediate aftermath of Mozambique has ensured that emergency needs are well covered. The Commission is now focusing its attention on





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the challenges of resettlement, rehabilitation, macroeconomic stability and long term development.

Follow-up ECHO funding will focus on promoting the immediate resumption of agricultural production, while the Commission's Development Directorate-General is also stepping up its medium to long term support.

This year, the EU will increase its development assistance to Mozambique to € 150 million, from € 100 million in 1999.

### **A glimmer of hope**

The Paris Club of bilateral creditor nations decided in mid-March to allow Mozambique to defer - rather than cancel - its large foreign debt payments to the group until much of the debt is cancelled later this year under the second phase of the HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) initiative.

Club members - including the US, Japan, Britain, France, Germany and Italy - wanted to

help Mozambique in its "current exceptional state of emergency." However, the Mozambican government had called for a total cancellation of its foreign debt.

Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao expressed disappointment at what he termed the "debt holiday", and noted that repairing damage to roads, bridges, and other infrastructure is likely to cost more than \$250 million.

The World Council of Churches also appealed to the G8 countries to write off Mozambique's debt.

Economists specialising in Mozambique added an optimistic note, saying that foreign aid used to rebuild the country's devastated infrastructure was likely to boost the economy. But will it come close to attaining the 10% growth predicted for 2000?



# Italy's development assistance

by Sue Wheat



UNICEF/PIROZZI

The tremors of Italy's political turbulence of the 90s are still reverberating through government, including its Ministry of Foreign Affairs - responsible for the country's overseas development assistance (ODA). As one Ministry of Finance official comments: "we used to do cooperation without much scrutiny, and do things very quickly. Now we have to be in line with the EU discipline. Adjustment has been

painful, because there have been a lot of administrative changes, but it is now working."

After a series of political scandals in the early and mid 90s, Italian aid hit its nadir in 1997 when its ODA (which it refers to as "development cooperation") plummeted to 0.15 per cent of gross national product (GNP) having been at a peak of 0.42 per cent in 1989. 1998 saw a substantial increase on paper of 80

per cent to US\$2,278 million, although this largely reflected the delayed payment of obligatory payments to multilateral funds by the Treasury Ministry.

In 1995 a reform process was set in motion which involved government, parliament and the non-governmental sector, and a Parliamentary Inquiry Committee on Development Cooperation worked from 1995-1996 with a view to reforming the legislation governing development cooperation.

Official estimates for Italian ODA during 1999-2001 are around 0.15 per cent of GNP, significantly lower than the Development Assistance Committee target of 0.7 per cent. Italy therefore holds the position of being one of the lowest of the 21 donors in terms of ODA/GNP, second only to the United States.

A commitment to increase ODA to around 0.22 per cent of GNP has been made, although there is no fixed timing.

"The level of ODA is not adequate in Italy, as in many countries, but there are signs of an aversion to reduction now," says Luciano Carrino, Technical Coordinator for Human Development Programmes of Italian Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

"We will increase resources in 2000. The problem is to convince MPs and Italian society that providing more development cooperation is a means of solving problems that affect us."



Official guidelines for a new development cooperation policy were drawn up in 1999, which "set objectives for a deep renewal of the Italian policy towards Third World countries."

Part of this discipline can be implemented with the existing legal framework, but "the remaining part will need the definition and adoption of innovative tools." The basic tool proposed is decentralisation, particularly through the establishment of an external development assistance agency, outside the MFA, which with consultants will manage technical and administrative aspects of ODA.

"Hence, direct management by the central administration shall be as limited as possible," state the guidelines.

Italian ODA is already concentrated on the poorest countries, with 80% of aid going to low and lower-middle income countries, Madagascar, Mozambique, Haiti, Uganda and Ethiopia being the top 5 recipients in 1997-8. Since the World Food Summit in 1996, Italy also prioritised both emergency and non-emergency food aid in sub-Saharan Africa. And there is a specific focus on relief, rehabilitation and peace-building, particularly in neighbouring European countries such as the Balkans, the Middle East, Mediterranean Basin and the Horn of Africa.

But there is now a more integrated focus on poverty reduction throughout its aid programmes.

"Italy will start great new programmes to fight poverty in Africa, Maghreb, Mashrek, the Balkans, Latin America and Asia, allocating over US\$100 million," says Carrino, "and the programmes will all use the same methodology which encourages local development and participation."

This move is applauded by independent commentators and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

"The introduction of a clear, devoted strategy towards poverty reduction is an encouraging change," says Marco Zupi, Coordinator of International Economics and Development Studies at the Italian Research Centre on International Politics (CESPI) and co-author of the Italian chapter in *The Reality of Aid 2000*. At the end of 1999 the MFA organised an informal group on poverty reduction, something that has never been a specific focus of aid strategy before.

Zupi feels the cause of the gap between strategy and practice has been a lack of professionals with knowledge of poverty reduction strategies and no organisational and management structure orientated towards poverty alleviation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Traditionally, the MFA's personnel skills have been in health and engineering. In recent years, Italy started to put an integrated approach into practice, and has used these health skills in building peace, particularly in the Middle East and more recently, Eastern Europe. This has been more conflict resolution than poverty reduction, and educational work has been weak.

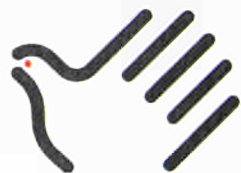
Multilateral contributions, particularly through the EU and World Bank, are also a focus (the EU received 48.5% of Italian aid in 1998). These contributions will be enhanced to make up for previous difficulties with bilateral aid, and to "increase integration of our assistance to the international community's efforts and our role in international bodies," state the guidelines.

On the issue of debt cancellation, Italy is roughly in line with other creditors, although they don't include all the countries on the Highly Indebted Poorer Countries (HIPC) list. However, as with much of Italy's aid, debt cancellation is often tied to Italian investment contracts. This February, however, Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema met the debt cancellation campaigning group Jubilee 2000 Coalition and pop star Bono, who has become a staunch ambassador of the cause. At the meeting Mr D'Alema promised to expand the number of countries currently eligible for 100% debt cancellation from Italy, over and above the 18 countries currently in the legislation.

Encouraging the market economy and furthering democratisation is central to Italy's new ODA strategy: "...wishing to encourage the trends which are developing in many developing countries towards political democracy and market economy, cooperation (ODA) will aim at benefiting the main components of the civil society of those countries where it operates."

But an emphasis on encouraging foreign investments, particularly Italy's investments in developing countries, is blatant, with 54.4% of its bilateral aid commitments tied to the purchase of Italian goods and services.





COOPERAZIONE  
ITALIANA

Mobilising Italian civil society is another major initiative.

"After all, this approach coincides with the trend to entrust the implementation of cooperation initiatives to external bodies," say the guidelines.

"Italian regions are working very hard, there is a lot of solidarity - and this is not tied aid - coming from the immigration shock. We have a lot of people Albania, Kosovo, Yugoslavia and Africa on our streets and this has mobilised people in their municipalities," says Mario Gay, director of COCIS (an association of several Italian NGOs). Sectors involved include, private companies (for joint ventures, training, and infrastructure development), banks (for financial mediation), universities (for training of

qualified personnel), and NGOs (for carrying out field work).

But the role of NGOs in Italy's development assistance has gone through a turbulent time. Although now the government seems to realise their importance, as revealed by the statement in the strategy guidelines: 'NGOs represent an asset in themselves since they are deeply rooted in society,' this has not always been so. Funding to Italian NGOs was completely cut off during the early 90s. And although partial financial support to NGOs, both in Italy and abroad, does seem to have been reinstated, NGOs have had a difficult time surviving. "Italian NGOs have performed a remarkable turnaround over the 1990s," says Gay. "At the start of the 1990s, 80 per cent of NGOs' funding came from the government. By the middle, 80% was coming from other sources, some private but a lot from the EU."

However, the main suggestion from the review team of the parliamentary inquiry, was that aid should move away from bilateral governmental programmes, to small-scale people to people assistance, "a highly significant recommendation for NGOs," explains Gay, and one which "is partly a product of lack of confidence in governmental structures."

Both the NGO sector and the Ministry are agreed that significant hurdles have to be overcome in the next few years for Italy's ODA performance to improve.

"The government's development cooperation department has

slowly taken back its activities, after several years of total block," says Guido Barbero, Chair of Italy's NGO platform. "But it is still financially insufficient and strategically undeveloped to guarantee a change in quality of aid interventions. NGOs are being severely penalised by managerial paralysis inside government and its administrative bureaucracy. Italy has to recover managerially and politically if it is to be a protagonist of sustainable development and it also needs to build a unique and coherent politics of development with other EU states."

Marco Zupi points out that general changes are needed in development assistance worldwide, not just Italy, and that Italy is just at the beginning of its improvements.

"There are some positive changes but they are not enough to say the future will be better. And financial resources need to be significantly increased. If Italy's ODA continues to be residual without strong coherence with non-aid policies, it will be difficult for our country's aid to be anything more than symbolic."

That these criticisms are recognised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a positive sign however.

"The major struggle our development cooperation faces is resistance to change," says Carrino.

"We need to use certain formats that go beyond the centralised and bureaucratic mentality.

"But I think we're facing the same struggle every ODA updating itself is facing."

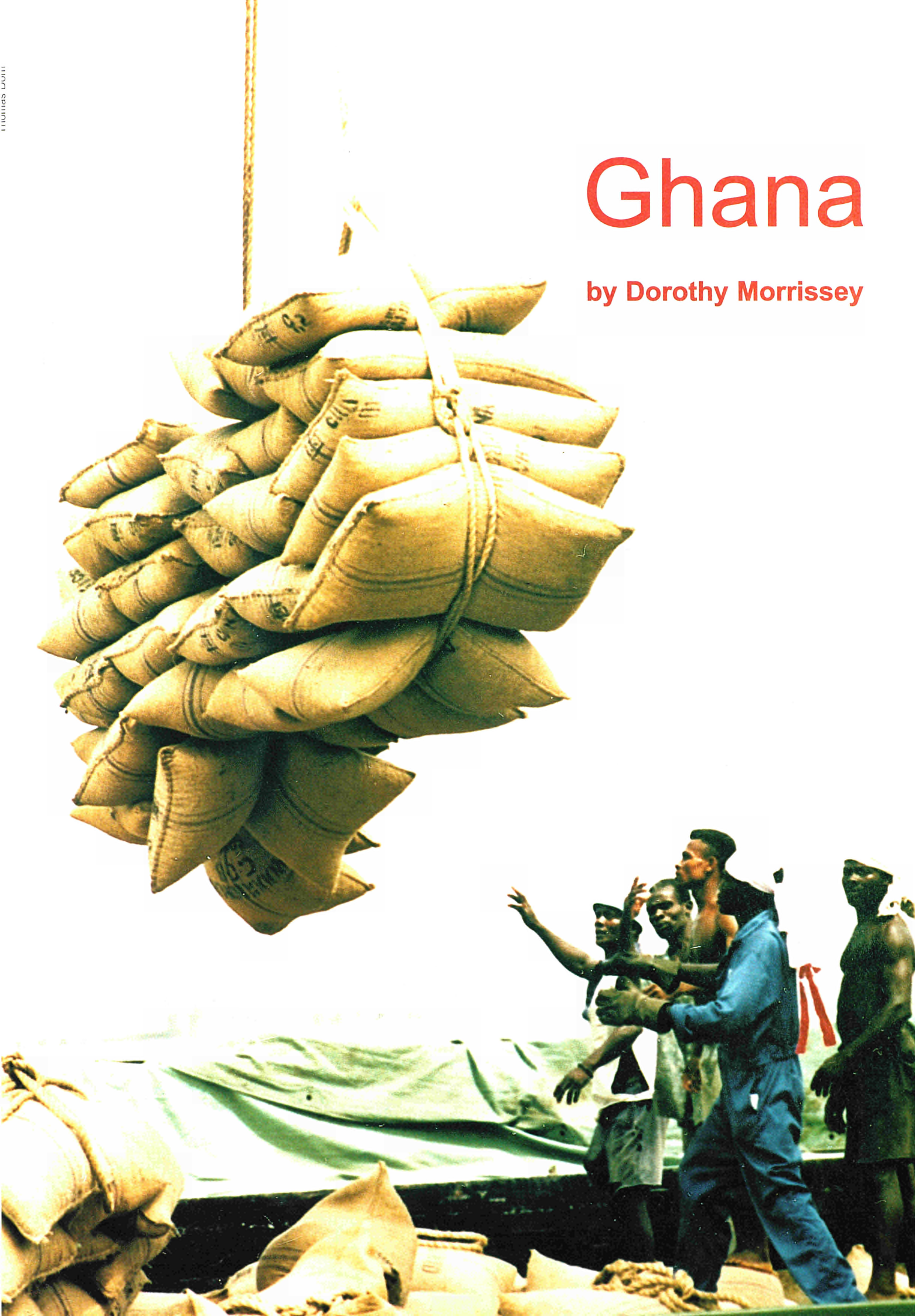
UNOPS-EdinfodecRoma/ Martinis





# Ghana

by Dorothy Morrissey





## Vision to reality



Ghana is known for its political stability, so it is perhaps surprising to learn that the country had a turbulent beginning, experiencing four military coups in the 24 years following independence. Ghana was a former British colony, the Gold Coast, re-named at independence after an ancient kingdom that had flourished some 1,000 years before. The first sub-Saharan country to reach independence, Ghana was an inspiration for others in the region. There had long been a tradition of independence movements in the country, even since the end of the 19th century, when educated Africans began to question the political system and press for change.

The founding father of Ghana was Kwame Nkrumah, a political firebrand and champion of African nationalism. The first African prime minister in the Commonwealth, he led the country to independence in 1957. A charismatic leader, his vision for Ghana was of a free and self-reliant country, with a high level of social services. He had ambitious plans to expand the economy and reduce Ghana's vulnerability to external market forces. Nkrumah's vision was not limited to his own country: he was a committed pan-Africanist whose ambition was for the whole continent to achieve inde-

pendence and emancipation. He was instrumental in setting up the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), in 1963. Nkrumah's reign ended in a *coup d'état* in 1966, the armed forces taking advantage of his absence from the country.

From then until 1981 saw Ghana slipping further into economic decline, with alternating periods of military and civilian rule. The great promise it had shown at independence had ebbed away.

In 1979 came a turning point. A young air-force Flight Lieutenant, JJ Rawlings, led an uprising in May, disillusioned by the corruption of the military government. The coup failed, and Rawlings was imprisoned. But his passionate speech during the trial on the appalling state of the country, and the need to "cleanse the system," won him strong popular support. Only weeks later, there was another coup, this time successful - the June 4th Revolution - and Rawlings was released from prison. He and the military officers formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), but pledged to return the country to civilian rule. True to his word, and to the surprise of many, elections were held and power was handed back to a civilian administration in September the same year.



The new government did not manage to cure the economic ills of the country. Inflation soared, and strikes were widespread. At the end of 1981, the government was overthrown in another Rawlings-led coup.

### **A new era begins**

Rawlings immediately got to work, assuring the people that real democracy "involves, above all, food, clothing and shelter." Nothing less than a revolution, a "holy war" was necessary, he believed, to bring about a social and economic transformation in the country. The new government called itself the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), and Rawlings was its chairman.

The twin problems faced by the PNDC were political stability, and how to stabilise the economy. At the end of his first year in power, Rawlings launched a stringent economic recovery programme, in accordance with the structural adjustment policies of the IMF and World Bank.

His strategy paid off, and in the decade that followed, the Ghanaian economy grew by an average of 5%. Inflation was brought under control, and the flow of development assistance to the country increased, as donor confidence grew. Foreign investment began to take off, especially in goldmining.

In the meantime, District Assemblies were set up in each of the country's 110 administrative districts, as local governing institutions. Two-thirds of their members were to be elected, the remainder to be traditional authorities. The district assem-

blies had some autonomy in setting programmes appropriate for local needs, but they had to be in line with national policies.

Rawlings described the district assemblies as "pillars upon which the people's power will be erected."

In 1992, a new constitution was introduced, followed by the country's first multiparty elections. Rawlings won 58% of the vote, ushering in the Fourth Republic, with Rawlings as its elected president. In the 1996 elections, he was again returned with almost 58% of the vote, to the opposition candidate John Kufuor's 39.5% (see page 34).

### **Vision 2020**

Ghana has an ambitious long-term development strategy, Vision 2020, which aims to make Ghana a middle-income country by 2020. To achieve this, annual growth of 8% would be required. Government strategy is to withdraw from business, and promote measures to facilitate the private sector. Important also is the focus on social development policies, especially health and education.

### **New deal for health**

While there have been improvements in the health sector in Ghana, especially in infant mortality and life expectancy, the sector still faces challenges. Access to health services remains difficult in rural areas, and there are marked regional disparities. Maternal mortality is still high in the north. The health ministry estimates that 60-70% of diseases are preventable, and in some areas up to 30% of children suffer from malnutrition.

Now an innovative reform

process is under way in Ghana, which, if successful, may influence how donors work with their partner countries in the future.

The key is that all funds are pooled in a common basket with donors and government agreeing on a single programme of work. The government felt that health delivery in the past had been too fragmented and donor-driven.

Dr Moses Adibo, Deputy Minister of Health explains:

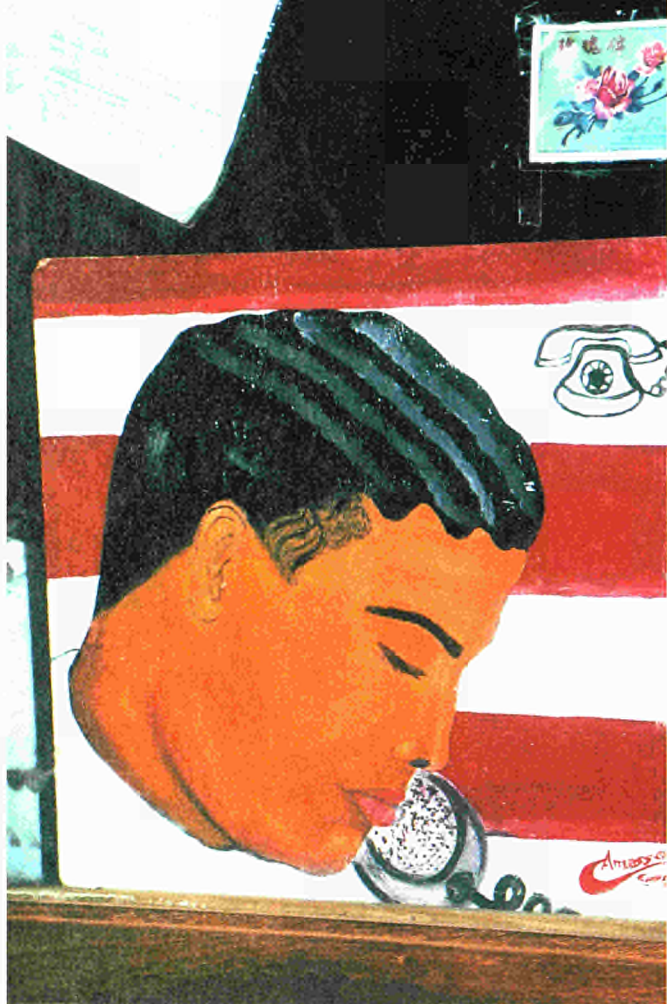
"In the past every donor came here with their own concerns, interests and priorities, not always fitting in with ours. They have a responsibility to account to their constituency back home, they like to see results they can show."

So, he says, some hardship areas were neglected, "because everybody likes to

Ghana's slave-trading history is a sad but compelling draw for visitors







Telecommunications need updating

be part of a success story." The advantage of partnership is that it identifies priorities and avoids the sort of prestige projects, like big hospitals.

This sector-wide approach means that donors are less involved in specific projects, and more in policy dialogue and major guidelines. The emphasis is on partnership and co-ordination. Donors and government together developed a strategic framework for health and drew up a five year programme cover-

ing 1997-2001. Key objectives are to improve access and quality, and financial reforms will make the system more transparent.

The government has pledged to increase funding to the health sector to 12% by 2001.

Included are plans to set up Ghana Health Service, which is to be the implementing agency, while the ministry remains responsible for policy.

Decentralisation is more developed in health than in other sectors, and there will be an increasing shift to district level and below. In 1993 10% of the total health budget was allocated to regional level, and this has increased to the current level of 40%. The ministry plans to increase the number of health centres from 680 to 805, and district hospitals from 75 to 90, by 2001. The district health centres manage their own resources, which, Dr Adibo believes, increases their sense of empowerment and ownership. Funds are generated by selling drugs. The system has built up capacity, better able to deal with regional disparities.

Close attention is being paid to Ghana's 'New Way,' and missions come from other countries to see how things are done. It is clear that a key factor is the political and economic stability of the country, and the strategy has full support at political level, surviving two ministerial changes. Donors have to share resources with the government, losing full control, so there must be full confidence. Unprecedented, too, is that donors share all documents.

### Education

The government has undertaken a restructuring of the sector. The thrust of the policy is to increase access, ensure quality, and improve management, and relevance.

Dr Chambas, Deputy Minister of Education, explains: "enrolment was very low for a country like Ghana which is growing very dynamically. Our objective is to expand enrolment at the basic level so that hopefully we can achieve 100% by 2005. At the moment it's around 70%. Clearly we cannot hope to compete globally with a large illiterate population."

### Highlife

Ghana has a strong musical tradition, and *highlife* was one of the best loved-styles, a melting-pot of musical influences.

Originating in the 1920s, the music got its name from the tradition of dressing up to go out for an evening of dance. Strict dress codes applied in the clubs, and the music became associated with the rich who could afford it.

Highlife is a fusion of musical styles from Europe, the Caribbean, and other parts of Africa, and indigenous styles. The highlife scene in Ghana flourished under the eight-year presidency of Nkrumah, Ghana's founding father, but many musicians left the country after he was

overthrown in a coup d'etat in 1966.

This was probably due not only to the deteriorating political situation, but economic conditions too worsened.

There were many different forms of highlife from the sophisticated, with full orchestra, to the 'low' for the less well-off, called 'palm-wine music,' which was primarily solo guitar.

The 'king of highlife' was ET Mensah, whose band *Tempos* toured regularly in West Africa and had a series of hits. His music incorporated jazz, calypso, swing and cha-cha - influences from the Allied soldiers passing through Ghana during the early 1940s.



A free compulsory basic education programme is being gradually phased in. At the moment there are not enough schools so this cannot be enforced, but the ministry plans to monitor attendance once schools have been built.

Government is not just focusing on increasing numbers, but wants to improve quality too. There is a review of the 38 teacher-training institutions. The curriculum is being adapted, to be more relevant to changing industrial and socio-economic conditions. The government is putting together incentives, such as rapid promotion, to encourage teachers to go to rural areas.

Female illiteracy is about 42%, and this is being targeted. Gender is not an issue at basic level, says Dr Chambas, "but it becomes an issue as girls progress, and drop-out rates increase." A Girl's Education Unit has been set up, to address the issue. There is a special programme to attract girls to science and technology subjects. During long vacations there are workshops in the 10 regions of the country. Here, girls get extra tuition in these subjects, and an opportunity to meet role models - successful women in science and technology. This has been so popular that the ministry is considering extending the workshops to district level.

Last year saw difficulties in the tertiary sector, when the government introduced fees. This was met with students' strikes which forced the universities to close for seven weeks. Third level education had been free, but as enrolment increased, it was difficult to keep up 100% funding and maintain standards. Government says the fees were modest, representing only a fraction of the real cost. The ministry set up a group to look at the question dispassionately. Compromise was reached, and government agreed to lower fees by 30%, with any further increases to be gradually introduced.

A three-day National Education Forum was held last November, to bring together all the relevant stakeholders to review the educational reforms introduced at all levels. "We devote 35% of our national budget to education," says Dr Chambas, an indication of the importance attached to the sector.

### Tourism has potential

The government is identifying the tourist sector as a growth area, and has a target of reaching a million visitors by 2010. The sector is already doing quite well, and is the third largest foreign exchange earner, says the Minister for Tourism Mike Gizo. The ministry has a 15-year tourism development strategy, and included in this is a plan to set up a tourist fund, which will be used to develop the infrastructure needed.

Ghana's slave-trading history is a sad but compelling draw for visitors. Along the coast there is a string of forts and castles, originally used as bases for trade in spices, gold, ivory, and slaves. The first trading fort was Elmina (*the Mine*), built by the Portuguese in 1482. Three of the forts - Elmina,



Cape Coast, and Fort St Jago - are now Unesco World Heritage sites, and others are identified for renovation and conservation.

Ghana is also participating in a Unesco programme to document and restore the slave routes. In 1998, Ghana identified 1 August as "Emancipation Day." Mr Gizo explained the government's thinking: "it is educational, so that the heritage is kept for future generations. The idea is not to create enmity, or racial upheaval."

As well as historical and cultural sites, the government also sees potential in ecotourism and leisure. But, minister Gizo says, "attractions *per se* are not enough,"

The country needs a more aggressive information campaign to sell its charms to the world.

The government hopes to increase enrolment at primary level to 100% by 2005



# Good policies, bad environment



Oto Ampiah, President,  
Ghana Chamber of  
Commerce

## Ghana feels the chill winds of adverse external forces

At Ghana's independence in 1957, it had the highest rate of GNP in Africa, but in the 1970s the economy went into serious decline. In the early 1980s President Rawlings launched a stringent economic recovery programme, as prescribed by the Washington institutions. Difficult as this may have been for the radical, socialist ideology of his PNDC (Provisional National Defence Council), after years of economic mismanagement it was the only way to get out of near bankruptcy. First came the disengagement of government from managing the economy, opening the way to market forces. Ghana was something of a test case, as one of the first countries in the region to embark on such a programme.

In the decade and a half that followed, the economy stabilised and growth averaged 5%. The country still faces difficult economic challenges, and the economy remains vulnerable. 1999 was particularly difficult. The country was buffeted by external factors beyond its control. World prices tumbled for cocoa and gold, the country's two principal earners (pages 30 and 33). Oil prices doubled. There was also a shortfall in donor assistance. Government says disbursement was significantly short of the commitments made.

The government has set itself the ambitious target of reaching middle income status by 2020. This needs an average of 8% growth. The growth rate for 1999 was forecast at 5.5%, but in fact was in the region of 4.5%. The government believes that this can be increased if the resources of the country are properly used.

### Donors remain supportive

Ghana is regarded as having one of the most successful and long-running economic and structural reform programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, with the backing of the IMF and World Bank. At the end

of November last year, a further three-year structural adjustment facility was concluded with the IMF, a sign of approval of the government's performance although reservations were expressed on the slowness of privatisation, especially in the cocoa sector.

Following this, there was a World Bank-hosted meeting of all major bilateral and multilateral donors in Accra, after which donors pledged \$1.7 billion in total aid for 2000-2001. The government asked donors to support them through the difficult situation and assured them that it would stick to the reform programme coming up to the 2000 elections.

Despite the years of reform, say some observers, the economy has not diversified and is still vulnerable to market ups and downs, and too dependent on foreign assistance.

"Despite many years of structural adjustment, we are still dependent on primary production," says Ato Ampiah, president of the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "The economic pillars have not been touched."

But diversification needs an inflow of capital. There is a problem of perception, he says.

"Ghana is classified with the whole of Africa. Investors see Africa as a high-risk continent."

What Ghana has to offer, in his view, is its political stability. "Every business wants a safe haven."

Without capital, it is difficult for manufacturing to take off. "Technology is changing very fast and we cannot reach the standards required."

He believes that manufacturing has not yet got over the shock of the free market, when it was forced to compete with products from environments with low interests, low inflation, high technology and good management.

"I think we exposed our enterprises too quickly. There could have been a government/private sector effort over a period of three or four years to shift the balance, after which they would have been ready for competition.

"There is no alternative to free trade and liberalisation, but we have to ensure that those who are going to play the match have their muscles right."





To encourage investors, the government has set up the Gateway programme, which aims at establishing Ghana as a major centre for manufacturing, value-added processing, and as a financial and commercial centre. Already, 150 companies have applied to operate and some have started production.

The government has shown it has the tenacity to tackle inflation, which has not dropped to the single figures forecast because of the recent difficulties, but which is under control.

Mr Ampiah believes that the country needs to specialise in a few products only, and use the advantage of its language - English is used in business internationally.

### **VAT - third time lucky**

The government first attempted to introduce VAT in 1994, and again in 1995 at a rate of 16%, but it was met by strikes during which several people were killed, and the bill was withdrawn. 10% VAT was re-introduced in February 1998. The Ministry of Finance says that the first year of implementation was "relatively smooth". There are 16,000 registered traders, more than double the initial projection. Revenue was 14% above expectation.

Some problems still need to be ironed out, but the first year is regarded as a success. There are still businesses which should register for VAT, who have reached the threshold of Cedi200m, and certain businesses who are applying the tax selectively. For the second year, the government will concentrate on improving compliance. Tax courts will be set up to handle disputes and deal with tax cases.

The finance ministry attributes the successful introduction this time round to the strategy, which was to introduce "VAT with a human face, which would have minimal impact on prices, businesses and the cost of living."

### **"Chronic informality"**

Everywhere, at all hours, someone is selling something in Ghana.

"Chronic informality" Mr Ampiah calls the informal sector, which he estimates to be 60-65% of the economy. He defines the sector as consisting of enterprises which are not registered and do not pay taxes.

"Those in the informal sector avoid all laws. We have to encourage them to register, put out incentives. We have to make them want to be formal."

One proposal is to create linkages between the formal and informal sectors, so that they share management experiences and technology.

### **Private sector**

The government has initiated several pieces of legislation to improve the business and investment environment. The Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) Act of 1994 aims to protect private investors, and streamline procedures. Certain "obtrusive business legislation" has been repealed, according to the finance ministry. A tax holiday of up to eight years is now possible for investors in agriculture and manufacturing.

The government says that its restructuring of key economic sectors such as power, water supplies and energy is increasingly attracting direct investment into these sectors. By July 1999, it says, 220 state-owned companies had been divested, out of a total of 350 at the beginning of the programme in 1986.

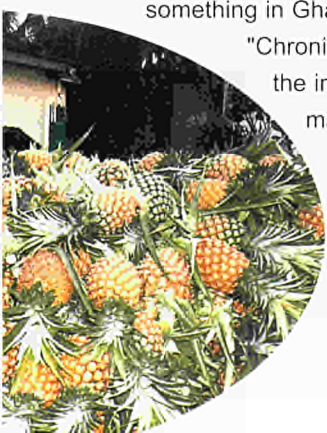
### **Regional trade**

Ghana is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a 15-member group established in 1975 to achieve a customs union and a common market. In the view of observers, the trade aspect is not really working, and ECOWAS has concentrated more on political issues. The French-speaking members set up their own organisation, the West African economic and monetary union (most commonly known by its French acronym UEMOA). They also have the advantage of a single currency, the CFA franc. Mr Ampiah believes it is time for ECOWAS states to look at this option too.

"Coming together would make our currencies stronger. I don't think Ghana's economy is strong enough to support the cedi. Before independence there was a West African currency.

"We have to submerge our pride, as some big EU countries have done."

The government will be steering a difficult path in this election year, bearing the brunt of a difficult external environment, while keeping to its donor commitments.





## Cocoa - the backbone of the economy

For most of this century, cocoa has been Ghana's biggest earner, accounting for one-third of total exports - the second largest export earner after gold.

Ghana follows Ivory Coast in cocoa production. Between them, the two countries produce 60% of global output. According to the government, almost half of the population depends in some way or other on the sector.

There are about 700,000 cocoa farmers in Ghana, and an average of nine people rely on that single cocoa farmer, so immediately one is looking at a figure of about seven million people, just under half the population," says John Newman, chairman of the state-owned Cocoa Marketing Board (Cocobod).

Cocoa is not indigenous to Ghana, but originated from South and Central America. It is the seed of the tree *Theobroma cacao*. According to Ghanaian history, it was introduced to the country in 1898 by Tetteh Quarshie, a blacksmith from Accra, who had an interest in farming. Returning from a trip to Fernando Poo (Equatorial Guinea) he brought back cocoa seeds with him and planted them in Ghana. The crop soon took off, and seeds were sent to other West African countries, where it began to thrive too. Ghana soon became the world's leading cocoa producer, with a

reputation for high quality cocoa, and in the 1960's production reached about 560,000 tonnes.

In the early 1980s, however, production declined to 160,000 tonnes. A combination of factors - drought, bushfires, neglect and poor management - caused the country to lose its lead in the sector.

Since the late 1980s, production has been making a steady recovery, and now averages 400,000 tonnes per year. Government has a target of reaching 550,000 tonnes in the medium term and 750,000 tonnes in the long term. The medium term target can be reached quite quickly, Mr Newman believes. "Yield is relatively low at present, at 350-400 kilos per hectare.

"With better agronomic practices this could increase to about 600 kilos, the same as Ivory Coast."

This alone could bring production to 500,000 tonnes.

Considerable losses have been caused by disease, pests and poor maintenance of farms.





Part of the problem is that the stock of cocoa trees is ageing, more prone to disease, and past prime yielding years. Re-planting is costly and takes time before producing marketable cocoa. The sector also needs to attract a younger generation of farmers. The average cocoa farmer is 55 years old.

Ghanaian cocoa is known for its high-grade quality, due, in part at least, to the smallholder method. "It is the fermentation and drying that really produces the kind of quality that we have. The farmer is a smallholder, and takes the trouble to sort the bad nuts from the cocoa. There is a lot more of the human aspect, people take pains to look after their product unlike in larger-scale production."

Each farmer produces about 10 bags of cocoa, or half a ton. When the bright yellow pod is ripe, it is harvested, the farmer splits open the pod, scoops out the beans, and covers them with leaves to ferment for five or six days. Then they spread them on mats on wooden stilts to dry in the sunlight. In the evening they are covered with leaves so that they can breathe, removing the leaves in the morning. Drying takes about 10 days, after which the product is delivered to a buying point of one of the licensed companies.

### Gradual liberalisation

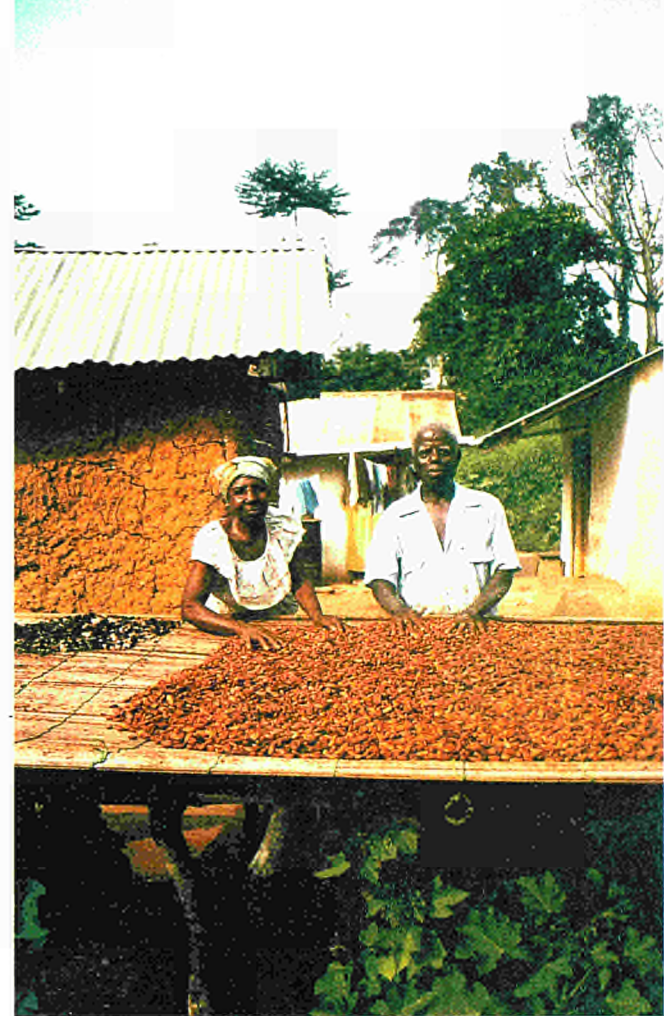
In 1993 domestic production was partially liberalised, and there are now about 20 companies registered to buy cocoa from the farmers. Under donor pressure, the government is now turn-

ing its attention to liberalising external marketing. In the 2000/2001 season, private companies will be able to export 30% of what they purchase. Only a small part of the crop will be available (about 10%) to start with. Strict conditions apply; only those companies which have been able to purchase a minimum of 10,000 tonnes of cocoa in the three previous seasons will qualify.

"We want to nurture them into the market slowly, and make sure they can hold their own against the big players," explained Mr Newman. "We don't want them to rush into selling cocoa on the commodities market, because there are so many conditions, so many rules, so much to learn." The Cocoa Marketing Board, the wholly-owned subsidiary of Cocobod, will continue to handle the bulk of sales.

### Slump in world price

Coming under donor pressure to liberalise the sector, the government is in a difficult position. Over the past decade it has been ensuring farmers' incomes, by setting producer prices and this policy has no doubt contributed to the expansion of the sector. But the sharp drop in cocoa prices in 1999 means that the government is paying dearly for this policy. Cocoa prices dropped more or less 30% between 1998 and 1999, but the government made a commitment to keep the producer price at the same level. This means that cocoa farmers are being paid about 70% of the world price, much higher than the original agreement of up to 60%



Ghana cocoa is known for its high-grade quality, due in part at least to the smallholder method

of the world price. The slump in prices appears mainly to be an increase in availability of cocoa on the market - production increased in Ghana, Ivory Coast and Indonesia, while consumption dropped. Added to this was the liberalisation of the sector in Ivory Coast, making more cocoa available on the market. Observers also believe that cocoa fell victim to the general recession in the world economy; considered as a luxury product, consumption of cocoa declined.

Mr Newman defends the government policy of price support. "It's an issue of government vision and policy. The cocoa farmer is so important. They have



been taxed so much over the years, contributing substantially to the social development of the country."

The recent introduction of VAT at 10% is fortunate, as the government will get more revenue from its tax regime, allowing it to lower its tax on cocoa.

Supply and demand was also a factor. But the surplus of supply over demand is set to continue over the next few years, as production increases in Malaysia and Indonesia.

The example of liberalisation in Ivory Coast has also raised concern about going any further. There, liberalisation coincided with the drop in world prices, causing severe problems for cocoa farmers. "Ivory Coast has been caught in this depressing situation, and it has caused a lot of problems. Farmers are not being paid decent prices which would enable them to continue planting cocoa," says Mr Newman.

The higher prices paid for cocoa in Ghana has led to problems of smuggling and the risk that cocoa coming in was not up to Ghana's standards. Efforts are being made to curb this, by putting strict quality control mechanisms in place.

### EU chocolate directive

Another worry for Ghanaian cocoa is the effect of the recent EU ruling on the content of chocolate. This ruling allows products to be marketed throughout the EU with the name "chocolate" even though up to five per cent vegetable fat replaces some of the cocoa. Many believe it will have an effect.

"The decision denies producers the opportunity to sell about 200,000 tonnes of cocoa," says Mr

Newman. He believes that using vegetable fat will change the component of chocolate, and the taste patterns of the consumer. The Directive specifies that the labelling should be clear on the percentage of vegetable fat "but the average person who is buying chocolate is not looking at the nitty-gritty of the label."

Since Ivory Coast and Ghana have such a big part of the market, efforts are

being made for the two countries to work together. Meetings are held at ministerial level, to try to find common ground to push the cocoa market, not only on price but also promotion, consumption and support to farmers.

Value-added processing has been an average of 20% in the last few years, and government plans that this should rise to about 30%.

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## Changing fortunes for gold

ince precolonial times, the country which is now called Ghana was known as a source of gold for Europe, traders transporting their merchandise along the Saharan trade routes. Lured by the potential riches, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive, in the late fifteenth century, looking for the source of the African gold. They established a series of forts along the coast, as trading posts and to protect their trading interests. Their first fort, Elmina (*the mine*) was built in 1482. The gold they sent back home helped to revive flagging financial resources, and to finance exploration further afield. In the following centuries, European countries - notably the Dutch, the Danes, and the British - vied with each other to establish extensive trade in gold and slaves.

At the time of independence in 1957, Ghana was producing one tenth of the world's gold, but the sector, like cocoa, declined in the 1960s and 1970s, receiving neither sufficient domestic nor foreign investment to enable production to expand.

Since the mid 1980s, the fortunes of gold began to turn with the instigation of the government's Economic Recovery Programme. The mining sector was targeted for rehabilitation as a potential source of export revenue. Efforts were made to privatise state-owned mines, and encourage investment. A mining code - the Mining and Minerals Law - was passed in 1986, creating attractive legislative and fiscal conditions for investors, and streamlining regulation of the sector. Mining authorities say that, since the law was promulgated, over \$4 million of foreign investment has been brought into the mining and minerals sector. It is by far the most successful sector in attracting foreign investment.

Since the law was passed, gold production has seen phenomenal growth. According to the Ghana Minerals Commission, production has risen from 287,124 ounces in 1986 to 2.3 million ounces in 1998. There are now some 237 companies (154 Ghanaian and 83 foreign) prospecting for gold. Gold has overtaken cocoa as the country's biggest export earner, bringing in \$682 million in 1978. Ghana is now the continent's second largest producer, after South Africa.

Ashanti Goldfields Company (AGC) Ghana's flagship mining company, has long been the country's largest producer, accounting for almost half of gold production in 1998. The company was state owned, but in 1994 it was floated on the stock exchange, with the government reducing its stake to 20%. In addition to this, the state holds a 'golden share' allowing it to veto major decisions. The other major shareholder, at 33%, is Lonmin, with the remaining 47% held by domestic and foreign investors. AGC was one of the first indigenous African companies to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and is regarded as Ghana's most prestigious and successful company.

Of course, heavy reliance on export of commodities is inherently a risky venture, dependent on the vagaries of the international commodities market. Like cocoa, in 1999 gold too fell victim to external events beyond the country's control, which sent world prices tumbling. According to the Ghana Minerals Commission, the cause of the slump in the price of gold was the announcement by the central banks of most European countries, and by the IMF and Australia, of the intended sale of gold from their reserves. Prices fell to a 20 year low, fetching only around \$250 an ounce instead of an earlier average of \$285.

### Hedging

To minimise the effects of falling prices, AGC had pre-sold a significant part of its future production. This strategy, called 'hedging' is used by virtually every gold producer, to varying degrees. It is designed to protect the company against fluctuations in the price of gold. When the gold price rose spectacularly at the end of September by \$75 an ounce, AGC, caught unawares, was unable to deliver, provoking a financial crisis that made the company vulnerable to takeover.

Ashanti is very much tied up with the Ghanaian identity, "a national heirloom that must not be trifled with," and any risk of takeover arouses strong reactions. It has political ramifications too, as the government retains its power to veto any major changes. It remains to be seen what the future will be for Ghana's brightest asset.



## John Kufuor, NPP - waiting in the wings?

A new political era in Ghana will arrive at the end of this year, when President Rawlings leaves centre stage after 18 years. Elections are due by December, and President Rawlings cannot, constitutionally, serve another term.



For the first time it will not be a contest of individuals, but of parties," says John Kufuor, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) presidential candidate. A lawyer, he was deputy foreign minister in the government of Kofi Busia in 1969-1972 and also the NPP presidential candidate in the 1996 elections.

"I contested the elections against the incumbent who had been president for 15 years. I polled about three million, 800,000 from Ashanti, and the rest from all over the country.

"The party support is not exclusively Ashanti, as some people say. We won in most of the urban areas."

The NPP and the ruling NDC seem to have broadly similar policies, centred around liberalisation of the economy, privatisation, support to the private sector. Mr Kufuor adds to this "deep respect for human rights, rule of law, property rights."

The difference between the two parties will be in implementation, he says:

"When we talk of using the private sector to spearhead the growth of the economy, it is an article of faith with us."

The private sector has been "traumatised" in the past, and never really took off. Solid support is needed, such as a Business Promotion Law, to create a more enabling legislative environment. He would like to see joint ventures with foreign businesses, which would bring in not just know-how, but new markets.

Access to credit is near impossible. Interest rates are reaching 40%, and there is no access to venture capital.

Ghana could be strong in the financial sector, especially banking. "We have very competent bankers. That sector could become a big revenue earner, at least for the sub-region. We would encourage the private sector to lead us."

The NPP believes that not much has changed in the economic structure of the country. "Twenty years ago Ghana depended on cocoa and gold, and we are still almost exclusively dependent on those two products. There should have been more diversification of the economy, a strengthening of resources so that it would not be buffeted about by the ups and downs of the market."

He cites the case of agriculture, which badly needs to be promoted and modernised. "We still have subsistence agriculture here - the average farm is not more than five acres. Agriculture is dying. We need to develop the rural areas around agriculture."

Kufuor believes that Ghana has the resources - sufficient land and water, to "produce more than we need and even export food."

His party is in favour of VAT, but was not happy with its timing. "Until the government has shown efficiency in managing revenue, we would not support adopting a new system, as if it would be a sort of 'heal all.' We were also afraid that VAT would be used to extract heavy taxes from the people, who are already overburdened with multiple taxation."

In the cocoa sector, Kufuor, like the government, is cautious.

"We are so dependent on receipts from cocoa that one wants to be sure that the revenues which enable government to function are not endangered."

On the state-owned Cocobod, he is more severe.

"It has become a haven of bureaucracy. You get some managers benefitting more from cocoa than the farmers who sweat. We would trim the board down to the bare necessities. The Produce Buying Company (PBC) - which controls domestic purchasing - "is in competition with private sector and perhaps it's time it was privatised."

He is cautious on withdrawing price support from cocoa farmers.

"Cocoa has been the mainstay of the economy and society for the past 80 years or more. The cocoa farmer is the hen that lays the golden egg. I wouldn't suddenly withdraw any state support in return for services over the decades. Any reduction of support should be well planned and gradual."

A calm personality, Kufuor was moved to strong words on the troubled company, Ashanti Goldfields (see page 33). "Ashanti is the flagship of Ghana. Many Ghanaians were against the government privatising. What remains is looked upon as a national heirloom that must not be trifled with. We must retain some interest there, otherwise it would be like trading our soul, so we are very concerned about it. We support all moves to retain it."



## Protecting natural resources

A major objective of EU-Ghana cooperation is poverty eradication, and improving the quality of life. Along Ghana's west coast is Princes' Town, a village lapped by the Atlantic Ocean and dominated by Grossfriedrichsburg Castle. The village and surrounding area is the focus of a programme to protect the rich natural resources of the area, while improving the quality of life of the community.

The project covers an 18km zone of 11 villages stretching from the coast inland, with a population of about 6,000 people. The area includes a forest reserve, which forms a natural buffer zone to prevent erosion. The project is managed by the Italian NGO Ricerca e Cooperazione, and the EU provides 80% of the funding.

The emphasis is on community participation, and for the local people one of the most serious problems was the lack of sanitation. There was nowhere to dispose of waste, and no toilets, a major health hazard. When it rained, rubbish was washed to town, and there were frequent outbreaks of cholera and other diseases.

To deal with this, an incinerator was built on the edge of Princes' Town, and all rubbish is now burned there. The site was given by the community, who also supplied labour and material such as sand and water. The community was educated on waste disposal and sanitation. By-laws were introduced to ensure that rubbish would not be dumped; dumping is now a punishable offence.

Household toilets were built, each for a family of about 10 people. Public toilets were also

built and a caretaker has the job of maintaining and cleaning them. Their salary is covered by a small user charge.

Another problem was the lack of a proper drainage system, and the rains caused erosion of some buildings. A drain is being built in the town, using a natural waterway, so that water can be drained directly to the sea.

On the beach, coconut trees have been planted, their purpose partly social, partly economic. The area is a burial ground, and the trees provide shade, and beauty. Coconut trees along Ghana's coastline have been ravaged by disease, "lethal yellowing", which rots the fronds, and to counteract this a disease-resistant variety is being planted. Within three or four years, the trees will produce coconuts - a source of income for the community.

A plant nursery was set up in Prince's Town. Here, planting material is produced and given free to local farmers. They are encouraged to plant trees, and educated in tree management and propagation, as well as conservation. So far, the nursery has trained 3,000 farmers. They are shown how to interplant fast-growing income-generating trees, such as cassia (used as fuel and for building) with slower-growing trees such as teak or mahogany. All schools in the area have been visited, to educate them on environmental awareness. Wildlife clubs have been opened, and walks arranged with the students to teach them about plants and animals. A school arboretum was set up, with the motto "Plant a tree today to save a life tomorrow."

### Ghana-EU cooperation

| Lomé Convention                          | EDF 7 (m€)  | Focal sectors  | EDF 8 (m€) | Focal sectors  |
|--|-------------|--|------------|--|
| Lomé National Indicative Programme (NIP) | 109.4       | Transport<br>Rural Development   | 130.0      | Transport<br>Rural Development   |
| Support for Structural Adjustment        | 87.2        | Support for macroeconomic situation.<br>Health, Education (Social sectors) | 46.8       | Support for macroeconomic situation.<br>Health, Education (Social sectors) |
| Stabex                                   | 50.6        | Support to Cocoa sector  |            |  |
| Sysmin                                   |             |  | 0.15       | Preliminary study  |
| EIB Funds                                | 1.7<br>94.0 | Risk Capital<br>Own resources (energy sector)                              | 40.0       | Risk Capital   |
| Other Lomé funds                         | 15.2        | Interest rate subsidies and<br>Emergency Aid                               |            |  |
| Total Lomé fundin*                       | 358.1       |  | 217.0      |  |

\* Note: Regional funds and budget lines are not included in this table.



Foreman Anthony Newton and the unit committee at the incinerator



## EU on the Road

Roads currently account for 94% of freight and 97% of passenger traffic. The road transport industry, dominated by the private sector, is competitive and has unrestricted entry. On the other hand, whole districts can be inaccessible due to inadequate road networks. Road design and construction is therefore one of the two focal sectors of EU cooperation with Ghana, the other being rural development.

The ongoing projects of the 7th EDF, involving roads in the Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Western Region, supported by technical assistance in the fields of Donor Coordination and Organization and Training of the Ministry of Roads and Transport, amount to €54 million.

Following an economic and technical prioritisation study in the South West of the country, another €56 million has recently been approved under the 8th EDF.

Road construction is very expensive, notwithstanding the fierce competition amongst contractors. Large amounts are involved in crop and property compensation, excavation, the base layers and wearing courses. Heavy equipment is needed to do the job correctly and economically. The cost of supervision and the frequent laboratory testing of all facets of the work are very high: from water to laterite, from high tensile iron bars to bitumen. Moisture



content, compressive strengths, static and dynamic deflections all have to be checked by sophisticated equipment, and levelling accuracies of 2 cm a kilometre are quite common. Building roads in Sub-Saharan countries also involves the transfer of knowhow to increase the competitiveness of local firms.

The investment in road infrastructure is of strategic importance to alleviate poverty, offering access to markets and social facilities (schools, clinics and hospitals).

I recall the words of a chief of a remote village in the Ashanti region where one of the EU-funded roads is being built. He expressed his gratitude and said that now, even before the road was finished, they had new faces coming to their village, buyers and traders, some all the way from Accra, to buy their plantains. Accra was now six hours away on an asphalt road; before it was built the partly gravelled road added an extra hour to the journey. This improvement in access had made all the difference.

**Vassilis Zafrakopoulos**  
Civil engineer  
EU Delegation, Ghana



## Genocide - what role did *you* play?



**Standing before the judges, the macabre exhibit of a skull. The spectator is on trial. The judges await an explanation...**

he Ghanaian artist Kofi Setordji is at pains to stress that our actions will always come back to us, that we will be judged by what we do, and not necessarily in the courtroom. We are not just guilty for what we do, but for what we fail to do, what we allow to happen. His exhibition, which took place in Accra last year, explored the horror of the genocide in Rwanda - just five countries away. "I tried to show that we are living in a very peaceful place here. But in Rwanda too

they were living in a peaceful atmosphere before, but something happened there."

He felt an urgency to bring the subject into the open. "Four years after the genocide, nobody knew what had happened to people five or six countries away. I asked myself, do all these people, about 800,000 of them... don't they mean something? Did they just pass away, families wiped out, a whole generation. I don't think it's correct that we should just leave it like that."



**"We only know the people who died by their number, we don't know their name, their aspirations, all we know is that 800,000 people died in three months in Rwanda, these are the statistics."**

It is important too that the world knows that Africa thinks about its own problems, reflects on the causes.

The exhibition was his way of confronting the genocide, putting it in the public domain, obliging people to talk about it, so that they could try to come to terms with what happened.

"Fifty years after the Holocaust the Jews still talk about it, because they don't want anybody to do this to them again. If you do not talk about it, people will talk about it for you, and that's not the way you want it to be said."

The message is universal, goes beyond Rwanda. Genocide is not confined to Africa, but can happen anywhere in the world.

"No person is immune... look at what happened in Chechnya, in Kosovo.

"I am an African, I am affected by what happens here, but I am human. I can be affected by what is happening in Chechnya. It is the same thing, people are dying."

It is essential to understand the causes, "so that we can work towards avoiding it happening elsewhere. In every society there are anarchists, but the government and the people must make sure that they are kept in check. We must make efforts to keep peace, work at it."

In Africa people always use tribal sentiments, he says. Politics is always divided in a tribal way, according to language, where the President comes from, who is ruling.

"We have to see what are the causes, what actually gears people towards something."

Consisting of mixed media, carvings, paintings, sculptures, the notion of guilt and judgement are ever-present.

"The United Nations evacuated everybody when they should have boosted the number of people who were there. The genocide happened and now they are trying to judge those people who caused the genocide.

I ask myself one simple question; if one person kills one person, then it's murder. But if he kills 10 people, how are you going to punish that person? For how many lives? He has only got one. If I kill one person, he kills me, it makes some sense, but if I kill 1,000 people, what punishment can they give me to mean that there is a scale that is being used?"

He is critical of the role of some multinationals. "We see not, we hear not, speak not," is one of his

titles. He feels they continue to work even in war-torn countries, turning a blind eye to what is going on, and thus they share in the guilt.

### **Holocaust/genocide**

For Setordji, memories of the holocaust were stirred.

"Jews use the word 'holocaust'. They say, it's ours, it belongs only to us, they don't want to use the word 'genocide.' Fifty years back it was not easy to take pictures of what was happening, and it was only after the war that people really knew the reality. But the genocide in Rwanda took place in an era of mass media.





"There was TV, simultaneous reporting. I followed the whole thing, there were bodies floating in the river. BBC and CNN were there...they were not in the actual place where the genocide happened but the bodies started floating in the river. So they saw this mass of people killed, bodies dumped in the river, and that's how they realised that something was happening. It can happen anywhere, not just in Africa, because what happens is that everyday the status quo tilts....."

The reaction to his exhibition was strong.

Art, for him, is important, as a means of communication, or simply to raise the human spirit.

"Art can uplift, a person doesn't have to go to school to realise that something is beautiful."

Public art is important "so that people who have nowhere to go can see things in their own city."

He regrets the lack of a museum of contemporary art in Ghana.

"We must find out what poverty is, what richness is. We must define it for ourselves as a people, instead of using someone else's yardstick. We must have something to pass on to our children.

"Art is an act of worship, it's the only way I can express my being. All of us ask ourselves the question once in our lives, what am I doing here? We are here for a particular purpose. To me, being an artist and communicating through art is the greatest thing that I could do. I try to better myself every day, to make accessible to others what I do."

What is he working on now?

It is an interesting time in Ghana, he says.

"We are going to choose our leaders again. I am trying to find out how the ordinary person views the politician. A politician enters your house unannounced, to canvass. When he is elected, you cannot go to his house, he is too busy."

He is trying to express the faces of ordinary people, and their hopes, in the houses of the politicians.

The genocide exhibition has also been shown in Ivory Coast, and Setordji is trying to take it elsewhere, especially to France and Germany where interest is being shown. The problem is the need to find sponsors as the paintings and sculptures weigh about three tonnes, and the cost of insurance is prohibitive.



Mass grave, above.  
"Those who caused the genocide would like to be buried in coffins, with their name inscribed, in dignity"

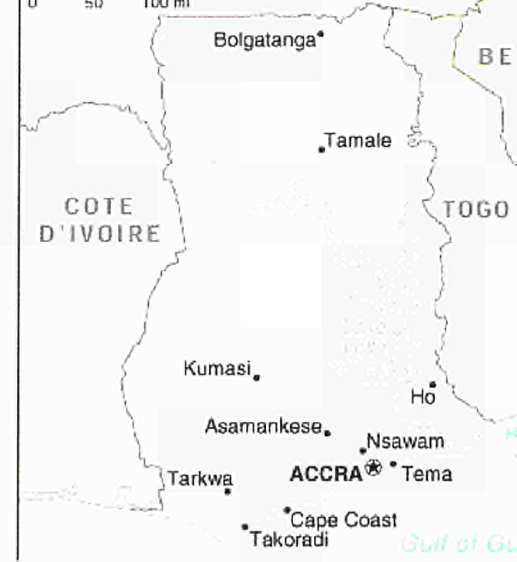


Kofi Setordji in his workshop, left



# PROFILE

## Ghana



### General Information

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Area               | 238,537 sq km  |
| Population         | 18.5 (1998)  |
| Population density | 77.5 inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup>                           |
| Capital            | Accra (pop. 972,000).  |
| Other towns        | Tema (440,000); Kumasi (206,000)                               |
| Languages          | English (official); Ewé, Fante, Ga, Hausa, Twi, Nzima, Dagbani |
| Religions          | Christian (6%), Muslim (20%), others (20%)                     |

### Economy

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Currency                       | Cedi (1€=3.59063)                               |
| GDP per capita                 | US \$437 (1997) UNDP                            |
| Real GDP growth                | 4.5% (1999)                                     |
| Main exports                   | Gold (32%), cocoa (32%), timber (11%)           |
| Total external debt            | US \$ 5.6 bn                                    |
| Debt/GNP ratio                 | 88.6% (1997 estimate)                           |
| Main trading partners: exports | Togo (13%), UK (12%), Germany (10%)             |
| Main trading partners: imports | UK (15%), Germany (6%), US (10%), Nigeria (14%) |

### Politics

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| President        | Jerry John Rawlings, currently serving second four-year term  |
| Vice president   | John Atta Mills   |
| Political system | Presidential system. The president is elected by universal suffrage for a maximum of two four-year terms. Parliament is single chamber and consists of 200 members (MPs) elected by universal suffrage every four years, on a first-past-the-post basis. The cabinet is appointed by the President, with approval from the parliament. Presidential and legislative elections are due in 2000. A new constitution was approved by referendum in April 1992. |

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Main political parties | National Democratic Congress (NDC) ruling party, Every Ghanaian Living Elsewhere (EGLE), New Patriotic Party (NPP), People's National Convention (PNC), Convention Party (CP), People's Convention Party (PCP), National Reform Party (formed in July 1999 by a breakaway faction of NDC). |
|------------------------|--|

### Social Indicators

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Life expectancy at birth       | 60 years (1997), 49 in 1970             |
| Population growth rate         | 3% (1995)                               |
| Infant mortality               | 68/1000 births (1997), 111/1000 in 1970 |
| Access to primary education    | 43.4% (1997)                            |
| Adult literacy                 | 66.4% (1997)                            |
| Access to health services      | 75%                                     |
| Human development index rating | 0.534 (133rd out of 174)1998            |

Sources: Economic Intelligence Unit, European Commission, UNDP Human Development Report (1999), Government of Ghana

The maps reproduced here do not imply recognition of any particular border, nor do they prejudice the status of any state or territory



# Tropical Forests

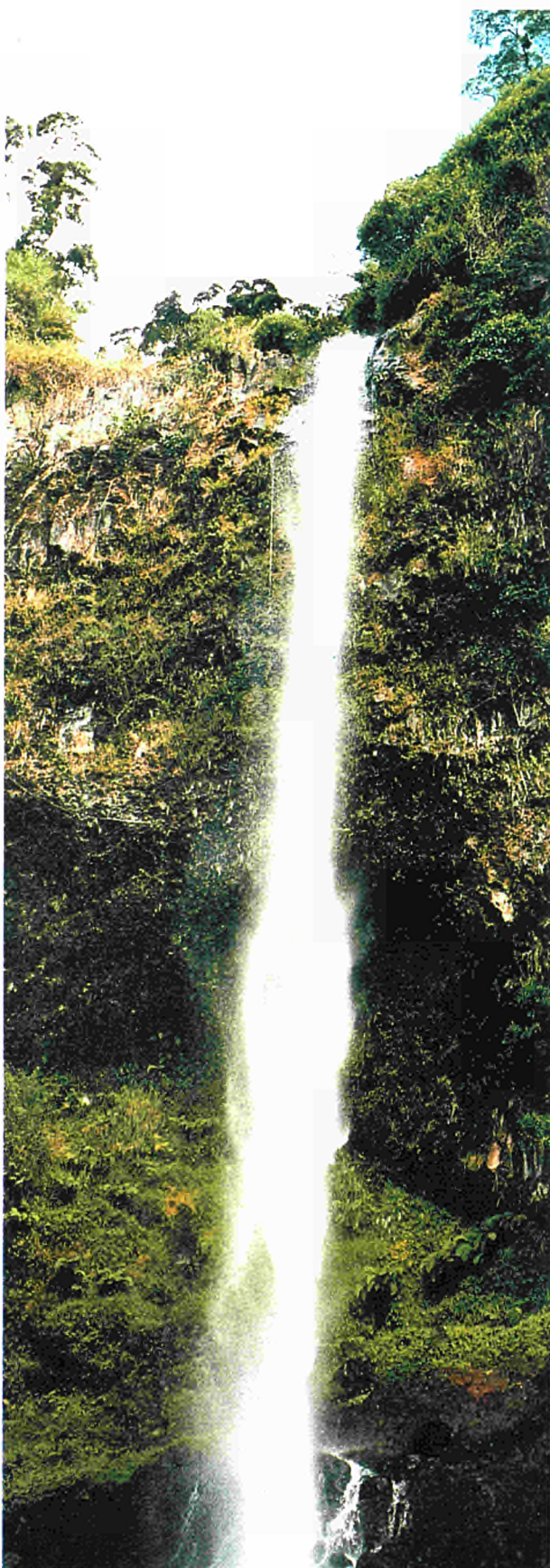
by Aya Kasasa

In south-west Uganda  
terraced agriculture is  
essential on the steep  
hillsides, otherwise  
protected from erosion  
by forest cover





## The versatile forest



Thomas Saïfe

Madagascar: The Montagne Sacrée Reservation, in the North-West of the island.

There are those who live in the forest and those who live from it. Those for whom it is merely a route that leads from one place to another. Those who defend it, and those who are happy to study it. Instead of just taking you for a gentle walk through the forest, this Dossier reviews tropical forests and the factors that affect them today. Sustainable management is a fast-developing sector, and has become an essential aspect of national, regional and international politics. Sustainable management of forests has become an essential aspect of national, regional and international politics. In developing countries, forests and their trees are a vital source of income, providing economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities, national economies and the world environment. They touch many fields: the production of wood and non-wood forest products, social and religious activities, leisure pursuits, the generation of employment and income, the production of energy and food. They also have an important environmental function in that they help to preserve biodiversity, recycle nutrients, support agricultural landscapes and protect water catchment basins. Their existence benefits the whole planet: they store carbon, they attract income from tourism, and hold a wealth of genetic resources.

In 1995, forests covered approximately 27% of the surface of the globe, 3.45 billion hectares. Developing countries account for 57% of forest cover, almost 2 bn ha. This includes forests in protected regions, inaccessible natural forests, those which are managed and plantations created by man. The figures do not include trees outside the forests, the basis for goods and services which are important to life in both rural and



urban areas. Over the last few decades, considerable resources have been devoted to developing the forest sector, and efforts on the part of the international community and partner countries have yielded encouraging results. Political decision-makers and those who manage the forests are currently responding to changes in national priorities and to international commitments, seeking a wider approach to forest management, a balance between social, economic and environmental objectives, restricting the level of felling and improving management strategies. Efforts aimed at preserving biodiversity have been stepped up and more extensive areas are being used as plantations. In many countries, laws relating to the protection of the forests are under review to take account of this evolution.

Despite these promising initiatives, the total area of forest cover is still decreasing in most countries. It is estimated that in the period from 1990 to 1995 13.6 million ha of forest were lost every year, an annual rate of 1.6%. Somewhat offset by reforestation in developed countries, the net annual loss increased to 11 m ha. There has been a net decrease of 65.1 m ha in developing countries and an increase of 8.8 m ha in the developed world.

Deforestation is defined as a permanent modification of the use of forested areas definitively allocated to other purposes, agriculture, pasture, the construction of roads and other such infrastructure.

#### **What is the forest worth?**

There are no accurate estimates of the contribution made by forests to the world economy, but a partial indicator is their share of GDP and international trade. At world level, it is estimated that forest-based goods and services account for around 2% of world GDP and around 3% of international trade. In many developing countries, particularly in Africa (6%) and South America (3%), forests contribute

significantly to GDP. World production of timber actually entering international commerce represents only 6% however. These estimates take no account of the assets and services provided by forests on a global scale. Nor do they include the non-commercial use of forest products such as food or medicines by local people.

#### **European initiative**

In a recent communication to the Council of Ministers and Parliament, the European Commission mapped out guidelines for an integrated strategy aimed at ensuring qualitative and quantitative conservation and sustainable management of forests. The European Community's objectives in terms of development cooperation in the forestry sector are clearly defined as are the actions necessary to achieve them. Specific objectives in developing countries are to reduce deforestation and degradation of the forests, to increase the extent of areas under sustainable management, to increase revenue from forest products and to make its distribution more equitable, to maintain genetic resources and biodiversity, to create high-performance institutional structures and to increase knowledge about the forests, whilst all the time developing lines of research. To achieve this, European cooperation will have to rely principally on support for the drafting and implementation of a forestry policy framework, with a view to preserving the multi-functional role of the forests and to reconciling the conflicting requirements to which they are subject.

The EC is not the only institution active in forest policy development and application. Other donors, such as the World Bank, have decided to rethink their approach, seeking constructive and innovative paths for the sustainable management of the forests of the present and of the future.



# Timber certification

by I J Bourke\*

**T**imber certification is getting a lot of attention in forestry, because of the interest in linking trade, particularly international trade, to the sustainable management of the forest resource.

The hope is that the market will be an incentive for better forest management; buyers will show their concern by choosing only certified products. Those promoting certification hope that it may contribute to improved management of the forests and to improved forestry sector development. Since sustainable (or improved) forest management is possible without certification, but not vice versa, there have been widely varying views on its usefulness.

## **Suggested benefits include:**

- increased market share or at least protection from the loss of the existing market share (mainly against other wood products but also against non-wood products);
- a higher price from selling a "green" product;
- greater insurance against market restrictions;
- long term supply security because of the sustainability of the supplying forests;
- independent evaluation of the standard of forest management practices;
- as a basis for comparing different management practices, and setting common standards;
- improved commitment to forest resource management;
- improved image with a range of interest groups;
- basis for improved control or policing of those who have control of the forest resources;
- protection from action by environmental groups.

## **Disadvantages could be:**

- high cost (both financial and management);
- reduced (short term) revenue due to reduced output volumes;
- focus on it distracts management attention from other important activities;
- loss of some control to other groups (eg to those developing the certification standards; those less close to the resource).

There is still considerable uncertainty about whether the benefits are likely to exceed the costs. Currently the main motivation of most of those

undertaking certification appears to be to increase their markets.

Certification has already brought increased attention and focus to forestry issues. The very controversy and disagreement over its impacts has resulted in a much wider debate of issues among the different interest groups.

## **The current status of certification initiatives**

Certification is still in its infancy. New processes emerge, old ones become modified, various systems come to some level of agreement or recognition. To date its actual impact has been very small and very country-specific.

Greatest interest in certification is found in importing countries which have active environmental groups and trade interests who see a market advantage from providing certified products. Attention is greatest in (and largely restricted to) Western Europe, especially the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands. Major Asian timber importing countries such as Japan, the Republic of Korea and China are currently showing little or no interest in certification. Important markets in Latin America are also not particularly bothered.

Most interest and activity is occurring in those exporting countries whose main export markets are showing greatest interest, and are likely to insist on some form of certification. A number are working to develop acceptable schemes to ensure the markets remain open to them, or to benefit from actual or perceived market opportunities. Amongst these are: Indonesia, Malaysia, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Canada, the USA, Brazil, and Australia.

In Africa, interest and action on certification has been much less rapid than elsewhere. Ghana is evaluating and developing a national certification scheme, countries such as Cameroon are investigating the subject, and some member countries of the African Timber Organisation are working on a process that suits their circumstances.

Despite all this activity, there is still little clear indication of the market impacts of certification - positive or negative. Even in markets showing the greatest interest, there is little sign of substantial



demand, or any price premium, although some rare buyers are showing an interest in or even insisting on certified products. The volume of certified products entering the market is also small. On the basis of the area certified, globally less than 0.5% of the world's forest area is currently certified. Most are in developed temperate countries, largely in Europe and North America. Sweden and Poland alone account for a high proportion.

### Issues still to be addressed

#### ● What is the likely market ?

It remains unclear whether there will be a strong and growing demand for certified wood, and whether a price premium is likely. Demand is being pushed by retail chains, especially the Do-it-Yourself retailers, rather than pulled by consumer demand.

#### ● Will certification act as a trade barrier?

There are concerns that certification will act as a barrier to trade by discriminating either intentionally or unintentionally against those unable or unwilling to achieve the required forest management standards.

#### ● Will certification help protect the forests that are at greatest risk?

A critical unanswered question.

### Where is certification headed?

It is still difficult to predict where certification will finally settle. Its market impact may expand and become significant; equally, it could remain limited to a few markets and a few specific end-uses (eg high-value furniture). The exact future impact will be heavily dependent on which markets demand it, the degree of support from consumers, legislators and traders, and the extent to which harmonisation, or at least mutual recognition of different certification systems, is achieved.

Despite the uncertainties, interest in certification continues to grow. It seems likely that it will have an increasing impact at least for the next few years. Although the direction and scope is difficult to predict, it is clear that the area certified will expand as those responsible for forest management use it to assess or even control practices in their forests. As the need to "prove" the practices being followed increases, it will be increasingly used by forest managers. However, whether certification provides

the hoped-for stimulus to improved forest management worldwide remains to be seen.

\*Forest Products Division, FAO

### Significant recent developments concerning certification

● In Canada an ISO-based certification system has been developed by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). This allows individual companies to be certified by a third party assessor using standards developed by the CSA.

● The Netherlands and Germany have been working on the development of methods of validating the certificates provided by suppliers (both domestic and foreign) to their markets, and of linking these certificates to final products in their markets. The Keurhout Foundation in the Netherlands has developed a system to assess suppliers' certificates (from any certified source), and monitor the chain of custody (i.e. tracking the raw material through to the final product form) to the end user. A "hallmark stamp" (ie a label) is available for final products.

● American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) has developed a Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) by which its member companies commit themselves to move towards sustainable forestry. This is a compulsory requirement of membership of AF&PA. It is not a certification process, but the principles and guidelines that companies commit themselves to may serve as a basis for future certification by an independent body.

● The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), has developed an FSC-label to be placed on certified final products. This label is available for use on supplies certified by FSC-accredited certifiers.

● A wide range of interest groups in the UK, including the UK Forestry Commission, timber grower associations, the timber trade, retailers and a number of NGO groups, have reached agreement on the recognition of the

UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS), a certification standard for UK forests.

● A new European certification process, the Pan-European Forest Certification Framework (PEFC), has been launched in Europe. This is supported by small-scale forest owners who hold about 65 percent of the forestland in the European Union, and forest industry organisations in Europe. The aim is to establish a framework for voluntary forest certification and a mechanism for mutual recognition between different national systems. It provides for independent third-party auditing at the regional level.

● In Sweden the large forestry companies are following the FSC approach, while small forest owners, who are concerned that the certification systems being promoted may discriminate against them, restrict their freedom, exclude them from markets, or be excessively costly to implement, have followed a different route.

● Increasing moves towards some degree of mutual recognition are arising between different certification processes. For example a leading UK home improvement chain, B&Q, a member of FSC and of the UK WWF1995 Plus Group, recently announced that it would accept Finnish timber certified under the national Finnish Forest Certification System.

● Indonesia has established an Indonesian Ecolabelling Institute (LEI), which has developed criteria and indicators for the auditing of forest management on logging concessions, as well as the ecolabelling of products from these concessions.

● Malaysia has established a National Timber Certification Council (NTCC) which is establishing a national set of criteria and indicators also based on the ITTO framework.



## From forest to pharmacy

Cameroon's economic problems have caused people to reverse the trend of rural-urban migration, and turn

to the forests around them for alternatives to the imported medicines they would normally buy.

Cameroon was once one of the success stories of Africa. It was prosperous, with a well-managed economy that was moving steadily forward, an example to the rest of the Continent.

Since 1986, this has changed, and the economy declined to crisis point.

Measures to improve the situation have not been very successful. To avoid sacking anyone from an overloaded civil service, for instance, employees' salaries were drastically cut, leaving many without a living wage. One job was no longer enough. People had to have two or more, and so became tired, disillusioned and very much poorer. Frequently, they could no longer afford to live in expensive urban centres and migrated back to the countryside.

In 1994 came one of the most serious and inevitable blows to a tottering economy - the CFA franc, always supported by the French franc, was devalued by 50%.

Imported medicines are now out of reach for most ordinary people, and even beer and whisky are largely unaffordable. People are therefore turning back to local products. They drink palm wine and local whisky (Odonto) made from the bark of *Garcinia kola* and *Garcinia lucida* and they have to choose local medicines, derived from medicinal plants and administered by traditional healers. While there is no doubt that these people have considerable knowledge and generations of experience, western medicines are even more effective. Some local cures are successful and have excited considerable interest from abroad, notably *Prunus africana*, the processed bark which has been shown to help prevent the symptoms of prostate cancer, one of the cancers most prevalent in men over 50 in developed countries. Trade in *Prunus* generates \$150 million annually. Other plants traded internationally are *Voacanga africana*, *Pausinystalia johimbe* and *Strophantus gratus*.

Medicinal plants have been used for centuries so there is no doubting their cultural importance to



Mount Cameroon Project



countries throughout the world. The growing enthusiasm for aromatherapy and homeopathy in the West is eloquent testimony to this. A 1993 paper said that between 35,000 and 70,000 essences or plants were used globally for medicinal purposes each year; in China alone, between 5,000 and 35,000 essences are used annually. In southern Ghana medicinal plants are the main source of medicine for rural and urban populations. The leaves and flowers of *Garcinia afzelii* are used for their antibacterial properties and the local market and regional trade is estimated to reach millions of dollars each year.

### Not over the counter

Medicinal plants may be cheaper and as effective as modern medicines but they are by no means as accessible. Instead of walking into a pharmacy, people have to go into the forest and harvest them. This poses another problem - sustainability. To prevent over-exploitation, the authorities need to step in. At present, for example, transportation is extremely expensive, as roads are bad. And while it is reassuring for people to be able to turn to their own environment to treat their ills, this has serious implications. People collect as much as they can, any old how, for rapid sale - although it is usually the case that unless they sell to a reputable and licenced buyer who only takes a certain amount from each person, they receive far less than they should. Not much attention is paid to regrowth and maintenance of supply is unreliable: people need the money today. Without sound planning and management, these valuable plant resources may soon be endangered or exhausted.

### A salutary example

Forestry exploitation to date has resulted in plants such as Moabi (*Baillonelli toxisperma*) being threatened: too many are being destroyed by forestry work and slash and burn farming. Moabi has disappeared from the area around Dimako in southern Cameroon, for instance.

Plants need to be collected efficiently and without damaging either their environment or their future prospects. While clinics remain far from rural populations, people will continue to rely on the medicines and healers that are easier to reach. Everyone interviewed in a recent survey indicated that, if they

had the money and could get to clinics to be diagnosed and prescribed, they would prefer modern medicines. At present this does not happen. In the survey of 60 households, from the villages of Knolnguét and Oyack, only 18 were able to afford pharmaceutical solutions, or to get to clinics that supply them. Building and equipping more convenient hospitals and clinics, and running them properly, also means money...

Medicinal plants are used by Cameroonians who cannot afford an alternative and because they are better than nothing - in many cases considerably so. People constrained by their economic situation cannot however, make a choice. If they could, they might decide to use both, but that is a long way ahead. This is not just their problem. It has serious repercussions for local and national government, as well as for international aid agencies.

It would seem sensible for researchers and traditional healers to collaborate to develop drugs based on medicinal plants in the correct doses. Doctors and drug companies could also be encouraged to work with them to develop cheaper pharmaceutical products instead of concentrating - as many do now - on the more profitable lifestyle drugs such as Viagra. What would you choose? To combat sexual impotence and improve your life, or combat malaria and save it?

Based on a paper given by Ousseynou Ndoye, Manuel Ruiz-Perez, Armand Desire Manoun and Danielle Lema Ngono at the International FORAFRI Workshop on the Sustainable Management of African Humid Dense Forests Today, in Libreville, Gabon in October 1998

Glyn Davies

Far left:  
the trunk of a  
*Prunus africana* tree  
in Cameroon, stripped of  
its valuable bark.  
Below: the stripped trunk  
of an *Erica* tree  
(giant heather)





# Not just wood from the forest

by Paul Vantomme\*

Non Wood Forest Products could be a tool for better forest conservation and income generation

The main issue regarding the development of Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP), for subsistence or commercial use, is related to their availability, ownership, and accessibility. As most harvesting on NWFP is done by those who live nearby, it is vital that local communities are involved in resource assessment, harvesting and management. It is therefore important to include community management of forest resources in any NWFP development programme. To regulate harvesting, ensure growth space for selected species and forest management regulations, it is essential that access/user rights and responsibilities are agreed. Forest management and silvicultural systems also have their limits, particularly when several groups want to take different things from the forest: for instance, timber, grazing and NWFP. Some species have a high timber value overseas but are also valued at home for their other uses.

NWFP cannot compete with financial returns from timber, but can supplement them. Increased production of NWFP in forests unsuitable for timber will enhance the value of the forests, and in theory, ensure that the forest is maintained. This all depends on careful and sustainable harvesting - if too much is taken too quickly it defeats the purpose. One solution put forward is domestication. When highly valued species become depleted in forests (eg *eru* in Nigeria and Cameroon) domestication has become the most common response. Most agriculture crops originated in forests and domestication continues: cocoa, rubber, oil palm, macadamia nuts, star fruit, durian and so on...

However, domestication and farming of NWFP may work well for some species and not for others. Some mushrooms species are highly valued but we do not yet know how to cultivate them. Farmed products may also be considered inferior in quality to wild ones, as is the case for many medicinal plants. If the species is available more cheaply and easily in the forest, why grow it and where? Often

people who depend on NWFP for survival and income might not have access to farmland at all, nor be able to compete with large-scale production of NWFP by well established farmers. Farming NWFP reduces incentives for conservation of ecosystems in which NWFP species thrive. Many domesticated crops have their relatives growing wild and are therefore a valuable source of genes for plant breeders in search of disease resistant and/or more productive varieties.

## Processing, marketing and trade

This is the next key issue, especially when commercial use nationally or internationally is planned. At the local level, NWFP provide raw materials for industrial processing, including commodities such as food and beverages, confectionery, flavourings, perfumes, medicines, paints or polishes. Of the 150 NWFP which are significant in terms of international trade, the most important are:

Gum arabic, rattan and bamboo, cork, forest-gathered vegetables and fungi, essential oils, wild honey, and plant or animal parts for pharmaceutical use.

Much of the production is still at subsistence level, and data remains localised and unreliable so their full economic importance is still largely underestimated. There is usually no institutional framework for the management, support and regulation of the NWFP sector and roads are usually appalling between production zones and the nearest market.

## Overseas trade bottlenecks

- the lack of import controls (esp food and medicinal plants), or - where they do exist - lack of harmonisation between importing countries
- irregular supply and unsuitability of product standards to regulations and consumer preferences
- for food products, the lack of regular, fresh produce or cold storage facilities at airports in producing countries
- the absence of quality control and product information to consumers



- cumbersome customs procedures
- the large number of low volume products, of variable quality and erratic supply

These problems can be remedied by private sector involvement, with support from government and NGOs. Most successful are local (or village-level) processing activities to increase value, such as grading, improvement of packaging and conditioning of products.

### Fair Trade

Fair Trade Associations have also been catalysts in the commercialisation of NWFP. The aim is to promote the development of autonomy and emancipation of small scale rural producers. These organisations buy products directly from the producers for resale at more rewarding (inter-) national markets or provide technical and marketing support to the local rural producers' association. Producers invest profits to develop their activities. This allows developing countries to promote new products, and a growing number of cooperatives worldwide market their NWFP in this way.

Appropriate and effective policy and institutional support is also vital for a successful NWFP promotion programme. Timber production has driven forest policy and management decisions in many countries. Conservation of biodiversity has been largely implemented through a network of protected areas in which no harvesting is allowed. This has often conflicted with the interest of forest dwellers and those dependent on the forests, and has limited the development of NWFP.

Large scale commercialisation is not always the answer. Many different ways are being studied to allow people to improve their income. These include:

- development of suitable management systems
- clarification of who owns what, particularly when it is considered common property
- research and development to understand the biological dynamics of the resources and domestication
- development of processing and marketing systems
- legal issues and trade regulations including intellectual property rights (compensation for the use of resources by outsiders)



Glyn Davies

- patent rights in the case of research into an active ingredient from a product leading to its synthesis.

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Eating the pulp  
of the fruits  
of *Dialium guinense*  
in the Gola Forest,  
Sierra Leone



# On behalf of those who live there

by Pierre de Maret

Our planet's remaining tropical forests have a significant influence on our climate and are also a source of prodigious biodiversity. For these two reasons, campaigns to preserve them have become emblematic of current ecological concerns. For almost five years, the Commission has been financing, under the "tropical forests" budget, a very important programme entitled "APFT - Future of the Peoples of Tropical Forests".

Made up of a consortium of five European institutional partners, the APFT Programme has seen a multitude of field collaborations with a large number of local partners in the 11 ACP states where it carries on its activities. These consist of efforts on behalf of the international community to conserve tropical forests and to provide decision-makers with specialised, operational data on the human aspect of tropical forests, too often overlooked in the implementation of conservation and development policy.

The context is all the more problematic since exploitation of tropical timber is increasing and the combined effects of population growth and impoverishment are stepping up pressure on the world's last large areas of forest. In spite of every effort, the sad fact is that densely forested regions have already disappeared in most parts of Asia, Central America and West Africa.

It is still difficult to reconcile economic development with nature



conservation. In addition, the "new ecological order" - to borrow the title of a work by the philosopher Luc Ferry - is Manichaeian in its tendency to oppose nature and culture, particularly in the case of tropical forests, which have become the symbol *par excellence*, in the minds of western city-dwellers, of nature in its original, intact form. In point of fact, archaeology and paleobotany have taught us that such forests have not been in the virgin state for a long time, that they have been inhabited for thousands of years. Virgin forest is a fantasy, but belief in that fantasy is so strong as to lead to a paradox: certain current conservation campaigns aim to restore forests to an unnatural condition since, by expelling man, an unnatural situation, which has not

existed for a very long time, is being recreated. This attitude appears all the more questionable given that it has been demonstrated that traditional methods of exploitation of such forests by indigenous peoples benefited rather than threatened biodiversity. Nevertheless, set ideas cannot easily be changed. Although these populations have been living in balance with their forest environment for thousands of years, they are suddenly being accused of destroying it by setting fire to it - another misconception, because nomadic agriculture on areas of burned land has been part of forest agricultural practice since time immemorial. What is actually sending large areas of forest up in smoke is essentially its industrial exploitation and pressure from "trail-blazing" immigrant populations fleeing wretched lives in the towns and cities.

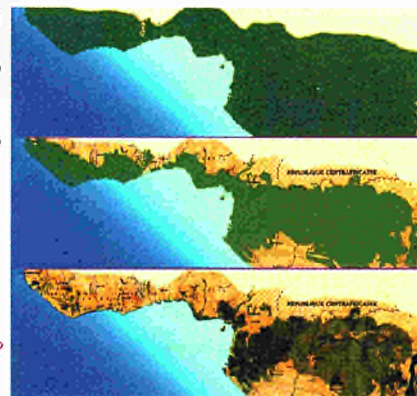
Any simplistic setting of forests against populations not only seriously handicaps campaigns to preserve the former, but also leads to situations in the field which are difficult to accept. Large numbers of people are being expelled from their ancestral lands because, from

The forests of central Africa 800 years ago

100 years ago

today

and tomorrow?



Virgin forest is a thing of the past - it has been inhabited for thousands of years, above

To all intents and purposes, large areas of dense forest are already disappearing, right



## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS PARTNERS IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Ever since the 1992 Rio Summit, indigenous peoples have been at the centre of debate on sustainable development. It has been the same in the European Union.

In May 1998, the Commission published a working paper on aid to indigenous peoples within the context of Community and Member-State development cooperation policy, and the Council of Ministers of the Union, in a resolution of 30 November 1998, then asked the Commission to provide it, in the second half of 2000, with a progress report on this process of support for indigenous peoples.

The APFT Programme decided to make its own contribution to current consultation processes by promoting the wide circulation of a working paper together with a consultative questionnaire. The results of this questionnaire, which has already been sent to several hundred indigenous organisations, will be published and circulated in July 2000 on the occasion of the meeting of the working group on indigenous peoples at the United Nations in Geneva.

Indigenous organisations demand that they be informed in advance of any decision concerning them, that they be consulted and that the agreement of the principal affected parties be obtained. Indigenous movements support an outward-looking approach and are in favour of increased democracy within their respective states. A large number of indigenous communities, long repressed or ignored, are beginning to

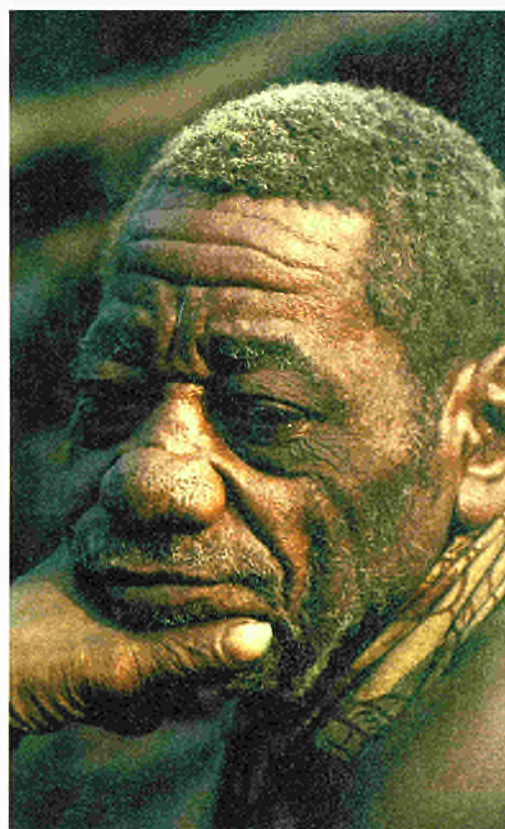
the legal standpoint, their forest belongs to the State, which can opt to hand it over to forestry companies or to turn it into a nature reserve. Villagers regard themselves as having been stripped of their inheritance, but, should they rebel, they are severely reprimanded. This creates dramatic situations to which we cannot remain indifferent.

The APFT applies an anthropological method consisting of long-term observation, involvement in the daily activities of the inhabitants, ongoing dialogue with local populations, a multi-discipline approach and collaboration between local and European specialists.

After five years of activity on three continents -

organise themselves and to demand from their governments basic services, the right to citizenship, and progressive integration into national life. Finally, the claims of indigenous peoples centre on issues which concern mankind as a whole: the need for a balance between concern for the environment and development for all, the involvement of greater numbers of people in decisions affecting the future, the maintenance of all-important social cohesion, the right to individuality without the exclusion of others who are different, and so on.

Through its expertise, the APFT Programme wants to act in an advisory capacity, assisting political decision-makers and donors, and making it possible to assess objectively certain arguments presented by the representatives of forest peoples to defend their rights, to consider the future and to suggest specific routes to effective consultation of local populations as a prerequisite for any shared system of management worthy of that name.



François Braem  
Indigenous Issues  
APFT Programme

Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific - the APFT Programme has been able to set up a databank resulting in the creation of an international network in which a large number of local experts are playing an increasingly significant role. The APFT Programme is currently putting the finishing touches to a major report. A separate work will summarise important observations and recommendations to be implemented. This may now be ordered from the APFT Coordination Office.

Professor Pierre de Maret, Programme Director  
APFT-DG Development - European Union - Free  
University of Brussels

- Web site:  
<http://www.ulb.ac.be/soco/apft/>
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## In Central Africa, the towns are eating up the forest

Many projects aimed at the conservation of forest ecosystems in Central Africa have been designed and implemented as if the area to be protected had no link with the rest of the country and particularly the urban areas where increasing numbers of the population are becoming concentrated. Convinced that the future of the forests lies both within the towns and cities and within the forests themselves, the APFT has, by means of a network of African experts, developed a major new area of research which is generating a great deal of interest on the part of large international bodies involved in the conservation of flora and fauna.

### The outward expansion of the forest/city interface

Urban areas in the region are increasingly encroaching onto the forest. Why is this? First, there is demographic pressure: one African in two in the region now lives in an urban environment. Sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing the world's fastest growth in population: the six countries of the Congo Basin have seen their populations increase by from 2.5 to 2.9% per annum over the last 30 years. The urban population has thus increased fivefold in less than a generation! City-dwellers have always needed more land, for agriculture and for dwelling, and also fuelwood for their domestic requirements.

Secondly, the acute economic crisis in the region further exacerbates the impact of the urban masses on the neighbouring forests. Furthermore, indigenous populations enjoy only a right of use over forest areas, whilst the State, continuing the system of colonial exploitation, reserves for itself exclusive ownership of the land, the subsoil and the forests. The fact that State systems find it difficult to meet the needs of city-dwellers merely perpetuates the latter's dependence on forest resources and agricultural products at the forest/city interface.

In Central Africa, the forest is often just at the very edge of town. This socio-cultural overlap explains how both the management of natural reserves and rural development efforts are directly influenced by urban populations.

### Game as fast food

City-dwellers depend to a significant extent on the resources of the forest - a fact amply illustrated by the consumption of game, commonly known as bushmeat. Formerly at the centre of rituals and complex symbolic relationships between hunter and hunted, this meat is now increasingly found in the urban food chain. A traditional food product, game is the principal source of animal protein in the region. Practically all species, from the largest mammals to the smallest vertebrates, are eaten, except where particular food taboos exist. The transformation of traditional rural consumption into a common urban practice which is highly commercialised is the result of the combined effects of

economic crisis, the process of urbanisation, demographic pressure, exploitation of the forests and institutional constraints, population mobility and the latter's attachment to a cultural and symbolic system. Moreover, the perception of the inhabitants of towns and cities in Cameroon regarding the forest and management of forest resources has been investigated by the APFT. All these factors have combined to lead to an increase in the consumption of bushmeat in urban areas, be this at home, in the street or in restaurants.

Will the fauna outlive city-dwellers' love of the special flavour of smoked meat? What alternatives and options are there for donors and those involved in conservation? These are crucial issues, as it has been demonstrated, given the important role of fauna and particularly of large mammals in the dissemination of seeds, that the processes of regeneration of the forests in Central Africa will be irreversibly adversely affected by the disappearance of fauna.

### Should towns and cities be demonised?

Certainly not! Urban populations, which constitute an increasingly heavy burden, are contributing to growing awareness and are moving on to action. They are thus pressurising their leaders not to misappropriate the common heritage to the profit of just a few, and they are working out new ways in which to guarantee their long-term survival by seeking to reconcile development and environmental conservation.

Dr Theodore Trefon  
Town/Forest Relations APFT Programme





# Need we be afraid of roads?

by Sophie Bouly de Lesdain\*

Roads regularly attract subject of media interest, and polarise opinion. This is particularly true of some NGOs, who regularly deplore the harmful impact of road building on the environment. They criticise organisations that provide funds to create and repair road systems. One example is the recent denunciation by The Rainforest Foundation of the European Union's campaign to renew the road system in Cameroon. This debate largely echoes the sterile conflict between environmental conservation (the need for areas unaffected by human activity) and development (the need open up areas to the outside world). In most cases, roads are attacked not for themselves but for the excessive exploitation of the environment that they allow, such as new frontiers and hunting. They become a symbol. Any question of their actual impact on the environment, in comparison with other modes of transport, ceases to be an issue.

The controversy about roads encapsulates the radical difference of opinion between NGOs, who regard the rainforest as part of the world heritage, and local population groups who fail to understand why they are denied this benefit of the modern world while they have to endure its other manifestations. Roads, after all, make healthcare, education, cultural activities, and so on more accessible. The creation of a dense road network enables outlying communities to become more integrated: integrated politically (with the benefits of education and therefore a common language, for example) but economically as well (sale of farming produce and fish). Economically, roads have national implications, too: the industrial exploitation of forests provides substantial income to developing countries. This is another area in which the NGOs are critical of donors, claiming that their road reconstruction projects merely serve the interests of forestry

companies and, by encouraging their activities, benefit only the private sector.

The forestry companies defend themselves against this charge. In the absence of any figures to show the true impact of roads, they put forward statistics of their own about deforestation as a whole, arguing that only 20% of forest clearance is directly attributable to these activities.

Some forestry operators go so far as to recommend that the population should be denied access to the roads they build. The harmful impact of people on the environment is thus taken

as read, whereas the effects of industry are the subject of little or no doubt. How can it be reasonable to contemplate closing forestry roads to the public, in the

**Roads are at the top rural populations wish lists. Yet their economic contribution is not clear. Although they make it easier to move farm produce, they also contribute to the destruction of resources.**

interest of preserving the environment, while the very existence of those roads is a result of the industrial exploitation of forests?

The conclusion of this thinking is that forestry areas, divided between protected zones and forestry concessions, are closed to the public who, nevertheless, are held responsible for deforestation.

## Constants and divergence

Apart from specific local features, certain constants can be identified. Roads come at the top of the list of demands made by rural populations. As a symbol of development, they are nevertheless associated with undesirable urban society in a country such as Papua New Guinea and desirable modernism in Africa. In the Dja region of Cameroon this link between roads and development affects local communities' support for conservation projects: in the minds of the villagers, the refusal to build new roads or upgrade existing ones proves that of the conservation programmes to drive the villagers from the region. They then turn against such programmes and the messages they carry.

Another constant is the inability of the state to



provide what is wanted. The forestry companies step in to fill this gap in exchange for the freedom to carry on their activities undisturbed. The resulting road systems have nothing to do with any global regional development policy, designed to open up the regions concerned to the outside world. And when the forestry companies find themselves obliged to do something that should be done by the state, they very often do so despite themselves. Consequently, they avoid the villages as much as possible. In any case, these roads are built to allow the regular, high-speed traffic of timber lorries and other trucks, resulting in widespread harm. One of the constants that surprises those responsible for the projects is the refusal of the local population to maintain roads despite their vociferous demands for them. In Africa, for example, during the last 20 years, nearly a third of the \$150 billion road investment has been wasted for lack of maintenance, even though every dollar saved on road maintenance increases vehicle operating costs by two or three dollars. This refusal can be analysed at various levels. First, the history of road building dates back to colonisation. In Africa, the representatives of the colonising powers forcibly enlisted the necessary labour for road building, then forced the local population to live a sedentary existence beside the roads so they could be more effectively controlled. As an instrument of policy, roads became a means for people to express their discontent in two ways: first, in Africa, villagers bar access to roads as a way of getting what they want; secondly, their refusal to maintain the roads also highlights the inability of the state to provide basic services. The final explanation for this refusal is an anthropological one: S Klappa mentions a rule that applies throughout Papua New Guinea: "The person who builds something must also maintain it."

In Papua New Guinea, too, and at Kilimeri in particular, the fruits of a tree "naturally" belong to the person who planted it or cleared the ground around it. It could be argued that the same applies in Africa, where, for example, a plot of land within a village belongs to the person who first cleared it. This explanation offers two advantages: it goes further than simply attributing the villagers' failure to

maintain the roads to the traumas caused by the history of road building in Africa (forced labour); and it incorporates the practice whereby the villagers who maintain the roads "tax" their users.

The final common aspect of the situations studied - a not insignificant one - concerns the ambivalent economic contribution made by roads. They make it easier to move agricultural produce, thus increasing opportunities for the villagers to make money; at the same time, however, they contribute to the destruction of resources, for example habitat fragmentation and an increase in predatory practices. People are so convinced of the benefits roads bring that the hope of enjoying them encourages a particular type of behaviour - increasing agricultural production in the hope that the state will then be forced to build a road to move the produce, or to announce the possible building of a road.

The villagers, however, remain unsure about the income they can expect to receive from their farming (haphazard transportation facilities, fluctuating prices), which partly explains the failure to move food produce out of the area, as in eastern Cameroon. Roads do not solve all problems any more than they cause all evil. By contributing to the opening-up of regions they enhance their potential while emphasising their weaknesses. Their existence alone is not sufficient to bring prosperity to a region, though it is a necessary condition for that prosperity. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is typical. Since the 1960s, the road network has deteriorated greatly, creating supply difficulties for towns, and problems with moving produce out of rural areas. One particular consequence of this situation has been an increase in farming on the outskirts of towns and the decline or even disappearance of old villages, which have now become inaccessible.

As emphasised by the ITTA, forest roads are a necessary evil: there is no reason to end forestry activities, but everything possible should be done to minimise the direct and, especially, indirect threats they pose to the environment.

\* Anthropologist. This article is an abridged contribution that appeared in an APFT publication, "La route en forêt tropicale: portes ouvertes sur l'avenir?"

[Roads in tropical forests - a gateway to the future?]



# GEF's support to biodiversity

by Georgina Fekete\*

Globalisation, a dominant force in the 20th century's last decade, is shaping a new era of interaction among nations, economies and people. It is increasing the contacts between people across national boundaries - in economy, in technology, in culture and

in governance. But it is also fragmenting production processes, labour markets, political entities and societies. So while globalisation has positive, innovative, dynamic aspects - it also has negative, disruptive, marginalising ones.

One of these negative aspects is the impact of globalisation on the natural environment. While struggling for the world to become more efficient, detrimental economic, technological, industrial, agricultural and energy policies in our world have had severe - mainly non-reversible - effects on the environment. The environmental challenges which face our earth are increasing and among others includes: land degradation, deforestation, declin-

## And when these resources disappear?

One such disappearing resource is the world's forests. Forests cover almost one third of the earth's land area, "ranging from less than 1% in Cape Verde, Djibouti and Iraq to more than 90% in Belize, Papua New Guinea and Surinam. In the developing world, as many as four million hectares of land an area the size of Switzerland - are deforested each year. Air pollution is devastating

(GEO-2000, United Nations Environment Programme - UNEP).

The demand for wood is rising, especially in the developing world as, "in every least developed country for which statistics are available, wood supplies at least 70% of the fuel used for cooking and heating."

What is the international community doing to conserve and use the biological resources in forest ecosystems sustainably?

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was created in 1991 as an

**"Don't ask the earth to produce more,  
do more with what the earth produces!"**

ing biodiversity and marine resources, water scarcity and deterioration of water and air quality.

The environment cannot just be viewed in isolation; it has intrinsic links at the micro and macro-levels across space and external links such as those between the poverty and the economy of a country. Poverty can exist alongside a wealth of resources, as in Africa, where many people don't have access to the natural resources unevenly distributed across the region and inaccessible due to the socio-historical context. In other areas the economy of a country may rely heavily on exports of natural resources.

Europe's forests, causing economic losses of US\$35 billion per year. Worldwide the remaining forest is predominantly located in the Amazon Basin, Canada, Central Africa, Southeast Asia and the Russian Federation.

Forests are valuable ecological resources, home to indigenous cultures, global biodiversity, ecosystem services and stores of carbon; they contribute to local and national economic growth and offer recreational facilities.

So why are we destroying such a valuable resource? Deforestation is a result of population and economic growth, poverty, urbanisation and expansion of agricultural lands

independent financial entity that provides grants and concessions to developing countries for projects and activities designed to protect the global environment. The four main areas within GEF's mandate are: climate change, biological diversity, international waters and the depletion of the ozone layer. Activities that concern land degradation especially desertification and deforestation are also eligible for funding. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNEP and the World Bank implement the GEF projects.

In the field of forest ecosystems GEF has two main aims: to support conservation by "protecting existing





Mount Cameroon Project

Epiphytic orchid on a tree trunk in Congo Basin cloud forest

forest areas and establishing and strengthening systems of conservation, focusing primarily on tropical and temperate ecosystems in areas at risk" and to manage forests sustainably through combined production, and socio-economic and biodiversity activities.

Activities supported by GEF include investment, technical assistance, capacity building, policy, public education and targeted research (GEF Operational Strategy).

Between 1991 and 1998, 46% of GEF projects focused on biodiversity, which have involved specific forestry projects. There are an estimated 1.7 million species on earth, around 90% of which live in moist tropical forests, mainly located in the developing world. A reduction in such diversity of species can be considered a threat to the material welfare of humans, in that ecosystems are less able to provide vital products and services. The dependence on forest's species

can be illustrated by a study in India which shows that "the poorest families derived as much as 25% of their income from nuts, berries and medicinal herbs commonly found in forests".

With the aim of protecting biodiversity in forests, the UNDP has implemented a project in the Kenyan Aabuko Sokoke Forest, following a Government declaration of the area as a reserve. GEF has helped to establish the Kipepeo Butterfly Farm in 1993 in an area, which is home to many rare species of mammals, bird and butterflies. This project, run by the East African Natural History Society in partnership with the National Museum of Kenya, has been ecologically successful in preserving species and the nation's largest lowland forest and financially successful by exporting butterfly pupae for the local community. In addition the project is the focus for ecotourism, "complementing the forest and the nearby Gedi historical ruins."

Madagascar is known as one of the richest ecological countries on the planet, containing around 75% of species endemic to the island (see page 57). Slash and burn agriculture has destroyed and severely degraded around 80% of the original forest, accompanied by a loss in biodiversity, a loss of topsoil and damage to watersheds. GEF, with the UNDP and the World Bank, has helped overcome this by supporting the second phase of Madagascar's National Environment Action Plan through three types of activities: field operations (management of natural resources, including soil, water, forests and biodiversity), strategic activities (formulating environmental policies, strategies and instruments for capacity building for impact assessments) and support

activities (including research, communications, education, training and information systems). The benefits of this US\$156.5 million programme to the island are three-fold: protected biodiversity, better management of natural resources with benefits accruing to local populations and maintaining sustainability through long-term financial support.

In other areas of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Region, villagers have come up with innovative solutions at little cost but large impact. The women of Pala in Burkina Faso, for example, have devised a plan within the framework of sustainable management to address the multiple concerns of deforestation and subsequent climate change; they have developed fuel-efficient kilns, which use less fuel wood than normal kilns to fire clay vessels. In addition, they have also initiated environmental awareness workshops and established nurseries, to grow seedlings commonly used to grow trees for fuelwood, reforesting nearly 14 hectares - all with the support of the GEF Small Grants Programme.

Many positive lessons have been learnt, providing best practices to replicate in other areas. It is not all doom and gloom - there has been a reversal and a halt in deforestation in some areas of Europe and North America. But we must not stop here - there is a long way to go. It is everyone's responsibility to work together towards a sustainable world.

**Useful websites:**

<http://www.undp.org>;

<http://gefweb.org>

**\*UNDP**

The contents of this article do not necessarily reflect the views of the UNDP



# New discipline, new practice

## New discipline, new practice

by Yves Renard (\*)

**F**orestry issues in the small islands of the Caribbean are, in many respects, different from those that dominate current discourses and fuel debates on forest conservation and management in other parts of the world. In most of these islands, the main challenge is not to regulate large concessions or to ensure that the behaviour of the timber industry is consistent with principles of sustainability. The main challenge is not to preserve and enhance the rights of indigenous populations or those of forest workers.

The main challenge is not to establish standards of production and to guarantee the fairness of trade in timber products.

In these small islands, the challenge is different, because commercial forest exploitation for timber production is rare, and the past two decades have indeed been marked, in several islands, by the failure and abandonment of commercial harvesting and plantation programmes. In these small territories, the most critical functions of forests are not based on the extractive use of their resources.

Instead, they include water supply (many countries have no underground water resources and thus rely exclusively on surface water for domestic, agricultural and industrial uses), tourism (with a rapidly growing heritage tourism sector in many islands) and soil conservation (an essential need in volcanic islands prone to erosion and where sedimentation can have serious negative impacts on coastal resources and activities).

For forestry administrations, this reality translates in a challenge which is radically different from what they have inherited from colonial administrations. Today, the work of the Caribbean forester is less about planting trees and more about managing wildlife habitats. It is less about harvesting timber and more about preserving watershed functions. It

is less about controlling squatters and more about encouraging recreational and touristic uses of forest sites and attractions. It is less about preventing illegal cutting in state-owned forest reserves and more about preserving soil cover in agricultural and residential areas.

This challenge is particularly difficult to meet, because there is insufficient public and political recognition of the values, goods, services and benefits generated by forests. In the Caribbean, many forestry administrations have recognised this need, and have mounted intensive campaigns aimed at increasing public awareness and generating support. In the Dominican Republic, for example, Plan Quisqueya Verde, a governmental initiative launched two years ago, has conducted an impressive campaign aimed at sensitising all sectors of society and encouraging people to protect, manage and plant trees. In the years ahead, there will be need for more efforts of this type, to demonstrate the values of forests and the need for greater investments in the

sector. There will also be need for studies which will establish and document the social, economic, cultural and ecological benefits of forests, and build the political argument in favour of conservation and management.

This new reality makes the life and work of forestry administrations, and of all those concerned with forest management, more exciting and more complex. In this emerging context, forest management cannot remain an isolated discipline, it requires the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, from the traditional hunters to tourism operators, from farmers to water authorities, from planning and development agencies to scientific institutes. Because of the knowledge and experience they possess, because of the need to respect their





rights, and because of their current and future roles in implementation, all these interest groups need to be involved at all stages in the planning and decision-making process.

In order to meet this requirement for multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches to forest management, there is also need for the formulation of new policies, and for the involvement of all partners in the process of policy formulation. In Grenada, for example, the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture has, over the past two and a half years, been engaged in an innovative process of policy review which has relied almost exclusively on local expertise and has been carried out with the active involvement of all sectors. As a result, a new policy has been prepared - and formally approved by the Cabinet of Ministers - which represents a consensus among a wide range of stakeholders, and provides the basis for a more participatory approach to forest management, and to the establishment of new collaborative management arrangements.

This need for institutionalising participatory forest management and translating it into formal collaborative arrangements has been recognised by a number of actors in the region, and there are promising experiments in several countries. In St. Lucia, for example, the Department of Forestry is supporting a number of community-based initiatives in forest and watershed management, and is currently negotiating management agreements with community organisations. This includes the case of the Mankôtè mangrove, where there is a formal partnership between the government and local people for the management and sustainable use of a mangrove forest for charcoal and timber production. In Haiti, under the auspices of the World Bank-funded *Projet d'Appui Technique à la Protection des Parcs et Forêts (ATPPF)*, the Ministries of the Environment and Agriculture are supporting the establishment of participatory arrangements for the management of the country's few remaining forest areas, and have facilitated the recent creation of a non-governmental *Comité d'Appui au Système National des Aires Protégées (CASNAP)*, which is expected to play an important role in facilitating the involvement of civil society in forest management at all levels.

In spite of these advances, most of the region's efforts in participatory and collaborative forest management are relatively recent, and new initiatives often suffer from the lack of methods and instru-

ments appropriate to local conditions and needs. Indeed, experience has shown that participation cannot be effective without the use of rigorous methods which allow for the identification of all stakeholders, the gathering and sharing of information, the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, and the equitable sharing of costs and benefits. In many respects, "poor" participation can be worse than no participation at all, and the time has come to focus on the development of approaches, tools and methods that make participation efficient and effective.

It is in recognition of these needs, concerns and opportunities that a regional forestry programme has recently been launched by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), with support from the European Commission through its Directorate General for Development, with a focus on participatory forest management. This three-year programme - now entering its second year - includes a small number of strategic interventions aimed at building the region's capacity for participatory forest management. The programme is developing four case studies of selected experiences in the region, and is conducting a range of training and organisational development activities with both governmental and non-governmental partners. It will also facilitate three participatory policy and institutional review processes in three countries of the region.

In the past decade, foresters and natural resource managers in the Caribbean have begun to make radical shifts in their approaches. They have moved the focus of their attention away from the resource, towards the goods and services that it provides as well as the people who benefit from these uses. They have begun to integrate concerns for equity and justice in their approach to management. They have progressively become the facilitators of extremely complex processes that involve a wide range of actors and activities. For the insular Caribbean, participatory management is no longer a buzzword made fashionable by the language of international conferences and the advocacy of marginal organisations. Participation is progressively changing the structures and cultures of organisations, moving from local practice to national policy, and shaping new institutions which are putting people - and the quality of their lives - at the centre of development work.

(\*) Executive Director, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), St.

Lucia



# Island forests

by Richard Hoath\*

**T**he early morning sun is already strong as we leave Chuchulu village across the clear blue waters of Marovo Lagoon, in the west of the Solomon Islands. People fish from outrigger canoes, villagers head inland to garden areas cleared from the forest, as we pass over reefs and islands on our way to the forests of Raukutu village.

A large ship is loaded with freshly-cut hardwood logs. And the water changes from pristine blue to a silty red.

Six months earlier the people of Raukutu signed a large-scale logging concession. Soon there were problems with water pollution, delays in royalty payments, and with the practices of the logging company. Chief Lidice Vitini began talking with Chuchulu village. "We were invited to show these people our alternative to destructive logging," explains Ridolo, one of the trained eco-forestry members from Chuchulu. "They see eco-timber production and they understand."

The Chuchulu community is one of 50 South Pacific communities receiving sustainable forestry training and support under the European Commission sponsored South Pacific Community Eco-Forestry (SPCEF) project.

This four-year pilot programme started in 1997 to develop country-specific and appropriate models for community-led conservation and sustainable management of forest resources. The Foundation for the South Pacific (United Kingdom), and the local South Pacific-based affiliates of The Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI), are carrying out the SPCEF project in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga and Kiribati.

## Forests and people

Long-established customs form the basis of social organisation and in particular, land ownership remains largely with the traditional owners. Most

South Pacific peoples still live a subsistence or semi-subsistence lifestyle. Sustainable management and use of resources is vital to maintain and improve their social and economic status.

But the continued productivity and existence of the region's forests are under threat from large-scale logging, commercial agriculture, foreign interests in natural resources, and population pressure.

## Conventional logging

The Raukutu experience with large-scale logging is common across the Pacific. There are short term cash benefits for the resource owning communities but long term costs, through the reduction in future productivity of the exploited resources, environmental degradation, incidental destruction of other resources important in traditional lifestyles, and social disruption over the use of income and remaining land.

The World Bank estimated that forest resource owners in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji consistently received only 8-15% of the log value, whereas the governments received 30-35% and the logging companies about 30%, as excess profits above normal profit margins.

Governments across the region are making positive steps towards sustainable management of the national forest resources, such as through the introduction of Codes of Logging Practice. Most initiatives are directed at large-scale operators, with support for community-based forestry left largely to non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

## The role for NGOs

Across the region NGOs are responding with programmes such as the development of appropriate forest silviculture prescriptions, environmental awareness programmes, and support for community-led resource management. Cooperation between projects, such as the recently formed Eco-Forestry





Forum in Papua New Guinea, is strengthening the emergence of a viable eco-forestry sector. Once reluctant governments are increasing support as communities take the lead in implementing sustainable forestry practices and providing rural based income opportunities.

### Changing views on development

"In the past, if a logging company arrives, rural people think this is development. People did not understand the effect of selling their resources," says Stewart Maearo from Malaita in the Solomon Islands. "Now we hear there are alternatives. That is why I have come to SIDT today. With information we can decide what is best to improve the standard of life in the village."

For three years the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) has been implementing the SPCEF project, reaching over 8000 rural people, including those in Chuchulu village. SIDT works with groups such as Greenpeace Pacific raising the profile of eco-forestry and providing a program of rural based sustainable forestry training and extension support.

The eco-timber alternative offered through the SPCEF project is giving village landowners in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji the option to manage and utilise their forest resources sustainably through providing a range of quality tropical hardwoods directly to local and export markets.

But Felix Narasia from SIDT is quick to point out that the SPCEF project is not about producing eco-timber. "We are here to provide the information and training communities need to manage their forest sustainably. Producing eco-timber is simply a tool that enables land owners to keep their forests intact while still making some income."

### The Impact

There are now over 20 community groups in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji who have decided to practice sustainable forestry, completed training programs, and are now producing eco-timber with support from the SPCEF pilot project. The increased individual and community income has been used for basics: education, healthcare and improvements to community water supplies. Local availability of timber has improved housing.

At a community meeting last December women from Hasavaia, one of the SPCEF Vanuatu communities, discussed the social impact of the project: how families have come back together to work as a community to implement sustainable forestry. But for them the process has not been easy. The initial training, forest inventory surveys, and heavy labour in milling and transporting timber are changing the use of time in the community. They agree: "we need to talk about the impact of our project, and decide how we will share the work and benefits."

### Success

The SPCEF project will end in February next year. The opportunity then will be to extend the programme to other interested communities. With time, regional cooperation, and donor support, FSPI is confident that the result will be an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable community-based eco-forestry industry.

"The SPCEF project will be a success if the communities we support implement the small scale community-led forestry model. These sites are seen as demonstration areas for what is possible, and small scale producers are given the chance to learn about and choose to practice sustainable forest management" says Mark Kalotap, a forester with the SPCEF Vanuatu project. "And most importantly, people begin to know they can do it."

Geoffrey Dennis, SIDT community forester helping the community survey their forest



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## Paying back the forest

In 1950, Costa-Rica's forests covered 2,708,400 hectares. This decreased to 1,591,100 hectares by 1970 and was down

to 1,333,710 hectares in 1983. The forests left were mostly in protected areas: forest reserves, national parks and so on.

**C**learing forests in Costa Rica was linked to its main exports: coffee, bananas and sugar. First Central Valley was deforested for coffee plantations. The Cuban revolution and changes in international markets, then certain non-traditional products and crops were developed, mainly sugar production and cattle raising; the latter activity gaining importance throughout the Central American region. By the end of the 80s, deforestation in Costa Rica had been reduced, thanks to the reforestation programmes supported by the United States, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and Germany.

biodiversity and natural beauty.

Until 1996, the state had used the law to promote the opposite effect: timber harvesting.

By law too, the state had established forestry exploitation by concession, including of forest reserves, protected zones and other lands that were part of the State forest assets but 1996 marked the end of exploitation.

Here, new concepts such as payment for environmental services (PSA) were introduced. Among other things, this 1996 Law provided a new framework for promotion of forest activities, against an interventionist approach to one directed towards development, and economic and environmental sustainability.

**Other benefits from the new approach to forestry include:**  
**mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions;**  
**protection of water for urban, rural, or hydroelectric use;**  
**protection of local biodiversity and all that entails;**  
**and protecting the natural beauty of Costa Rica**  
**for tourism and for science.**

In 1998, the country was no longer a net deforesting country, but one in which forests were preserved, and the forest cover of the country had gone up to 40.4%.

### **How had this happened?**

After ratifying the 1992 Rio Convention resolutions, these were incorporated in 1996 into Costa Rican Forestry Law, which acknowledged that forests help mitigate greenhouse gas emission, and protect water,

Apart from establishing the PSA, it included: the creation of FONAFIFO (the National Forestry Financing Fund); delegation of responsibilities and the creation of forest conservation certificates.

Owners of forests and plantations now receive payment to compensate them for loss of revenue and reward them for the benefit that the forests and plantations provide both Costa Rican society and the world as a whole.



Other benefits from the new approach to forestry include: mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions; protection of water for urban, rural, or hydroelectric use; protection of local biodiversity and all that entails; and most importantly protecting the natural beauty of Costa Rica for tourism and for science. The forests now compete with other activities (agriculture and cattle-raising) and are no longer considered as mere timber producers.

The new system ties in with the framework established by the Structural Adjustment Program of the International Monetary Fund, which decided in 1995 to eliminate all public subsidies, including those related to forest activities; what is more it conforms with the Rio Declaration on environment and development; and finally it makes Costa Rica one of the first countries to mitigate its own emissions of greenhouse gases through a tax on hydrocarbons directed back to fund reforestation, forest management and conservation.

A state body was created for the benefit of small and medium producers, to fund the promotion of forest management, reforestation, afforestation and agroforestry. It also attracts financing for the payment of the environmental services that forests and forest plantations provide.

A new law submitted to the Legislative Assembly proposes that FONAFIFO becomes the National Fund of Environmental Services and that environmental service of water protection is added to the rate charged for water and electricity to the Costa Rican consumer. 50% of the return generated by the Fund shall be allocated to provide credit to finance environmental activities.

*Source: The development of the Forestry Environmental Services Payment Program in Costa Rica (San José, 1999)*

## **Strategic Alliances established by FONAFIFO for Payment of Environmental Services include:**

(i) **FUNDECOR - Energia Global Agreement (1997)**. "The first agreement for the payment of environmental services directed to the protection of water for generation of electric power";

(ii) **Compania Nacional de Fuerza y Luz - FONAFIFO Agreement**, where "The National Power and Light Company shall pay FONAFIFO \$5 ha/year, for the promotion and follow-up of projects within the area of interest; and \$40 ha/year for each hectare offset by means of forest management, conservation, or reforestation.

(iii) **FUNDECOR - Compania Hydroelectrica Platanar S.A. Agreement**, where FUNDECOR agrees to pay for "environmental services" to the owners of properties within the catchment area (National Protected Areas System); and give a "green label" certificate to the owners of forests and forest plantations.



# Threatened forests

## An NGO perspective

by Saskia Ozinga\*

**F**riday 11 February 2000. The last day of negotiations at the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) in New York. Talks continued day and night as one by one or in small groups, delegates were called aside to broker a joint agreement. At seven the next morning, an agreement was reached and the four-year process that could have contributed to solving the world's forest crisis was over.

NGOs had been denied the opportunity to speak. Indigenous people's organisations walked out in protest. By midnight only one NGO representative remained. The others had felt excluded from a debate that had deteriorated to backroom-dealing, with little reference to the forest crisis.

The IFF had a chance to reverse the trend of disappearing forests, but it did not take it. Since the end of the negotiations NGOs have expressed their disappointment at its outcome and identified the main cause for its failure: a lack of political will to address the direct and underlying causes of forest loss.

### The IFF

A descendant of the Rio Earth Summit via the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), the IFF inherited the aim of combating deforestation and promoting sustainable development of forests. Specifically, its priority was to promote and facilitate the implementation of 130 Proposals for Action identified by IPF. These Proposals for Action, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly, are effectively a form of soft law. Secondary mandates for the IFF were to "consider matters left pending" from IPF and to consider "international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management and conservation of forests." It was this latter mandate that hijacked the IFF process while the implementation of the vital Proposals for Action was neglected.

### The debate on a forest convention

Most NGOs, including Fern, Greenpeace, WWF, Friends of the Earth and the World Rainforest

The IFF inherited the aim of combating deforestation and promoting sustainable development of forests

IFF







Addressing the issue of trade regulation and land rights

Movement, have been against a premature forest convention for a number of reasons. In most cases NGOs advocate better legal arrangements, but the forest debate is a highly political one that links in with discussions on trade, land use and land rights.

NGOs believe the two main issues that need addressing are trade regulation - including illegal logging - and land rights issues - including more equal division of land and resources. These issues have no chance of being incorporated into a forest convention or any other legally-binding instrument. Trapped between the insistence on national sovereignty over forests, on the one hand, and international legal obstacles to any non-tariff or tariff barriers to trade in forest products on the other, there is little scope for a convention to establish binding commitments. Instead, it would be more likely

to develop criteria for sustainable forest management. There are NGO fears that these would soon be reduced to the lowest common denominator, thereby threatening existing standard setting and certification. Furthermore a forest convention would hold up ongoing forest negotiations in other fora, including the Convention on Biological Diversity.

### **IFF is dead, long live UNFF**

The main outcome of IFF was to recommend to the eighth meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD8) the setting up of a UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), with a similar mandate. The disappointment NGOs feel at this outcome is not related to the creation of UNFF *per se*, but to its terms of reference. Or, more specifically, with its lack of focus on action.

Fern believes that if IFF had used its opportunity to imple-

ment the IPF Proposals for Action, which was its first mandate, the Forum could have contributed to an improvement in the forest situation worldwide. There is little evidence that action will be more forthcoming. Instead, the final text of IFF IV has given most NGOs reason to fear more discussions on the pros and cons of a forest convention rather than on implementing the Proposals of Action.

A spokesperson for Friends of the Earth commented: "It is pathetic to see how foresters are re-establishing a mechanism proven not to work."

Anticipating the emergence of a forum like UNFF, a large group of NGOs presented their criticisms of IFF at the penultimate IFF meeting:

"The IFF process has not led to action. It has been dominated by narrow economic interests, has used outdated procedures for major group participation and has often ignored or duplicated the work of existing agreements and initiatives such as the CBD. This type of process must not be continued."

The joint statement also listed six activities that any new mechanism should include to win the support of NGOs.

These included:

- focusing on implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action at both national and international level;
- creating an effective international monitoring and reporting mechanism for such implementation
- creating enhanced means of participation for civil society and



major groups in the intergovernmental process itself and in implementation processes at both national and international levels.

For the time being NGOs seriously doubt if the UNFF will adequately implement these demands in its programme of work. Nonetheless, many NGOs are determined to work constructively to encourage UNFF to develop a working programme that focuses on the implementation of the Proposals for Action, as well as other commitments governments have made, many of which have not been implemented. There is a growing frustration among NGOs about the lack of real participation of NGOs and indigenous peoples' organisations as well as a lack of commitment from many governments to implement the promises of Rio to allow proper participation of all Major Groups. Many NGOs will work hard towards CSD8 to ensure that once UNFF has been created, it will be a fully-participatory process, with a clear focus on implementation, and without IFF's failings.

### Three credibility tests

The first test of whether UNFF will become a body that can contribute to tackling the forest crisis will be the next CSD meeting. It has not yet been decided where in the UN system UNFF will be placed. Some NGOs feel UNFF should be placed under the CSD. There are three reasons for this: to allow as much participation as possible; to provide funds for developing countries to participate and to ensure that the forest debate does not turn into a pure forestry debate. If the UNFF were placed elsewhere, ie higher in the UN system, it would be more difficult to meet these criteria.

The second test will be the format of the UNFF meeting. Unless the first week of the two-week meeting is set aside for monitoring and reporting on implementation of previous commitments, followed by clear recommendations to Ministers, some NGOs do not believe UNFF will be able to do any better than the IFF.

Lastly, for UNFF to be truly effective, it needs to be assisted by an expert committee to develop clear procedures for monitoring, reporting and producing country reports. UNFF on its own would not be able to research and assess more than five to 10 country reports at each meeting, which means that it would

be 15 years before a country could be assessed again.

### Conclusions

According to official figures 15.4 million hectares of tropical forests are disappearing every year, or about 45 soccer fields every minute. Recent estimates by the governments of Indonesia and Brazil suggest that these figures are too low. In the northern hemisphere natural forests are being replaced with intensively-managed plantations. In Europe, which has a forest cover of 36%, the remnants of old growth forests are less than one per cent. Even these remnants are still being logged. It is therefore no exaggeration to state that the next 10 years will be decisive ones for the forests.

What needs to be done? The IFF experience makes it clear that creating a forum on forests is not enough. UNFF will only contribute if it focuses on the implementation of commitments made. More importantly, to date the most concrete results in halting destructive logging or mining projects, promoting sustainable forest management and empowering local people are only visible at national and local, not international, level.

These are the initiatives which should be supported by the governments present in the IFF debate with policies, funds and moral support. An international process that does not actively include indigenous peoples and local communities, nor allow major groups, including NGOs, to participate, respects neither the text nor the spirit of the Rio meeting.

*\*Director of Fern, an NGO*

### Implementation of IPF Proposals for Action

NGOs pledged at the third meeting of the IFF to start a project monitoring the implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action. It is coordinated by GFPP and Bionet in the US and Fern in Europe with a Steering Committee with partners in all continents. 20 countries have been selected, each with a

country monitor working on a report. Preliminary results show a large difference in the attitude of governments. Some EU governments, notably the UK and Germany, have shown a clear commitment to implementation of most of the Proposals for Action, while others have not done anything. The final report will be presented at CSD8 in April 2000.



## A brief analysis of IFF 4

The final meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests succeeded in addressing many outstanding issues, but the preoccupation at IFF 4 was whether to start negotiations on a legally binding instrument (LBI) on forests. Other issues also generated considerable heat: new finances, technology transfer, and trade and environment were what some developing country delegates called the three pillars needed for sustainable forest management (SFM).

### Legally binding or not?

Delegations were unable to agree until sunrise on the morning after the meeting was due to close. Some delegations' winner-take-all attitude was evident from the start. Some pro-convention delegations would not concede to any reference to a new policy forum on forests without reference to a LBI. Others argued that there should be a new forest forum and no LBI.

At 5:55 am on Saturday, 12 February, Co-Chair Asadi presented the consensus text that states that to achieve the objective and carry out the functions of the arrangement, the ECOSOC and GA would, *inter alia*: establish an intergovernmental body that may be called UN Forum on Forests; invite relevant international and regional organisations, institutions and instruments to form a partnership supporting the work of UNFF within five years, and on the basis of an assessment, "consider with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests"; take steps towards financial and technical transfer support for implementation of SFM.

The agreed text is sufficiently obscure for those for and against-LBI to feel they had achieved a successful outcome. As one delegate confided: "In five years time, a vast array of lawyers will spend large amounts of public money trying to interpret what the negotiators meant."

### Who foots the bill?

While not as dramatic, the discussions on creation of a forest fund became a significant preoccupation for a number of delegates. Many hoped for new and additional funds to steer them on a path towards achieving SFM. Developed countries knew they had little to offer and were disinclined to put

what money they might be able to secure into a central fund. In the end, delegates agreed on a CSD text, which states that the Forum discussed but did not reach consensus on whether to establish a global forest fund.

### Who owns the knowhow?

Apart from the usual call for technology transfer, discussions led to a debate on access and benefit sharing of biological resources. The IFF became a vehicle to advance consideration of complex issues associated with access, intellectual property rights (IPR) and *sui generis* systems of ownership. These issues also surfaced in connection with discussions on trade and environment and traditional forest-related knowledge (TRK).

### A lack of political authority?

Only one proposal for action on underlying causes, relating to transparency within international financial institutions, survived from the 1999 Global Workshop on Addressing the Underlying Causes of Deforestation and Forest Degradation, which submitted over 100 action proposals to IFF3. One delegate suggested that a sub-agency of the CSD is unlikely to have enough political authority to address issues associated with the IMF, WTO, World Bank and other key high-level institutions. This observation lends weight to the call for the proposed UN Forum on Forests to be under the UN General Assembly rather than ECOSOC or the CSD.

### Déjà vu?

The IFF picked up where the IPF left off with the task of forging consensus on the most contentious issues in international forest policy. Although there was a definite sense of *déjà vu* arising from discussions on many of these issues, in some areas the IFF did make headway. One delegation noted that the IFF's major achievement was in focusing attention and continuing the dialogue on the issue of forests, as well as spotlighting the value of NFPs. The IFF process also encouraged a myriad of country and NGO-led initiatives, which increased interest in areas such as finance, underlying causes, low forest cover countries, and forest research, while solidifying consensus on many issues discussed at IPF and previous IFF sessions.



# Industry fights back

"We are not out to destroy"



industry

A man with a firm handshake and a frank and open gaze, Jean-Jacques Landrot knows he is up to the task entrusted to him. From a very early age, he has had a dual affliction: a love for the continent of Africa and a love for wood. Arriving in Côte d'Ivoire in 1962 as a student, he set up his own group in 1980. Now Secretary General of the International Technical Association for Tropical Timbers (ATIBT), he is the self-appointed ambassador of forest-industry representatives. His aim is to put an end to the damaging confusion between deforestation and controlled removal of timber. Those in the industry are tired of criticism, believing that, together with the rest of the population, they share the sacred mission of devel-

opment. They are now organising themselves to have their voice heard.

The ATIBT is an international association made up of 31 member countries. It represents a multitude of skills, ie an entire industrial sector ranging from the forest down to the consumer, taking in research centres, nationalised or mixed-economy companies, owners and service-providers in the timber sector. Its areas of skill are represented by four committees (forests, timber, business and transportation), a scientific and technical committee, and an arbitration chamber for resolving any disputes. Set up after the Second World War at the request of the FAO and the OECD, this association set out to standardise trade (rules of classification and

Learning to use the forest sustainably, Papua New Guinea



measurement and international contracts) and to promote tropical timber. Yet what gave it new impetus in the 1980s, was that, in the wake of exchanges with high-ranking international officials, the association's specialists became aware that there was a lack of understanding, a misconception of what they were about. One of the first of these was the confusion between controlled removal of timber and deforestation. Jean-Jacques Landrot confirms that he was stunned when, in 1985, during a field visit with a World Bank official, the latter expressed his regret at seeing such a fine forest "disappear." The forest in question had already been given back to nature, removal of timber having been completed! Something was very amiss. "In 1986, we decided to set up a forests committee, tropical forests hitherto having been left to regenerate naturally. Timber was removed in a controlled manner and the forest handed back to nature, particularly in the case of the extensive areas managed by major companies." Controlled removal consists of felling trees to remove them from the forest and sell them in the form of rough timber or locally processed products. Nowadays, in Africa, it represents one to two standing trees per hectare. According to Mr Landrot, this does not amount to destroying the forest. "This confusion between controlled removal and deforestation is very damaging, and is not unintentional. As far as we are concerned, controlled removal amounts to putting the forest to good use. The two phenomena are completely different."

The ATIBT decided that it was high time to react. Since the Rio Conference, forests have become a focal point. "We have become increasingly aware of the problem of the image of the product and of exploitation of forests, at least in the minds of Western consumers." Leading European experts on Africa therefore set about the task. In 1995, it was to them that the FAO turned with a view to implementing a project to reorganise the forestry-industry sector and to raise its profile internationally. The project was set up in three stages: an IFIA structure, which groups together the industry in Africa, through syndicates in Côte d'Ivoire. It comprises 300 formal businesses employing approximately 100,000 people directly and indirectly representing (subcontracting) approximately one million. The

forestry sector, which corresponds to six per cent of the GDP in the Congo Basin, is a major employer in Africa. Moreover, employment in the timber sector offers a significant advantage in that it promotes stability by tending to establish populations in the provinces and thereby preventing the creation of a proletarian underclass in the towns and cities. "One of our primary tasks is for the forestry worker to be a developer." IFIA is a member of the ATIBT, just like the European or US federations. One point counts in Africa's favour: the IFIA can count on a hard core of 15 groups sharing a common denominator - industrialists who have taken the step of transferring technologies and investing in the continent of Africa. "They all have a medium-term view of the management of their forest heritage, and value positive dialogue with governments, their workers and with rural communities." Companies are anxious to make it known that they have come to these countries to stay, not just to make a quick profit. This hard core has created a foundation which supports a major part of the ATIBT's activities, providing a locomotive effect drawing along African companies and the ATIBT international sector. Thanks to these 15 groups, a study is being conducted into the incidence of infrastructures, which are perceived as a vector of development or of destruction.

### **Cultivating the forest**

The forestry companies are not seeking to pass themselves off as something they are not: "Our outlook is different from that of the NGOs, because a company's objective is profitability. It has to prosper or else go under. Investors have to have a medium-term view and manage their resource in a sustainable manner. Yet, just like anyone else, a forestry company is entitled to love nature. A peasant farmer who grows wheat is not destroying it when he harvests it! The situation is the same with us. A good forestry company manages its resource in a sustainable manner, and that includes the ecological environment. It cultivates the forest."

However, something went wrong along the way. These trail-blazing builders have, in the mind of the public at large, become trail-blazing destroyers. Jean-Jacques Landrot believes that the best remedy is to publicise their work. "What we actually





have to do is commit ourselves to improving our work: there is inevitably disturbance of the forests, but our ultimate objective is development. National bodies find it difficult to accept this, but it is idealistic to imagine that such countries can be developed without nature being disrupted."

### Rejecting a mixture

Jean-Jacques Landrot remembers with bitterness the harm done by certain NGOs. "Many have used the forest to promote a particular lobby or action. They had to whip up emotion. What is offered is a caricature of a forestry company, and there is deliberate confusion of the clearing of areas of forest by burning, to create agricultural land, trade in game, and the promotion of development with the production and consumption of tropical timber. Shocking images have been shown on the television, with pygmies weeping because the evil White Man had destroyed their forest, preventing them from feeding themselves. There have been abuses, I grant you, but, all in all, the profession respects what it does." Nothing, however, prevents large groups from doing as they wish. Jean-Jacques Landrot would like to put things into perspective: "People have to be aware of the great difference between tropical forests and temperate forests, which is that point 0 is not the same. European point 0 corresponds nowadays to deforestation which went on for over four or five centuries, but today things are going very well. The forest is being regenerated, there is sustainable management, and forest volume and surface area is on the increase. These days, England has less than 30% of the forest it had three centuries ago. The industrial revolution destroyed the forests, for agricultural land, too. In Africa, we are starting from "year 0 plus 50": primary virgin forests offer a great many advantages. Obviously, where there is demographic pressure, there is destruction of the natural forest environment. We are accused of setting up a front of operations, ie of opening up infrastructures and thereby promoting the arrival of peasant farmers who burn the forest in order to cultivate the land or of hunters who trade in order to supply the towns and cities with foodstuffs. It is a very difficult problem to deal with, and three years ago we decided that we could no longer stand outside our socio-economic environment. Our role is that of leader and we have to act responsibly.



We do not want to appear like the ecologists, who say 'There is no alternative' and provide no practical solutions. We are addressing the problems of leadership and are the driving force in the profession: the 15 groups represent over half of forestry production and 80% of Africa's forestry industry."

### Towards a global solution

The ATIBT maintains that environmentalist NGOs and donors have offered only partial solutions. It proposes tackling the problem as a whole, at State level. Regional development appears to be the key, and states have been asked to divide up their forests into three parts: sanctuary forests (or totally protected forests), which would be located as far as possible from urban centres and, if possible, in areas of great biodiversity; productive forests, where the forestry companies are decisive players; and conversion forests, which are used for forestry

The ATIBT intends to bring together all those involved in the sector.

Here, a forest warden at the Asaguy reserve, in Côte d'Ivoire





Mada primary forest

purposes and then converted for agriculture. Jean-Jacques Landrot clarifies the forestry company's view: "In our opinion, the village communities living in the sanctuary forests have to be helped. We can't just seal them off and make them continue to live as primitives. They have to receive economic support. At State level, the forestry authorities, which have been ignored, have to be strengthened - if an administration is dilapidated, without human or technical resources, it cannot react against corruption and the pressure of development."

Setting up new programmes is no easy task. The first wave of managed production is scheduled for 2000, but there are technical problems owing to the unskilled workforce and economic difficulties. Such an approach is also very expensive. The IFIA is also lobbying for RIL - Reduced Impact Logging. There are many thousands who are wasting the forests' resources. Forestry companies are proposing that donors produce a list of approved methods which have a reduced impact on the forest environment, with teaching materials, video cassettes and demonstrations. "There are no better teachers than those actually involved in the field. Limiting waste promotes sensitive use of the forest, with the same level of production."

In their work, the professionals are inviting various bodies to join their cause. "We have to work with local populations, scientists, environmentalist NGOs, etc. Ours is a targeted approach."

Demographic pressure, immigration, profitability: it is more attractive for a peasant farmer to raise livestock or to farm than to manage a hectare of forest, and this is where the problem lies. The Western system of management is based on 30-year cycles, to allow for regeneration. In developing countries, it is difficult to require millions of hectares to be "frozen", awaiting regeneration, whilst the needs of the local populations are so overwhelming. Very often, there is no choice but to convert forest into agricultural land. The means also have to be devised to maintain use of forests over time. "In Europe, we manage forests as part of our heritage - they are not a resource instrument. It has to be appreciated that forests in the tropics cannot be enriched by commercial species in the hope of increasing their value. Africa has to adopt a heritage-management mentality involving versatile use of its resources, namely fruit, bark and timber."

Before concluding, Jean-Jacques Landrot highlights the importance of building on what has already been achieved. He recommends a study of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria: "We have to look at these cases, because their development is approximately 10 to 15 years ahead of countries in the Congo Basin. Lessons have to be drawn and used as a springboard." Any landing has to be on the side of development.



## Also check out...

### Essential viewing

the FAO website:

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/Forets.htm>

The FAO Forestry Programme addresses one of the most important, complex and controversial issues of modern times - how to use trees, forests and related resources to improve people's economic, environmental, social and cultural conditions while ensuring that this natural heritage is preserved for future generations. For more information about the FAO Forestry Programme, download its brochure *FAO, Forests and Forestry*. There you can also find its series of Information Notes on selected specific programmes in sustainable forest management, consult its on-line databases, read *The State of the World's Forests 1999* or view the Internet version of *Unasylva*, the international journal of forestry and forest industries. A clear, fast and user-friendly site, an excellent starting point for those seeking information on the subject.

A new approach to the World Bank:

<http://www.worldbank.org/environment/>

"In 1991, the World Bank brought the environmental agenda into the mainstream of its activities with the publication of *The Forest Sector: A World Bank Policy Paper*. The paper challenged the Bank to make a major break from business as usual by adopting a multisectoral approach to conserve tropical moist forests and expand forest cover. It also initiated participatory and consultative processes in strategy formulation. Parts of the strategy outlined in the 1991 forest paper became the basis for Operational Policy 4.36, which were issued in 1993.

"The effectiveness of the 1991 strategy has been modest, and the sustainability of its impact uncertain. The strategy had several inherent limitations. First, it was narrowly focused on 20 countries with moist tropical forest and neglected other biodiversity-rich forest types that are even more endangered, more important globally, or more in need of conservation to meet the needs of the poor. Second, while it diagnosed the problem of externalities, it did not stimulate a mechanism for mobilising grant or concessional funding for gainers to compensate losers for conserving forests of global value, implicitly assuming that governments will borrow Bank funds to achieve global conservation objectives. Third, the strategy failed to address governance issues beyond economic solutions such as the length and price of con-

cessions as incentives for conservation. Fourth, its cautious approach had a chilling effect on bank involvement in improving forest management in forest-rich countries that wished to use their forests for economic development. Fifth, the strategy's diagnosis was insufficient in determining the impact of domestic and international market forces on rates of deforestation.

"To enable the Bank to fulfill this role, six enhancements deserve priority in a revised forest strategy:

- The synergy between development and conservation objectives in the forest sector needs to be recognized and actively promoted through forest plantations, energy substitution, end-user efficiency, research, technology generation, and dissemination. This will require strengthened partnership with the private sector, NGOs, civil society, and research institutions.

- Efforts need to be made to improve governance so as to reduce and eventually eliminate illegal logging in natural forests.

- The current focus on the conservation of tropical moist forests needs to be broadened to encompass conservation of all natural forest types with rich biological diversity and carbon sequestration potential. Attention needs to be paid to temperate and boreal forests, where production forestry is being carried out and supported by the Bank, along with other highly endangered biologically-rich forest types in the tropics, the cerrados, the Western Ghats, the Atlantic forest, and tropical dry forests which are critical for addressing the fuelwood and other needs of the poor.

- While the Bank needs to safeguard the rights of indigenous people, more attention should be given to the effects of forest strategy on all the poor.

- Concessional or grant financing and other financing mechanisms (such as the prototype carbon Fund) need to be pursued on a scale sufficient to compensate countries producing forest- international public goods such as biodiversity preservation and carbon sequestration.

- The bank's organization and its processes will need adaptation to ensure effective forest strategy design and implementation as well as improved reporting systems capable of monitoring progress and compliance of its operations with safeguards."

In the next months, the World Bank will be carrying eight regional consultations to help build its way forward and to create partnerships for implementation. The important work carried out can benefit all policy makers dealing with the forest sector; and the transparent way



to publicise it and ask for comments demonstrates a willingness to embark in real partnerships, which now needs to be effectively put into practice to the benefit of beneficiary countries.

(extracts from *A Review of the World Bank's 1991 Forest Strategy And Its Implementation*, Vol I: Main report, January 13, 2000, OED)

**IIED : International Institute for Environment and Development**

<http://www.iied.org>

The IIED Drylands Programme publishes short 10-page monthly bulletins on the issues with which it is concerned. It seeks to promote more effective and equitable management of natural resources in the semi-arid regions of Africa by means of a multidisciplinary approach, working in partnership with many different organisations. Its energies are focused in particular on soil conservation and nutrient management, pastoral development and land tenure issues, as well as problems of resource access. Key objectives of the programme are to strengthen communication between English- and French-speaking parts of Africa, support the development of an effective research and NGO sector, promote locally-based management of resources by increasing reliance on local skills, encourage the use of participative methods and give local users firmer rights.

### **Judge for yourself:**

WWF: <http://www.panda.org>, (maps and a virtual library) <http://www.metla.fi/info/vlib/Forestry.html>. (links to other organisations and initiatives, such as CGIAR [Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research], <http://www.cgiar.org>.)

The CGIAR, established in 1971, is an informal association of 58 public and private sector members that supports a network of 16 international agricultural research centres. CIFOR (Centre for International Forestry Research) was established under the CGIAR system in response to global concerns about the social, environmental and economic consequences of loss and degradation of forests. It operates through a series of highly decentralised partnerships with key institutions and/or individuals throughout the developing and industrialised worlds. The nature and duration of these partnerships is determined by the specific research problems being addressed. This research agenda is under constant review and is subject to change as the partners recognize new opportunities and problems.

CIFOR's Mission is to contribute to the sustained well-being of people in developing countries, particularly in the tropics, through collaborative strategic and applied research and related activities in forest systems and forestry, and by promoting the transfer of appropriate new technologies and the adoption of new methods of social organization, for national development.

Look up <http://www.cifor.org> for: an information letter about CIFOR and a superb art gallery featuring drawings of forests by children from all over the world.

### **Some regional and worldwide initiatives on forest management:**

**The UN Framework Convention on Climatic Change (FCCC)**, adopted at the 1992 UN Conference on environment and development. Its objective is to stabilise greenhouse-gas concentrations in the atmosphere in order to prevent dangerous human-induced interference with the global climate system.

**The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** : the fourth Conference of the Parties was held in Bratislava (Slovakia) in May 1998. Agreements were made regarding international programmes on the biological diversity of forests and of inland water ecosystems, and the need to complete a protocol on biosafety. The forestry work programme focuses on an approach to the ecosystem following research into the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, as well as on an analysis of the influence of human activity, on the methodologies needed to elaborate and implement criteria and indicators, on the methods and measures required to attenuate the loss of biological diversity and, finally, on models of ecological landscapes.

**The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)** : the first Conference of the Parties was held in Rome in October 1997. The Secretariat is located in Bonn. **The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**. **The International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)**: signed by 28 producing countries, 25 consumer countries and by the European Union. The ITTA therefore has 54 members. It came into force in 1997 and its work focuses on the "Year 2000 Objective", according to which all the producing countries have agreed to ensure that by the year 2000, their exports of tropical timber, as well as all products deriving from these, come from sustainably-managed sources.



# Something for everyone

## Parks for Biodiversity - not just on paper

by Rolf Hogan\*

Nature has enormous potential to drive economic development, according to *Parks for Biodiversity*, a new book published by the European Commission.

Almost one million people visited South Africa's Kruger National Park in 1998, earning the park close to US\$10 million. Many such parks make plenty of money from tourism, but many do not. Even the big earners face problems: wildlife

*Parks for Biodiversity - Policy Guidance Based on Experience in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries* makes the point that well-managed, protected areas are an ideal mechanism for jump-starting rural economies. The book is the latest product of a partnership between the European Commission's DG for Development and IUCN - The World Conservation Union which goes back to the



dwindles as increasing numbers of nature lovers and tourists cause shyer species to flee or interrupt the predatory and mating behaviour of those who remain; four-wheel drive vehicles tear up the landscape, destroying essential habitat, and governments' commitment remains unclear. In addition, many of the world's nature reserves are so poorly funded and managed that they are struggling to do what they were set up for: to protect nature.

So why bother? Why not simply turn money-spinning parks over to the private sector and close the rest?

World Parks Congress held in Caracas, Venezuela in 1992. Following the meeting the Commission funded IUCN to prepare a series of case studies on protected areas and development in African, Pacific and Caribbean countries. These papers were presented at a meeting in Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe in 1996 after which it was decided that the project enter a second phase, aimed at communicating strategies for protected areas and development. *Parks for Biodiversity* is a key product of this second phase.

*Parks for Biodiversity* is a product of the World Conservation Union's World Commission on Protected Areas, a 1,300-strong group of the

Black rhinoceros cow with her calf in the dense woodland of Mkuzi Game Reserve



world's leading protected area professionals, who consider what will be required if protected areas are to be successful in the next century.

"The idea of parks stimulating economic development has been around for a long time," says David Sheppard, head of IUCN's Programme on Protected Areas. "This is the first time that a concise guide has been produced to help donors make the link between nature and development."

The term "National Park" makes us think of wilderness areas, cut off from local inhabitants by large fences or armed guards, and teeming with tourists. They are good for nature, we assume, good for providing a once-in-a-lifetime experience for visiting nature-lovers, and even better for generating hard currency. Although such parks often bar local people from natural areas they have used for generations, this social cost, it may be argued, is minor compared to the goal of conserving what is left of the world's wild spaces and species for future generations.

But in many cases this is simply not happening.

#### **On paper only**

In Africa, parks cover an area four times the size of Spain. Worldwide, the area is as large as Antarctica. Many are just parks on paper: governments issue decrees, shade the designated areas on their maps, and do nothing more. On the ground, the parks do not exist.

In developed countries, more money for conservation and better law enforcement means that

protected areas usually achieve their conservation aims. Paper parks tend to be found in poorer countries where there is less cash for conservation, laws are difficult to enforce and poverty forces local people to resort to poaching or illegal logging.

When protected areas become popular tourist destinations, it usually means profits for government, hotel owners and safari outfits, but rarely for local people who are often barred from using their traditional lands and must take menial jobs in the tourist industry. The park becomes an indirect cause of poaching, rather than an incentive to stop.

Nature parks "will only succeed in developing countries if [they are] part of an overall development strategy of poverty alleviation", says Professor J Pinheiro, former European Commissioner for Development, in the foreword to Parks for Biodiversity. To promote economic development, parks need better management.

"Good management is not just keeping the poachers out and the tourists in," remarks David Sheppard, "it means involving the local community so that they too can benefit and take an interest in maintaining their environment."

Nature and development, conservationists argue, are not mutually exclusive. In a rural setting they are often mutually dependent. Parks supply goods and services which are rarely considered by economists. If harvested wisely, natural products (game meat, medicinal plants, timber) can contribute to local economies. But such harvesting needs to be controlled by park

staff if it is to be sustainable.

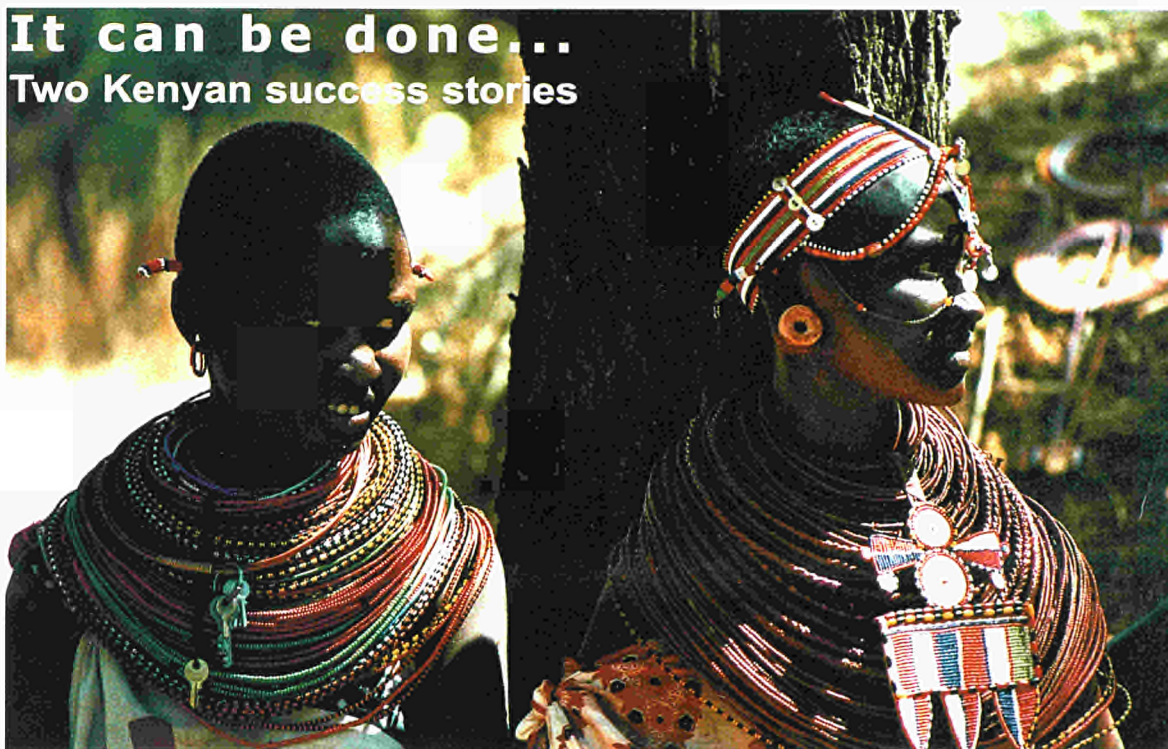
The parks that prove popular with tourists can generate large amounts of cash. Good management can help distribute the profits and involve locals in tourist enterprises, increasing the flow of cash to the local economy. Even parks which lack high tourism potential can share their resources and infrastructure with local populations. Upgrading roads to facilitate access for park staff, for example, will help stimulate trade and communications. Health services and computer facilities for parks staff can also be shared with local people, and so parks can stimulate rural development.

Natural areas also provide essential ecosystem services to surrounding areas. Upland forests, for example, act as natural water management systems, absorbing rainwater and releasing it slowly into the surrounding countryside, thus irrigating farmland while preventing flooding and soil erosion. Marine parks are often important breeding areas for fish, and help to restock surrounding fisheries. While these services often go unnoticed, they are important for maintaining productive agriculture and fisheries, the key industries of rural areas.

Parks therefore are well worth the effort of maintaining and managing, but they need the complete commitment of governments and donors to meet their full potential and secure the support, involvement and good will of local communities. A half-hearted effort is not enough.



## It can be done... Two Kenyan success stories



by Carole Douglass\*

Surely, if wildlife pays its way, it will be protected? This assumption leads economists to calculate the regional benefits of hosting healthy wildlife, and planners then base their forecasts on the same premise.

But in Africa, where more than half the wildlife spends its time outside protected areas – the brunt of the cost of wild animals is actually borne by local people. Elephants and predators take residents' crops, livestock – and even lives. So while tourism companies and local officials may get rich, the hazards of living with wildlife do not encourage villagers to help wildlife thrive.

Many now believe that the best hope for Africa's wildlife is to change the incentives for the people who share their land. Over the years, a number of international organisations and government agencies have tried to bring wildlife profits to the people by sharing gate-fees, setting up income-generating projects, and encouraging tourism and other businesses in the rural areas.

Unfortunately, most of these schemes have delivered less than promised. The projects' market analysis, financial planning, controls and marketing efforts have often proved woefully inadequate. If it comes in, money has a way of vanishing into government or officials' coffers on its way to the villages; or in village executive committees on its way to the villagers; or it stays with private tourism operators who may employ a few local residents, but make barely a dent in the local economy.

Conservationists now are working with conservation-based development designed to benefit and empower local communities while giving them a real incentive to manage wildlife for the future. When it works, it develops community-based enterprises that are solid and sustainable, financially and environmentally.

In East Africa, for instance, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has assembled teams of young, mostly African professionals in law, community development, ecology, business planning and management, and negotiation.

In key wildlife areas, near parks or reserves, when a community voices interest in developing an environmentally sound enterprise, one of AWF's Conservation Service Centres (CSCs) dispatches a team to help.

"In a traditional, rural community, people often have very little experience with business," says CSC enterprise specialist Moses Kanene.

"They don't know how much their land is worth; they don't have a realistic understanding of the market; they don't know what their options may be. How could they, since they simply haven't been exposed to many business deals?"

Some companies, then, have found it easy to take advantage of rural communities. Other communities miss opportunities because they have overblown expectations of how much money they can get for, say, leasing land for a campsite. And like any non-lawyers, they need help interpreting a



**"For years, lions, elephants, giraffe and other wildlife have been our neighbours, but never before have we benefitted as much from living in their midst."**

proposal or a contract and understanding what their own obligations will be.

It takes a lot of meetings and much perseverance, but so far the results look promising. Two contemporary cases illustrate the scope and promise of this work.

#### **Iolosokwan**

A Maasai community, on the border of Serengeti National Park, leased some land to a corporation in the mid-90s, for cattle raising. That corporation violated its contract and managed to get a title deed for a tourist lodge. The community took the tenant to court; the tenant sold the title deed to a lodge operator, who then inherited the lawsuit.

Because the AWF's Conservation Service Centre had helped residents set up several profitable campsites, the community called AWF back in to help settle the lawsuit. It took months of workshops, education, and negotiating, but eventually a deal was brokered that each side - the Conservation Corporation of Africa (CCAfrica) and the village - considers fair and durable.

In return for leasing 25,000 acres of community land surrounding a lodge called Klein's Camp, CCAfrica will pay the community \$25,000 a year plus bed-night fees, provide a clinic and other benefits, and increase payments yearly. For the 15-year lease, the community retains dry-season grazing rights and benefits from local jobs. And Serengeti wildlife are free to migrate safely from the park through this acreage.

The entire conservation team worked to educate local people, help them develop a land-use

plan, strike a fair deal, and write a legally-binding business contract.

The High Court of Tanzania has approved the settlement, thereby creating a precedent for secure Maasai land tenure, for communities to negotiate as equals with investors, for local residents to make an income from tourism, and for creating a model partnership that helps conserve land for wildlife.

As one villager put it during the celebration of the deal's conclusion and the first payment:

"For years, lions, elephants, giraffe and other wildlife have been our neighbours, but never before have we benefitted as much from living in their midst."

#### **Eselenkei**

In another Maasai group ranch, this one bordering Amboseli National Park in Kenya, Conservation Service Centre staff helped the community figure out how best to derive income from the wildlife that roams out of the park onto their land.

AWF took Eselenkei Group Ranch members on a study tour to other community enterprises and facilitated workshops to help the community of 10,000 assess its options.

Eselenkei decided to set aside 5,000 hectares of land for Eselenkei Conservation Area. The group ranch has signed a 15-year lease agreement with Porini Ecotourism Limited. In exchange for exclusive rights to manage and market the conservation area, Porini will pay the community KS 350,000, increasing 10% a year, plus camping and gate collections. Porini is

employing ranch members as game scouts, and other staff. Porini hired, for instance, local warriors to build 60 km of road through the area - by hand with hoes - for the least environmental disturbance. In addition, Porini has already built a nursery school and put in boreholes and two dams for water supply for livestock and wildlife.

The company is planning to construct a campsite and later a tourist lodge. The first visitors are expected in early 2000.

While Eselenkei has had an agreement with Kenya Wildlife Service to share revenue from Amboseli National Park, the community believed it wasn't receiving its fair share, and had no control over how much it got. Community members are more hopeful about the partnership with Porini.

Since the deal, a change in attitude toward wildlife is already evident in Eselenkei. Ranch elders have told young women to stop creating praise songs for warriors who kill animals. There has also been a suggestion that school fees be refused for siblings of warriors who hunt for fun.

Brokering deals in this way is an ideal role for a conservation NGO: bring wildlife-rich communities together with experienced businesses, educate both sides on the promises and pitfalls of partnerships, help negotiate a fair deal - then step out until needed once again. Time will tell, but all sides in these agreements think that this time they've got community conservation right.

\* AWF Press Officer



# Is gender blindness obscuring development

by Carolina Wennerholm\*

**Gender awareness is an instrument for ensuring women's and men's right to participate and benefit from development interventions. It also increases efficiency and sustainability in the development process.**

It is quite simple. The human world consists of two sexes. Women and men share life and all that goes with it. How and why women and men share it varies globally. What are women and men expected to do in a specific society? At home? For income? What are their respective responsibilities? Who has the power? Over what? What different possibilities do they have in life? What is it to be feminine or masculine in a given context?

To be gender aware is to see the systematic differences in what it means to be a woman or a man in a society and to see why such differences exist. Gender awareness is an instrument for analysing the complex division of responsibilities, labour and power between women and men, which a development worker cannot bypass.

Gender is different from sex. Biological sex is static, universal, most clearly connected to the reproductive functions. Gender refers to a more complex identity and role, defined by the relationship between women and men and the idea of what it means to be a woman or a man. These ideas vary depending on not only in which part of the world women and men live, but also on their age, religious beliefs, socio-economic status and so on. Gender relations define how women and men organise their lives: what they do, what their responsibilities are, their possibilities, restrictions and needs. Gender relations are intrinsically linked to power, expressed universally by women having less access to power and thus fewer possibilities to control and change their lives. Women and men therefore will have different needs in a development process.

The reasons for using a gender perspective in development work are firstly that all women and

Gender blindness, on the other hand, may have a negative, even disastrous impact on development.

**But how can gender awareness make a difference?**

men have the right to be considered in the development process and to benefit according to their gender needs. Governments of the world have agreed in international agreements and conventions to apply a gender perspective in their policies and activities (eg the Platform for Action from the IV world Conference on Women in Beijing 1995, EC Resolution on Gender Mainstreaming from 1995). Secondly, a gender perspective improves efficiency and sustainability in development work. Knowledge of who does what and why is invaluable in planning and implementation. It is also essential in formulating goal and methods. Thirdly, development is about improving people's lot, and as such it is a social process. All social relations and processes are gender-based; it is a matter of principle to be gender aware before initiating a project in terms of its consequences for women and men.

Gender relations are obviously important in social projects, particularly if the goal is to improve the situation of women. However, it is not confined to projects like these - all development has a social impact. Even a purely technical intervention (an infrastructure or environment project) will have an impact on both sexes. If their relationship is ignored, the development input may not have the expected impact. Gender analysis must be the starting point to identify different needs and approaches to achieving change in a development process.

Think of a forestry project. The aim of the intervention may be to achieve the technical goal of planting a number of trees. Such a goal may seem far from the social relations of the population. Still, the process to reach that goal is clearly gendered: do the men or the women do the planting? Who plants what kind of trees? What other activities are





Sometimes men and women do the same work, sometimes they don't. It is important to find out who does what, when planning projects

women and men responsible for? What different sources of income do women and men have? Who owns the land? What do the legal frameworks allow or forbid? Who has the decision-making power outside? At home? What do boys and girls do?

The checklist will always vary for different situations. Gender analysis includes a full description of what rules and norms define the everyday lives of men and women, as well as why there are differences.

For instance, the training for the project may be planned for the mornings. Men may be able to attend, whereas the women are busy collecting water, gathering fuel or preparing food. If participating in the training is a prerequisite for a job at the nursery, then only men will get the job. The trees might get planted, but the women have been bypassed and have lost their right to participate in the development process. A common argument is that women, as members of the household, benefit anyway. However, decision-making in the household varies and the women might not have any say on the disposal and spending of the income. In another context the women might be

the ones experienced in forestry activities and with access to the land. If it is assumed that planting is male business, the training will be directed at the men who may have neither the capability to benefit from it - to implement the activities to ensure sustainability. Result - neither efficiency nor sustainability, and no trees planted either.

Planning with a gender perspective prevents this by identifying these issues at the start. Training is planned according to the activities of women and men so both groups benefit. Childcare may be set up to lessen the burden of the women. The household dynamics are identified - who decides what to spend on what. By including both women and men more labourers are available for planting and other activities. If the gendered division of income means that women buy food for the family (ie the children), and pay for school or their own health care, this might have an added value to the project. With better food, better health and increased self-esteem and status, the women increase their input, which makes for better general development.

Each population has its own

specific gender relations that must be considered to see what consequences a project could have. Gender blindness can be disastrous for the efficiency and sustainability of a development project.

Gender awareness and a perspective open to change, in gender dynamics and power-relations, improves efficiency and sustainability; women and men - as is their right - can both participate in and benefit from development according to their specific needs.

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## Kvinnoforum's

### Gender training

Over the last five years many top managers in Sweden and several other countries have participated in *The Paradise of Contradictions*, a seminar where they learn to notice, understand and use gender differences.

The seminar produces results that the participants can use to increase the energy and efficiency of their organisations.

They are involved in a unique learning approach with realistic simulations, observations, reflections and discussion on theory change in exciting learning cycles.

One of the participants concluded:

" I have learned to go from frustrating equality work to efficient gender management."



# Catherine Bertini, World Food Programme Executive Director

interviewed by **Eva Kaluzynska**  
about how she thinks the problems  
of today's humanitarian aid should  
be tackled



## New thinking for old problems

"The aid community today is facing different challenges and needs to be more flexible in responding." That is the view of Catherine Bertini, World Food Programme executive director, after the setting up of operations in Kosovo and East Timor.

The World Food Programme is an important partner in European Commission development and humanitarian aid activities. The Commission contributed over Euro 165 million to WFP programmes worth about \$1.3 billion in 1999. ECHO's share of that amounted to over Euro 36 million.

Last year, Bertini's organisation fed 86 million people, over half of them female, in 82 countries. Africa, and Sudan in particular, was its biggest concern. She says that defining and labelling the situations in which the WFP works is not just semantics but influences outcomes.

"Is it an emergency? Is it development? Is it something in between, or a wholly different thing? In a lot of cases, it's difficult to describe what the situation is once the fighting is over and there's a state of relative peace," she says. In Kosovo and East Timor, the UN is having to create a complete infrastructure from scratch. "This is a whole new kind of programme for the UN to be involved in."

She welcomes the new structure at the European Commission, which puts both humanitarian aid and development under one commissioner, Poul Nielson.

"Frankly, sometimes it's hard for us to know whether we're supposed to talk to ECHO or to Development. Having decisions made by the Commission with both the old ECHO and the old DGVIII under the same management is going to help facilitate the kind of influence the EU will put into these projects. Now it will be better for programming from the Commission's perspective, and it'll facilitate better communication with people like us who are funded by the Commission."

In 1999, WFP was involved in ECHO-funded programmes in locations as diverse as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Indonesia, Tajikistan, Tanzania, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The programmes provided food for 5.3 million internally-displaced people and 3.2 million refugees. On the development side, there was a focus on African countries including Somalia, Sierra Leone, Angola, the Great Lakes region, Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Uganda, Senegal and Chad.

### Nielson's appointment welcomed

She welcomes Commission President Romano Prodi's decision to appoint the former Danish minister Nielson as Commissioner for development cooperation.

"He has such a good understanding of development needs and emergency needs from his job in Denmark, he has a good understanding of the



WFP/Tom Haskell

WFP air drop of emergency food assistance to aid war and drought-affected populations in southern Sudan. The operation is designed to provide emergency assistance to over two million beneficiaries approximately 80% of whom are women and children





WFP food aid reaches children in Tanzania as part of a relief and recovery programme in the Great Lakes region

Commission because of his involvement with it, and he also understands the UN system well."

Bertini had to postpone a mission to Brussels in November to meet the new commissioner because of a plane crash accident involving a WFP-chartered aircraft flying to Kosovo. Its 24

passengers all died. Among them were workers who would have been involved in building a police force, or in hospital administration. There were also three WFP staff members working on food aid issues.

"They were 24 people going to Kosovo who knew they could make a difference in helping to rebuild the country. It hurts all of us to have lost them," she says, adding that WFP would not be deterred from continuing its mission to feed people and to provide transport for aid workers, and had made arrangements to continue operating flights. It runs similar flights between Darwin and East Timor, and between Bujumbura and Nairobi.

WFP recently resumed operations in Burundi after mourning the loss of logistics officer Saskia Von Meijenfheldt, killed in an ambush with UNICEF representative Luis Zuniga. They were on an assessment mission and were shot dead despite being accompanied by the local governor, policemen and UN security staff.

#### Higher level of concern

"It was such a brutal killing, someone just turned round, shooting them point blank in the head. We must have a much higher level of concern about the places that we ask humanitarian aid workers to go. This really highlighted the fact that aid workers are asked to go places where governments won't send their soldiers." Bertini appealed to the international community to summon the political will to solve simmering crises such as those in Sudan,

Angola and Russia, instead of opting for prolonged emergency aid in the absence of better ideas, and sending aid workers into such danger. "We're just coming to a time when governments and donors have to say, wait a minute, there's a more important issue here, and that's solving this war, finding peace, so we can work on reconstruction, as we are in Kosovo, as we are in East Timor, instead of just perpetual emergency aid."

On 23 November, the UN launched its consolidated inter-agency appeals in Geneva. The focus was on forgotten crises and was declared World Humanitarian Day. Bertini said her input was to remind delegates about the forgotten people - women, who, with their children, make up eight out of 10 victims of political violence and are the first to experience the pain and humiliation of hunger and homelessness. "We forget them when we develop programmes, because we forget to include them in the process. We forget them when we make distribution plans, because we forget they're the ones who are going to be preparing the food. We need to get everyone thinking about the people we're trying to help."

For example, she had recently returned from Iran, where she visited a camp to talk to women refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan about their needs. "Several women told me they hadn't been to the doctor in years. The reason why? There isn't a woman doctor who goes to this camp. There are doctors, but someone hasn't paid attention to the fact that unless there is a female doctor, they won't be able to help the women."

All too often, experts at HQ make assumptions about the people in a refugee camp without checking their needs, Bertini said, appealing to them to be more analytical. "Who are they? How many women are there? How many children? We need to talk to these people, to get them involved in making decisions about what they need for their own community."

Giving women more control over their aid is crucial in helping to overcome a sense of hopelessness - a crucial first step in helping to rebuild shattered societies.

A version of this interview was published in the Winter 2000 edition of ECHO News, a quarterly newsletter available from ECHO: [echo@cec.eu.int](mailto:echo@cec.eu.int)



# Béa Diallo: The man with the golden fists

by Natalie Massart

IBF Intercontinental Middleweight  
Champion, champion of Belgium, Brussels  
Sportsman of the Year for 1998: this young

Guinean, Belgian by adoption, still cherish-  
es the dream of reaching the top before his  
promised retirement at the age of 30.



Asked to name his main quality, Béa Diallo's one-word answer is: "Niceness." But, he hastens to add, it is also my principal weakness. Not sufficient, though, to prevent this magnificent athlete from steadily climbing the ladder of the relentless world of boxing. His philosophy is that aggression does not necessarily involve unpleasantness. And it works: it took Béa Diallo only a year to capture his first title. That was in 1995. And yet a year earlier Béa had left Brussels University

with a degree in marketing. But the call of the ring, was stronger.

Béa Diallo was born in Liberia in 1971. The son of a Guinean diplomat, he was barely five when his parents left for a posting in Paris. His was a privileged childhood, but, first as a child and then as an adolescent, he soon proved restless and quarrelsome. Recruited to the anti-racism movement, he revolted against what he called the system. "I didn't feel at all at home in a



world that encouraged the principle of 'every man for himself.' I felt that I was a Guinean first and foremost, certainly not French."

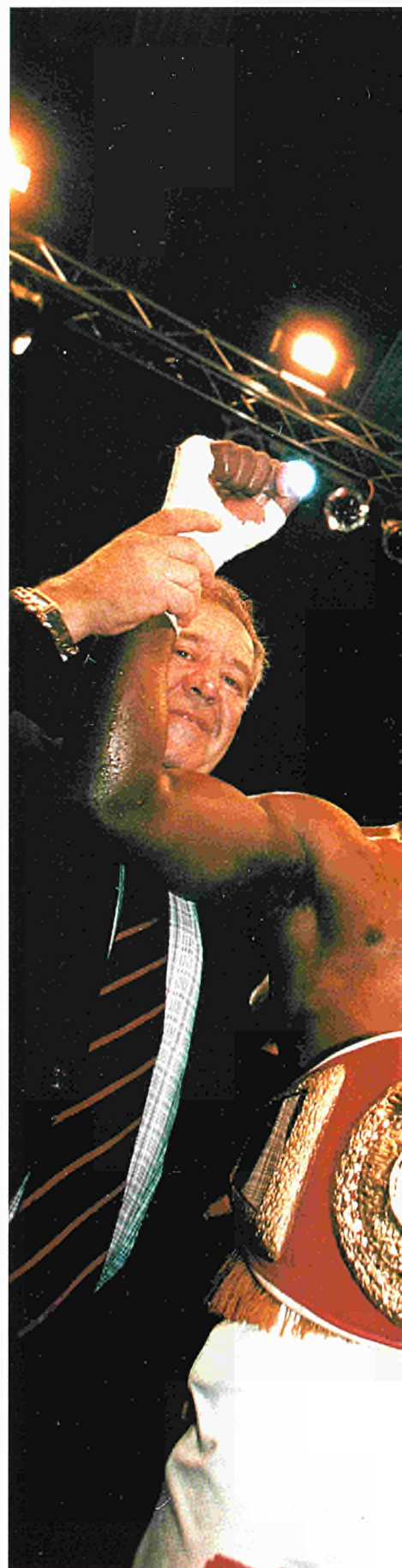
In 1985, the family packed its bags again and headed for Brussels. Béa made friends there very quickly. Driven by an abundance of energy, they gathered most often on the football fields. As luck would have it, there was a boxing gymnasium along their route, and their natural aggressive instincts persuaded them to try the sport. Béa's friends were quick to throw in the towel, having no taste for being beaten so easily. Béa himself though, rose to the challenge: he could not admit defeat. To start with, he confesses, he was looking for revenge. Very quickly, though, the simple desire to get his own back became a need to excel himself. From 1989 onwards, unknown to his parents, Béa became a regular at the gymnasiums and took on his first opponents. Four years later, the rebellious young Guinean entered the ring as a professional, successively winning the Belgian and Benelux championships.

### **A poet of the ring**

Stylistically, his inspiration came from the greatest legends of the ring: Mohammed Ali and, before him, Sugar Ray Robinson - a dancer, says Béa, smiling. "Sugar Ray Robinson was all technique. His strengths were in his gaze, the speed of his arms and his

unbelievable legwork. With those qualities, no one could land a punch on him. He was completely different from the generation of demolition men, Mike Tyson for example, who give boxing a bad name. In any case, strength and power are at odds with intelligence. Sugar Ray proved that, and so did Mohammed Ali after him. I discovered Ali on the occasion of his famous fight with George Foreman at Kinshasa in the early 1970s. He was the man who revolutionised boxing - a poet of the ring. He proved to the whole world that a boxer need not necessarily be stupid. A boxer is something much more than an idiot with a manager. Ali chose his entourage, and I did the same. To me, Ali is the greatest sportsman that ever was - a committed sportsman in every sense. He fought for his sport, but he also fought for recognition for the black community."

Paradoxically, his father, who banned him from boxing, was responsible for his catching the virus. It was through Diallo senior that his son first discovered Mohammed Ali, and that discovery completely changed the course of events. "What boxing has brought me is serenity," says Béa Diallo. "I learnt respect for others and the value of human contact. I also learnt that life is a fight, every day, and that you have to fight to go forward." As a father, Béa Diallo also admits that he owes his equilibrium to his "clan". Especially his mother, whom he describes as a







woman of remarkable courage. And then his wife, who suffers agonies before every fight but is still his main support.

What disgusts him? Injustice and discrimination. His heroes reflect that line of thinking. Their names are Nelson Mandela and Gandhi: great men whom the boxer learnt about at an early age during family discussions. "I clearly remember the day Nelson Mandela was released. He is a man who inspires the greatest respect in me; I identify with him. Despite all the obstacles, imprisonment, suffering, he was steadfast to the end. It's that commitment that I like about him."

Commitment: a word frequently heard from Béma Diallo. Especially when he mentions the name of Gandhi, whom he regards as one of the noblest fighters for freedom. "He died for a cause which he defended all his life, he died for his idea ..."

A generous man, Béma Diallo remembers that he was not always an angel. Last December in Brussels, when he defended his IBF intercontinental title, he invited 500 young people from underprivileged backgrounds. And he gave them a lesson in courage: despite a broken bone in his hand, he stood up to his American opponent and emerged victorious. "I want to show these kids that there are better things they can do with their time than hang around the streets and attack people - that they can become somebody."

### **A foundation for his country**

In Guinea, too, Béma Diallo is unsparing in his commitment. Once a month he visits Conakry and makes new contacts in his search for partners. The idea of a foundation, jotted down on paper two years ago, should become a reality in the course of this year. As an idealist, he wants to encourage development projects in his home country. "In particular, we are looking at a project for reopening a tomato concentrate production plant. It would create 3,000 jobs in three years, and be able to export to neighbouring countries within five... a genuinely vital project to teach my compatriots to earn independence by making use of their own resources." And he believes in it passionately. "You can't let yourself be put off by all kinds of impostors or people who think they can cash in on my name and reputation. I have already met people like that, but I have enough intellectual equipment to defend myself."

At 30, whatever happens, Béma Diallo will quit the ring. So he still has a year left to achieve his dream of a world title. But this athlete with the feline graces is not too concerned about it. After all, he says, boxing is showbusiness. "You have to have the actor's instinct; you go on stage and you perform, it's a game ... and my dream is to take courses in dramatic art."



## ACP-EU Joint Assembly

Abuja, Nigeria, March 20 - 23

**"The largest gathering of democratic representatives in Nigeria since the restoration of democracy."**

President Olesegun Abasanjo

Less than two years ago, Nigeria was still labouring under a military dictatorship which had massively abused human rights, grossly mismanaged the economy, and diverted a huge portion of the country's wealth into the pockets of a few individuals.

Now a democracy, Nigeria recently hosted the ACP-EU Joint Assembly. At the opening session, President Obasanjo - one of a select band of heads of state who have been political prisoners - declared good governance an overriding priority, and that newly-democratic Nigeria is committed to the fight against corruption.

Other speakers reiterated this theme, including the presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Inside the plenary chamber, optimism prevailed. The president of the Senate spoke of the complete end of military rule in Nigeria. Yet there was also recognition of the challenges facing the country- including the continuous and long-term fall in the ACP countries' share of exports to the EU.

Outside the chamber, Nigeria's many newspapers were filled with discussion and analysis of a host of issues which threaten the momentum of reform.

Recent violence in Kaduna and other centres has highlighted one of the main problems: the difficulty of maintaining good relations between the country's many different regions and traditions, in a period of political transition. The economic difficulties inherited from the military dictatorship do not make this any easier.

Nigeria's route to lasting stability and economic progress will be difficult. The country's new leadership is determined to succeed - and the outside world must be ready to assist them.

Eamonn Noonan  
(Human Rights Unit, European Parliament)

## Pushing forward on Fair Trade

Philip Lowe, Director General DG Development, confirmed at the Fifth Fair Trade Day on 22 February 2000 at the European Parliament in Brussels that Fair Trade is a subject which involves the EU's whole commitment to developing countries.

The European Commission was now trying to develop a more comprehensive and coherent policy through applying the guidelines in its Communication approved in December 1999.

Lowe believes it is now time to extend this debate beyond the European institutions and governments to reach the whole of civil society, and to involve the private sector and NGOs more.

"Amateurism is not sufficient to succeed," he said.

Professional communication is needed to spread the message about Fair Trade cooperatives and to market Fair Trade issues. If the successes were publicised more, then commercial interest might be aroused.

Support was needed for capacity building and to strengthen institutions and communities to promote micro-credit.

One urgent Fair Trade issue was the new EU Directive on chocolate, debated by the European Parliament in March.

There was intense lobbying on behalf of the 11 million growers of cocoa beans, who see their livelihoods threatened because the new legislation will permit a cut in the cocoa content of chocolate consumed in the EU.

For more information on the Fair Trade Movement, contact:

**Ms Brid Owen**

**EFTA, Director Advocacy and Campaigns**

**7a rue Edouard Michiels**

**1180 Brussels, Belgium**

**tel : (32) 2 333 2594**

**fax: (32) 332 1888**

**email: [eftaadvocacy@compuserve.com](mailto:eftaadvocacy@compuserve.com)**



## Health research

### uneconomic and unfair

Only 10% of the world's population benefits from 90% of the world's annual health budget, estimated at \$50 - 60 billion. This is known as the "10/90 Gap", and is the subject of a new report published by the Global Forum for Health Research.

Adetokunbo Lucas, of the Harvard School of Public Health, and current chairman, denounces the current duplication of effort and inefficiency in the report's preface: "Yet a reallocation of merely 1% of global health research spending would provide \$500 million for priority research needed by the vast majority of the world's population of 6 billion."

Four diseases - pneumonia, diarrhoea, tuberculosis and malaria - account for more than 20% of the disease burden in the world but get less than 1% of global health research funding.

The Global Forum for Health Research was founded in 1997 expressly to put right the disequilibrium. Its 150 members include representatives of the WHO, the World Bank, many international foundations and cooperation agencies. There are direct links to government policy-makers and private sector companies. Meeting annually, the Forum has a declared aim to make one new product available every five years.

The full text of The 10/90 Report on Health Research 1999 may be downloaded from

[www.globalforumhealth.org/docs](http://www.globalforumhealth.org/docs)

## Bantu Humanism

### African representations of Bible scenes

Father Engelbert Mveng, Jesuit intellectual and painter studies how the traditions of the Béti, a Bantu tribe of Cameroon, have been influenced by the ancient Greek and Roman civilisations, tempered by the Italian Quattrocento and the French Renaissance. Then he incorporates humanist and African symbolism in his paintings of scenes from the Bible.

Simao Souindoula, from the International Centre for Bantu Civilisations, explained Mveng's work to 30 historians, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists and linguists, who gathered together last January in Praia, Cap-Verde, to discuss Latin Humanism and African Humanism.

The Praia meeting was preparing the Continental African input to the international conference *Globalisation and Latin Humanism* held in New York on 1-3 May 2000, supported by the Italian-based Fondazione Cassamarca.

For information contact  
**Dr Simao Souindoula**  
**Tel. (241) 70 40 96**  
**Fax: (241) 70 54 09**

## Cyber Café à l'Africaine

In Yeumbeul, a suburb of Dakar, the project "Y.medias" is creating a centre for training in multimedia and communications. This will provide access to young African information engineers, both new and experienced, to try out the latest equipment and to learn state-of-the-art programming. One enthusiastic user claimed "the illiterates of tomorrow will not be those who cannot read but those who cannot use information technology."

The cyber café is highly popular and here to stay.



## EBAS

### Business consultancy costs recouped

When small private enterprises and business associations in ACP countries hire consultants to raise their productivity and skills base, or to improve their customer services, they can now get up to half their money back. The EU-ACP Business Assistance Scheme (EBAS) is the brainchild of the European Commission's DG Development and the ACP Group and is aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of existing businesses, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

EBAS will refund up to 50% of the costs of consulting assignments, with a ceiling of €70,000 per application. Any business (except for start-ups or those with state subsidies) may apply. Applications and disbursements will be handled rapidly by Internet, email and fax (12-15 working days for each transaction is the target). They should be submitted to one of the four EBAS regional offices:

- Abidjan for Central and Western Africa,
- Bridgetown for the Caribbean
- Gaborone for Southern Africa
- Nairobi for East Africa.

A central coordinating unit in Brussels will obtain the official approval from the European Commission and pay out the funds.

EBAS was set up in November 1999 and will last three years. An information team is now touring ACP countries to explain the scheme in detail.

Application forms and further details (in English, French and Portuguese) from <http://www.ebas.org> or contact:

**Laurence Guigeu**  
**EBAS Project Management Unit**  
110 boulevard Reyers  
1030 Brussels, Belgium  
tel : (32) 2 740 0242  
fax : (32) 2 740 0249

## The poverty point of view

Trade policy potentially has consequences for poverty through its effect on both growth and income distribution. The effect of trade on income distribution has been more firmly established than its impact on growth. This is significant, given that poverty reduction is very sensitive to income distribution. (Poverty Briefing No. 6, December 1999).

Food aid has, with surprising rapidity, become a marginal and uncertain component of aid globally - only 3 - 4% of overseas development assistance (ODA) in 1995 compared with 11% in 1985 - making it difficult for it to have significant food security impacts at an international level (Poverty Briefing Paper, January 2000).

ODI, the Overseas Development Institute, is a leading British think tank on international development and humanitarian issues. Its Poverty Briefing papers present objective information on important development issues, often in cooperation with similar agencies in other European countries. They debate new approaches and offer the recent findings of research and experience. The papers are short (four pages) and may be downloaded from the ODI's website on:

<http://www.oneworld.org/odi/>

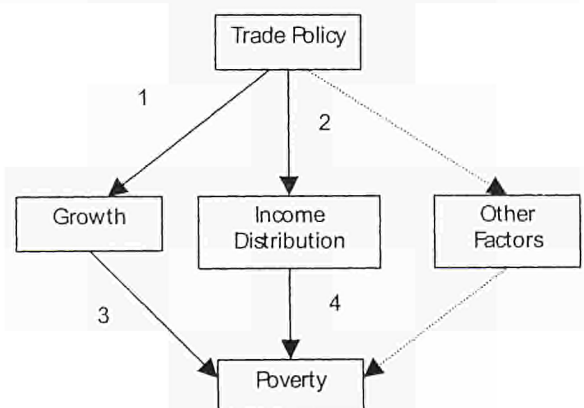
or contact: Overseas Development Institute,  
Portland House, Stag Place,  
London SW1E 5DP

tel: (44) 20 7393 1600

fax: (44) 20 7393 1699

email: [publications@odi.org](mailto:publications@odi.org)

### Schematic representation of trade policy and poverty linkages





# OECD Partnership Report

## Partnership not an option but a necessity

The OECD's 1999 Development Cooperation Report, published on 14 February 2000, claims that after more than five years of continuous decline, official development assistance (ODA) rose in 1998 by nearly 10%. This means US\$53 billion in real terms. But while this has gone up, the ODA/GNP ratio has fallen to nearly 0.25%, well below the average of 0.33% maintained in the 1970s and 1980s. In dollar terms this means a shortfall of \$20 billion dollars.

Despite the Asian crisis, private flows continue to be far larger than public aid flows (see chart). In the aftermath of Seattle, implementation of poverty reduction strategies is now the central priority of development cooperation. Thus sustainable development is displacing the traditional structural adjustment approaches used by major donors.

The OECD notes that an increasing number of developing countries are taking initiatives to establish implementation frameworks for their development based on com-

prehensive long-term visions and more systematic coordination. The major challenge will be to make these partnerships work.

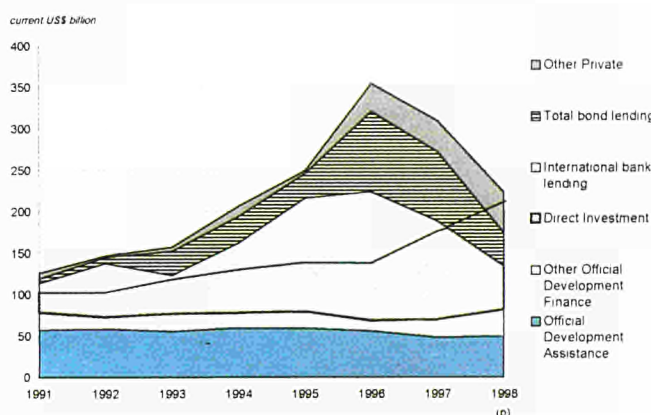
For a copy of the report contact:

OECD Media Relations,

fax: (33) 1 45 24 80 83

email: [news.contact@oecd.org](mailto:news.contact@oecd.org)

Chart 4. Total net resource flows to developing countries



## Major move on malaria

A new drug is needed for malaria, which kills between 1,7 and 2,5 million people annually and infects 300 million. Mosquitos are increasingly resistant to today's drugs. At present the amount of money spent annually on malaria research is equivalent to half the cost of building a jumbo jet. While the pharmaceutical industry sees little commercial interest in developing a new drug, much useful precompetitive research exists that has no commercial outlet.

A new public/private partnership has created a public venture capital fund : New Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV). There is synergy with the WHO's (World Health Organisation) Roll Back Malaria campaign.

MMV is chaired by Louis Currat, Executive Secretary of the Global Forum for Health Research, many of whose partners are involved. The public sector will provide funding (\$15 million at first, due to double later) while the private sector will contribute expertise and the results of previous research. A tender was sent out in January to pharmaceutical firms and academic centres, and it is expected that the most promising proposals for funding will be selected before the end of the year.

For more information contact:

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email: [jupps@who.ch](mailto:jupps@who.ch)

<http://www.malariamedicines.org>





# A Nou Diboute Ensam

(Let's all stand together)

by Myfanwy van de Velde\*

**A poverty-alleviation project in Mauritius was launched with EU funding, only a few months ago; already 21 projects have been identified and many more are coming forward**

Marie (not her real name) is a 42 year-old widow. Until the age of 10 she lived with her grandparents, then moved home with her parents when her father got a job, working as a watchman, in sugar cane and vegetable fields. At 17, she married a fisherman with a taste for drinking, dancing and women. She gave birth to seven children, but in 1988 her husband died, without a pension, and she was forced to go to work in a local salted fish factory. She now receives a pension of 800 rupees (€ 30). X is a 17-year-old living in a hostel. Aged six, his parents separated and he continued living with his father, who beat him frequently. At 10, he left school and at 12 - having been accused by his father of stealing - he left home. He was taken to a hostel to be cared for, began learning to be an electrician at the age of 13, and now earns Rs 2500 (€ 96) a month. T. (14 years old) has worked every day in the market for the past two years, earning Rs 50 a day. Y. (13) sews bags in a workshop from 7 am to 4 pm, for which he receives RS 100 a day. The examples, unfortunately, could go on ...

These cases were recorded in Mauritius, a country widely regarded as one of the best performers in terms of economic and social development over the past 25 years. But poverty is no stranger to even the most developed of societies: illness, alcoholism, loss of employment, loss of a husband and drug abuse can all contribute to reducing individuals and families to a state of poverty, and help is vital if the descending spiral is to be reversed.

In mid-1999, with the plight of the poorest of its society in mind, the Mauritian government launched a Rs 100million Poverty Alleviation Programme, with substantial EU funding (€ 3.6m).

## **Community-based, bottom-up approach**

The aim of the programme was to contribute to eliminating pockets of poverty, which despite the country's increased incomes *per capita* and improved living standards, were most visible amongst landless labourers, small farmers, unemployed youth and single mothers. The programme would operate through a series of small-scale projects - a community-based, bottom-up approach which had worked well in Mauritius in the past and was considered the best way of reaching the underprivileged populations most in need.

By way of preparation for the programme, the Mauritian government undertook a study of poverty on the island, including six Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs). The purpose of the study, and of the PPAs, was to identify better the nature and extent of poverty in Mauritius and, subsequently, to design a small-scale programme, based on decentralised cooperation.

Poverty was not defined as the absence of income or goods and capital, but "includes deprivation, (lack of) human rights, lack of self-esteem, feelings of exclusion, cultural or linguistic repression, and individual psycho-social aspects, as well as inability to earn income, to send one's children to





school, to enjoy good health (or safe and affordable health services), or reach (or maintain) a suitable nutritional and living index". The study confirmed that poverty - as defined - existed in Mauritius, despite the huge advances made in economic development and social welfare over the past decades.

"Within the context of a middle income country like Mauritius," the study went on, "an advanced, and complex society with a social security system and welfare provisions of which many countries would be envious, and with considerable human capital in many sectors, and which has a wealth of religious, linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity, understanding poverty and designing policies to combat poverty is bound to require a series of inter-related interventions which reflect the complexity of that society."

The strategy proposed for the Micro-Projects programme was therefore "holistic, multi-sectoral and community-based" - using participatory methods both for problem solving and for Multi-Project design and monitoring.

#### **What? Where? How?**

The programme - baptised ***A Nou Diboute Ensam*** (Let's stand together) - was launched in November 1999, with considerable media coverage on television, radio and in print. Newspapers published lists of the 53 regions throughout the country on which the programme would concentrate and the criteria for projects to be selected.

Clear information was given on the kinds of areas for which project finance would be available (access to education, medical facilities, improving youth employment opportunities), and on the allocation of funds. As with all micro projects, beneficiaries would provide a minimum of 25% of costs, in cash or in kind, eg by providing labour. The programme, it was emphasised, was not on giving but on enabling - not on handing out fish to eat, but on teaching to fish.

To reach beneficiaries and ensure that the most needy were amongst them, the project recruited 20 facilitators with the necessary social skills, but who also would be approachable by those whom they sought to help. These evaluators - one of whom is a specialist in the problems of fishermen, and two of whom will work in Mauritius' sister island, Rodrigues, have to assess and set up the various projects, all of which are channelled to the Microprojects office through community groups.

In the two months since the launch of the programme, fieldwork has started and working meetings have been held in the coastal region of Black River (which has a predominantly Creole fishing community), and in the central part of the island - Montagne Blanche - where the community is made up of Indian planters. Some 21 possible projects have been identified: in the areas of education (improvements to community schools,



kindergartens, training) and in social infrastructure (social facility halls, housing). The project is soon to be officially launched in Rodrigues.

If ***A Nou Diboute Ensam*** can contribute to a better life for Marie, and for those like her, it will have been a project well worth undertaking.

**\* Mauritius Desk Officer,  
EU DG Development**

**holistic,  
multisectoral  
and  
community-based**



## OECD FORUM 2000 Partnerships in the New Economy

Paris, 26 - 28 June 2000

Pascal Lamy, the European Commissioner for Trade, and Mike Moore, WTO Director-General, are among the 30 senior ministers and businessmen from around the world who have confirmed their participation Forum 2000's Plenary Session..

The seminar and workshop themes include:

- moving towards sustainable development;
- reaping the full benefits of global trade;
- electronic commerce - way to growth;
- government, business and civil society: building partnerships in public policy.

For programme details and further information visit the Forum website at:

<http://www.oecd.org/Forum2000>, or

contact:

Meggan Dissly at OECD

tel: 00 33 1 45 24 80 94 ,

fax: 00 33 1 45 24 80 03,

email: [meggan.dissly@oecd.org](mailto:meggan.dissly@oecd.org)

## Transnational crime - what can be done?

The planned outcome of the 10th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders will be The Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the challenges of the Twenty-first Century. It is due to be adopted at the closing session on 17 April after two days of high-level discussion with heads of government, justice ministers and attorneys-general.

Governments view international crime as the greatest non-military threat to national security. Criminal organisations have never had it so good as they can profit so easily from the globalisation of finance, transport and information technology.

Trafficking is on the increase: in arms, drugs, nuclear material, illegal cash, and in people. Criminal groups focus particularly on women and children for economic slavery and prostitution, or illegal emigration. Murder contracts are common, so also is the wide-scale bribery of public officials, politicians and business leaders.

The Vienna Declaration is expected to call for the immediate adoption and ratification of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime. It will also emphasise the responsibility of each State to establish and maintain a responsible, ethical and efficient criminal justice system. The Declaration will be submitted to the UN Millennium Summit in New York on 6 September 2000.

For further information, contact Jonathan Lucas, Congress secretary, on tel : (43) 1 26060-4280, or consult the website: <http://www.uncijn.org>.

## SOS Faim Report

### Cities of the South

The latest report from the NGO SOS Faim (Help Hunger) in its series *Défis Sud* focuses on the problems and aspirations of the rapidly growing megacities of the developing world. It is not all doom and gloom. Despite, or perhaps because of, their size, these cities have developed their own solutions to urban living. Side by side with unemployment, pollution, disease and violence exists an extraordinarily rich social culture.

Case studies are presented of Cairo, Jakarta, Mexico City and Villa El Salvador.

**A copy of this report (issued in French) can be ordered from**

<http://www.sosfaim.be/>

or from

**SOS Faim ASBL**

**4 rue aux Laines**

**1000 Brussels, Belgium**

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## WOMEN 2000-03-02 Gender equality or pipe dream?

A Special Session of the UN General Assembly will be held in New York from **5 - 9 June 2000** to discuss "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first century."

2000 marks the fifth anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China. It was the largest UN conference held to date (189 governments, 2600 delegates, and over 30,000 women at the parallel NGO forum). So far, only 18 out of a possible 139 countries have replied to the current questionnaire on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The June session will examine the many roles of women in relation to health, poverty, education and training, armed conflict, the economy, the environment, in power and decision-making, and as victims of violence.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, in force since 1981, has been ratified by 165 countries. But there are certainly not 165 countries implementing it fully.

**For more information consult**

**<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>**

## NGOs offer help to revise EU cooperation policy

Development NGOs have the benefit of extensive experience and are key to the implementation of development projects. It seems only logical that they should be involved directly in the European Commission's deliberations on reshaping EU cooperation aid policies. In 1999 there was an open call to NGOs to participate fully in the policy dialogue.

The European Conference of the Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the European Union believe that top priority should be given to revising cooperation and achieving consensus amongst development stakeholders, and will devote its next annual meeting on 13 April 2000 to this issue.

A first draft of the Commission's new general policy document on development aid is due to be discussed by the Development Council in May 2000.

Please use  
these pages...

The Courier welcomes input on all aspects of development for the News and Noticeboard Pages.

Any information to be considered for inclusion should be sent to The Editor: [sylvia.howe@cec.eu.int](mailto:sylvia.howe@cec.eu.int).

**Noticeboard** publicises courses, seminars, meetings, workshops and so on. The **News** pages are for short articles about development activities within the EU and outside.



## The politics of adjustment

"Africa's destiny is caught up in a vicious circle. After the democracy of the 1960s we became an autocracy in the name of National Unity and Development, before going back to democracy in the 1990s, which is again giving way to autocracy today. The result is dismaying. Where are we going wrong?" Mayoyo Bitumba Tipo-Tipo devotes his book to addressing this question and trying to find some answers.

*African political adjustment, For an endogenous democracy in Congo-Kinshasa* by Mayoyo Bitumba Tipo-Tipo. L'Harmattan, 5-7 rue de l'école Polytechnique, 75005 Paris, France. ISBN: 2-7384-7334-2. 284 pages

## Human rights finally explained

Four NGOs: Amnesty International; Médecins sans frontières; Oxfam-Solidarité and Magasins du Monde-Oxfam have pooled their efforts in order to bring to everyone, first and foremost to adolescents, this CD-ROM which provides an interactive explanation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

*Citizens of the World*, distributed by Mille Dis, tel : +33 1 40078767 ; fax : +33 1 47421159 ; 21 rue de Choiseul 75002 Paris, France - Price : £ 14.99

## Biodiversity management in the ACP

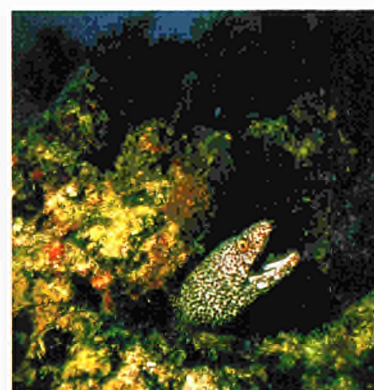


The EU have published, in collaboration with IUCN, a very useful and thought-provoking report called Parks for Biodiversity. The beautiful photographs complement its clear and informative writing, which gives an overview of the present situation on biological diversity, debates many questions, and goes a long way towards answering them. Protected areas are defined, and area planning and management examined, with guidance for external

support. Part II deals with protected areas in Africa south of the Sahara, Part III and IV with the Caribbean and the Pacific perspective.

*Parks for Biodiversity, Policy Guidance based on experience in ACP countries*; Published for the European Commission by IUCN-The World Conservation Union, rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK

Available from: European Commission, DG DEV, 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels, Belgium, Fax: +32 2 299 25 25; Email: info@DGDev.cec.be; ISBN: 2-8317-0464-2; 118 pg



## Health care in Dominica

The book describes the development and implementation of Primary health Care in Dominica since the 1980's, assesses present challenges and explores avenues towards continuing its success.

Part I of the thesis introduces the reader to Dominica and the primary health care services in the Marigot health district, where the studies were conducted. In part II, utilisation and morbidity patterns encountered at the different levels of the primary health care services of the Marigot health district are assessed. Starting at the base of the health care pyramid with popular medical practices and beliefs, through the district nurses' clinics to the top, Part

III reviews the major primary health care programmes. The whole maternal and child health care program over the years is assessed, as well as environmental and dental health. The two studies presented in part IV assess the health status of the elderly and the mental patients in the Marigot health district. Part V is made up of studies of various public health conditions in Dominica.

*Primary health care in Dominica* PhD thesis by Bram Luteijn, University of Groningen, Dept. of General Practice, Antonius Deusinglaan 4, 9713 AW Groningen, The Netherlands. ISBN 90-367-1062-2, 235 pg



Austria  
Belgium  
Denmark  
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France  
Germany  
Greece  
Ireland  
Italy  
Luxembourg  
Netherlands  
Portugal  
Spain  
Sweden  
United Kingdom

France  
(Territorial collectivities)  
Mayotte  
St Pierre and Miquelon  
(Overseas territories)  
New Caledonia and dependencies  
French Polynesia  
French Southern and Antarctic  
Territories  
Wallis and Futuna Islands

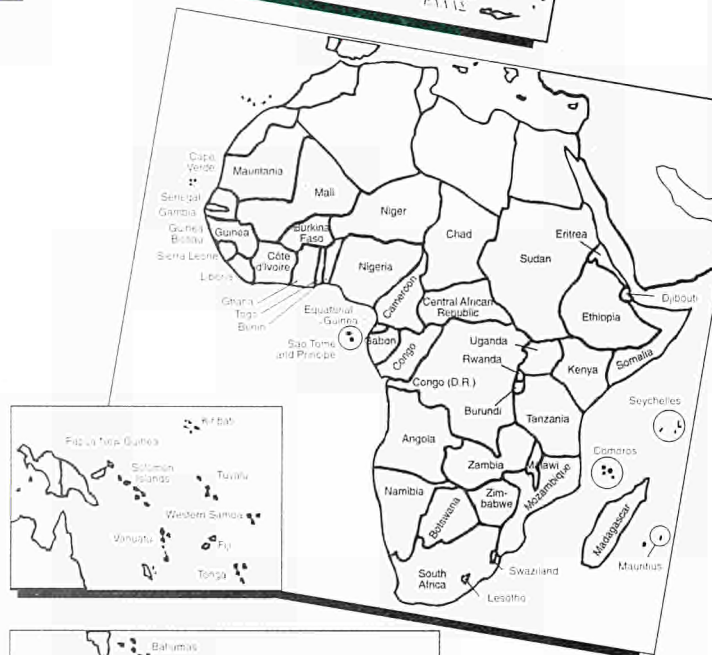
Netherlands  
(Overseas countries)  
Netherlands Antilles  
(Bonaire, Curaçao,  
St Martin,  
Saba, St Eustache)  
Aruba

Denmark  
(Country having special  
relations with Denmark)  
Greenland

United Kingdom  
(Overseas countries and  
territories)  
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British Antarctic Territory  
British Indian Ocean Territory  
British Virgin Islands  
Cayman Islands  
Falkland Islands  
and dependencies  
Montserrat  
Pitcairn Island  
St Helena and dependencies  
Turks and Caicos Islands

General Secretary  
of the ACP Group  
of States  
Avenue Georges Henri, 451  
1200 Brussels  
Belgium  
Tel: 743 06 00

## THE EUROPEAN UNION



## THE 71 ACP STATES

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Burundi  
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Central African Republic  
Chad  
Comoros  
Congo  
Congo (ex-Zaire)  
Côte d'Ivoire  
Djibouti  
Dominica  
Dominican Republic  
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Eritrea  
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Madagascar  
Malawi  
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and the Grenadines  
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Sudan  
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Togo  
Tonga  
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Uganda  
Vanuatu  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe

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the status of these countries and territories  
now or in the future.  
The Courier uses maps from a variety  
of sources. Their use does not imply  
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nor prejudice the status of any state  
or territory





Shade-tolerant shrubs linger in the dimly-lit understorey, waiting for a tree or branch fall to open a light gap into which the shrubs will race. As the trunk grows it pushes out buttress roots to support the tree, and these wind across the poor soils of the forest floor re-absorbing nutrients from fallen leaves and other debris.





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