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arbor*vitæ*

December 2005

The IUCN / WWF Forest Conservation Newsletter

contents

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A bushmeat hunter in Papua New Guinea

Forest Conservation and Poverty Reduction: the hunt for synergies

Savings banks, safety nets or poverty traps? What do forests and forest products really mean to the rural poor? There is little evidence that forests are actually capable of lifting people out of poverty on their own. So are forests, and non-timber forest products in particular, better characterized as poverty traps? We don't think so. If rural people who depend on forests tend to be locked into poverty this is more because of institutional and political structures that perpetuate existing inequalities, rather than any inherent characteristics of forest products themselves.

On the other hand, forest conservation has a mixed record in poverty reduction. In some cases, protected forest areas have provided new economic options that improve poor people's livelihoods but in many others they have resulted in restricted access to forest resources that further deprive the most disenfranchised, offering little or nothing by way of compensation. This issue of arbor*vitæ* takes a balanced yet critical look at both sides of the forests-poverty story and debate. Several authors also identify creative solutions and key policy changes that are required to enable forests and forest conservation to play a bigger part in poverty reduction.

Conservationists need to do more than simply lament the weakening of the environmental commitments and momentum of the early 1990s and the fact that donors have redirected resources from saving forests to lifting people out of poverty. We should not shy away from pointing out that current development strategies tend to favour urban areas and bypass large numbers of forest-dependant rural poor. We should use our knowledge of biophysical systems and how people use them to identify poverty-reducing linkages within our forest conservation work. Finally, we should be explicit that sometimes strict protection is the only viable option to conserve biodiversity but that this has to be accompanied by fair and equitable compensation that improves development opportunities for affected communities and individuals.

For sure, conservation and poverty reduction are not always compatible, and win-win situations are rare. Yet, the more open we are about these trade-offs and the more practical solutions we can offer, the better placed we will be to ensure that the conservation and sustainable use of forests is mainstreamed into the delivery of current global development priorities.

Stewart Maginnis, IUCN and Mark Aldrich, WWF

WWF

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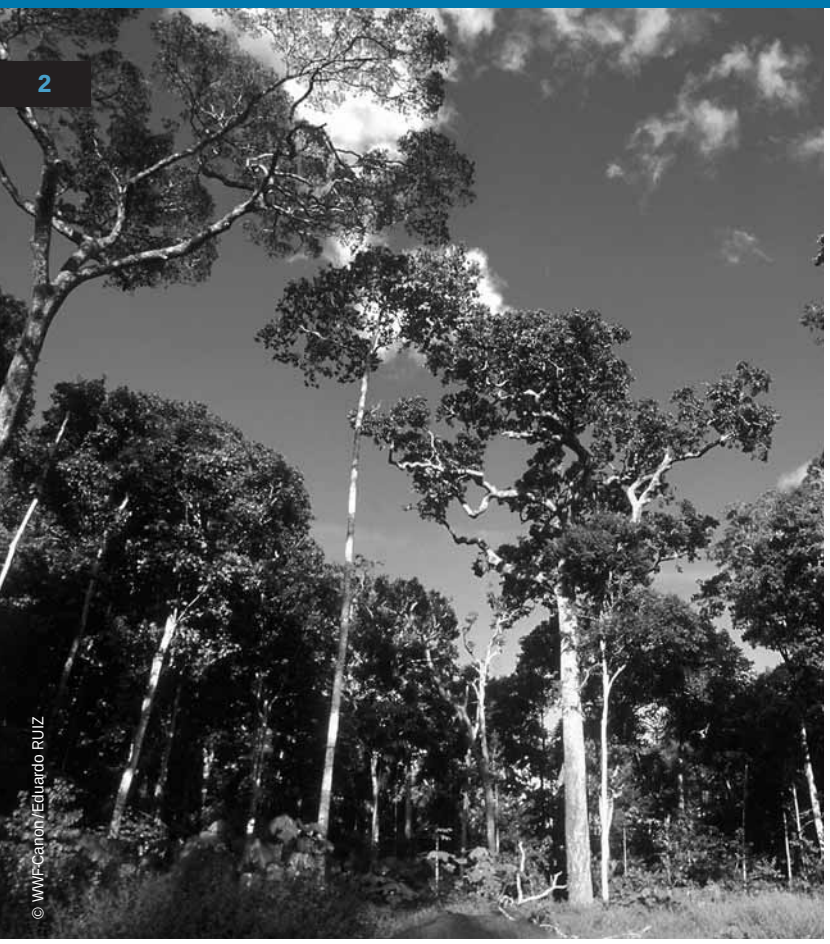
The World Conservation Union



Bolivia's northern humid forests

Bolivia certified as world leader

Bolivia has taken the lead in tropical forest certification. The recent commitment by a Bolivian timber company, CIMAL/IMR, to certify 300,000 hectares of its forests brings the country's total certified forest area to over 2 million hectares. This means that a quarter of Bolivia's managed forests now meet the rigorous standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) - the highest national coverage of all tropical countries worldwide. Of the 16 FSC-certified forest operations, 13 are forest concessions, two are private properties, and one is an indigenous communal land. The certified operations are primarily located within the Southwest Amazon.

Certification has made Bolivia's forestry sector highly profitable, generating about US$16 million annually in exports and allowing access to the lucrative US and EU markets where consumer demand for certified products is high. In addition to these economic benefits, certification has also had positive social impacts, as FSC standards protect the rights and welfare of workers and neighbouring communities. “The FSC certification process in Bolivia has improved labour conditions of forestry workers in terms of level of income, safety, hygiene and health, as well as access to opportunities to strengthen their capacities,” said Roger Landivar, WWF's country representative in Bolivia. “Indirectly it has helped improve relationships between forestry companies and local populations regarding assistance and employment opportunities.”

Bolivia's expansion of its certified forests has been supported by one of the most progressive forest laws in the region that has put in place high social and environmental standards over the last ten years. As such, Bolivia offers some valuable lessons for other tropical countries hoping to follow its lead in sustainable forest management.

Sources: www.panda.org October 12, 2005; www.rainforest-alliance.org October 6, 2005. For more information contact Viviane van Oven, voven@wwfbolivia.org.

Mauritius roadblock

The Mauritian Prime Minister announced in October that he would stop construction of a highway that was mainly designed to hasten tourists' journeys from the airport to the island's east-coast hotels. The planned 25-km highway would have passed through the forested Ferney Valley that is home to the Mauritius kestrel, once one of the world's rarest birds, and a number of critically endangered trees including two Pandanus species believed extinct until their recent rediscovery along the route of the proposed road. IUCN had been supporting local environmental NGOs' campaigns to halt the road. Prior to the halting of the road project, Achim Steiner, IUCN's director-general, had commented “Given the tiny amount of good quality tropical forest remaining on Mauritius, this development can only be viewed as catastrophic to the native biodiversity.” Only 1.6 percent of the country's original forests remain and IUCN has ranked Mauritius as having the third most endangered flora in the world.

Supporters of the US$19 million road project stressed the benefits it would bring to the tourism industry - a key pillar of the island's economy. Opponents argued that the government could upgrade the existing coastal route or investigate alternative routes that would save Ferney Valley and benefit poor fishing communities living on the east coast.

Source: www.planetark.org, October 10 and 17, 2005

The Mauritius kestrel

Green gold or fools' gold?

The much-prized jatropha fruits

There is something of a gold rush feel about it. The ambitious plans of several developing countries to plant huge areas of jatropha (*Jatropha curcas*) are part of a fast-growing worldwide enthusiasm for this 'green gold' tree crop. Jatropha seeds produce an oil that can be used for cooking, lighting or generating electricity, or mixed with petrol or diesel to produce a biofuel. Many see jatropha as a lucrative crop for poor farmers, an environmentally-friendly alternative to fossil fuels that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and beneficial to wildlife. Native to Central America, jatropha is now found throughout the tropics, and this year alone, new efforts to encourage farmers to adopt the plant were announced in Burkina Faso, Ghana, India, Malawi, Nicaragua and Nepal, among others. The Indian government's Vision 2020 document says that cultivating ten million hectares with jatropha would generate 7.5 million tonnes of fuel a year, creating year-round jobs for five million people. They see great potential for this pest and drought-resistant tree to turn the country's wastelands into productive plantations. The Indonesian government also recently announced plans to establish 10 million hectares of jatropha plantations by 2009 to provide biodiesel for state-run power plants.

Certainly, jatropha has very promising qualities. The trees produce seeds for more than 30 years, and each mature tree produces between 5 and 15 kg of seeds three times a year. Farmers can extract the oil using a press and cars do not need to be modified to use the biofuel. So is jatropha a real miracle tree? Its critics argue that biofuel plantations will harm the poor by taking land out of foodcrop production and point to studies showing that the production of biofuels uses more energy than they actually generate. And other problems are setting in. India has already had to hold back on its grand plans, as red tape and supply problems have delayed the launch of its proposed 'biodiesel mission'.

Source: www.scidev.net, November 4, 2005

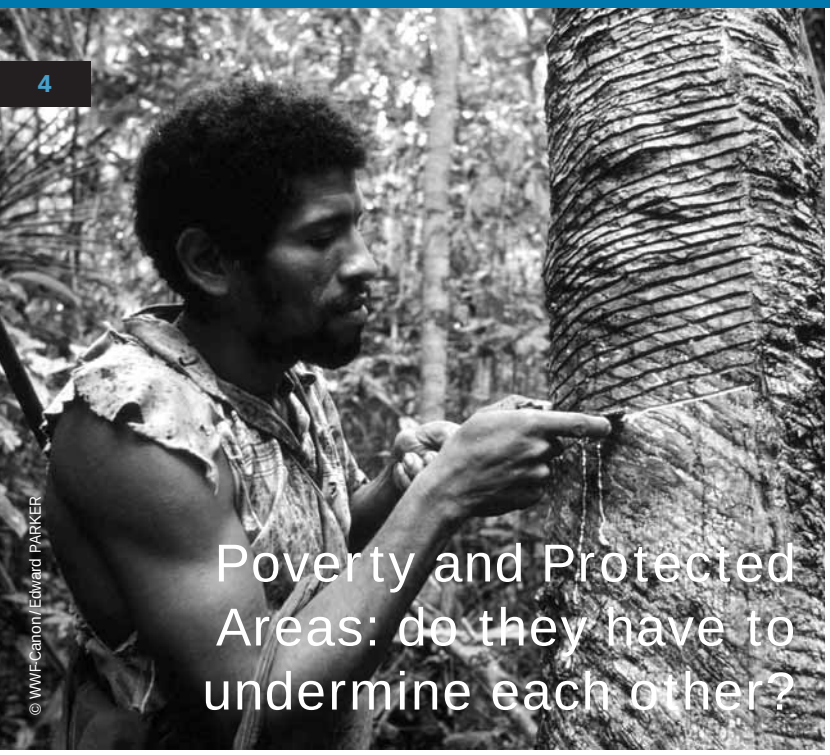
The canary suffers: In October, the Brazilian government declared a state of emergency in the Amazon, in response to the region's worst drought in over 40 years. Studies by the Amazon Environmental Research Institute suggest that the warming of the Atlantic near the Africa coast and the Gulf of Mexico may have altered the circulation pattern of air currents and moved dry air masses over the Amazon Region. "If the warming of the north Atlantic is the smoking gun, it really shows how the world is changing," said Daniel Nepstadt, an ecologist from the US-based Woods Hole Research Institute. "The Amazon is a canary in a coal mine for the earth. As we enter a warming trend we are in uncertain territory," he said.
Source: www.planetark.org, October 11, 2005

Environmental refugees: There will be as many as 50 million environmental refugees in the world by 2010, according to a recent statement by experts from the United Nations University. There is, they say, an urgent need for a new definition of 'environmental refugee', to give those fleeing environmental degradation the same recognition and access to benefits as victims of political upheaval or violence. Research by the Red Cross shows that more people are now displaced by environmental disasters than by war.
Source: www.ehs.unu.edu, October 12, 2005

UK worst offender: The UK is Europe's top importer of illegal timber, with its illegal timber trade resulting in the destruction of 600,000 hectares per year according to a recent WWF report *Failing the Forests*. This trade, says the report, is exacerbating poverty in some of the poorest countries. "The UK has made poverty a central plank of its EU presidency yet its consumption of illegal timber is robbing countries such as Cameroon and Indonesia of invaluable income," said Andrew Lee, Director of Campaigns for WWF-UK. WWF believes that current EU efforts to curb illegal logging are inadequate, as they rely on voluntary agreements between EU and timber-producing companies and do not cover pulp, paper, furniture, or any timber imported via third countries.
Source: www.panda.org, November 22, 2005

China - first the good news... Eight timber companies have become the first members of the China Forest and Trade Network (CFTN). The companies include two of China's largest state-owned forest bureaus, three major private manufacturing companies based in mainland China, and three trading companies located in Hong Kong. In meeting the CFTN membership requirement, these companies have demonstrated long-term commitments to responsible forest management and trade. As the China chapter of WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network, the CFTN provides its members with market access to a vast network of similarly-minded businesses.
Source: www.panda.org, November 1, 2005

...then the bad Chinese logging companies are colluding with Burmese military commanders and ethnic leaders to illegally log and export timber from some of the world's most important forests, according to a two-year investigation by Global Witness, a London-based watchdog group. The illegal cross-border timber trade between Kachin state in northern Burma and Yunnan province in China is said to be worth up to US$400m a year. Global Witness warns that unless the illegal trade is stopped by China, it could destabilize the region. "Tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of Chinese workers employed in logging, transportation and road building in Kachin state, and in the timber processing industries of Yunnan province and further afield, could soon lose their jobs unless the industry is put on a sustainable footing."
Source: www.guardian.co.uk, October 19, 2005



Poverty and Protected Areas: do they have to undermine each other?

Dilys Roe, of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) looks at the debate on poverty and protected areas.

Rubber tapper in an extractive reserve, Brazil

Protected areas, the cornerstone of international conservation policy, have become the subject of an intense debate over the role they play in creating - or exacerbating - rural poverty. So what has their record been, and how can it be improved?

Protected areas have in some cases resulted in loss of, or reduced access to, land and resources; forced resettlement; destruction of crops, herds and villages; fines, and even loss of life. The negative impacts of protected areas can be especially critical in forested areas, given the particular dependence of poor people on timber and non-timber forest products for food, fuel, building supplies and so on.

However, protected areas are not necessarily bad for poor people. Some protected areas have succeeded in generating significant revenues from tourism which has directly benefited poor people. In Peru, for example, the construction of new tented campsites inside the Manu Reserved Zone provided at least $500,000 in one year to the local economy and to the indigenous community. Extractive reserves (IUCN category VI), common in some South American and Asian countries, can also generate significant benefits for poor people, while providing incentives to conserve biodiversity. And not all protected areas result in evictions of resident communities or top-down enforcement. There have been instances where local groups themselves have requested that areas be officially protected in order to protect valuable resources from 'outsiders' or where local communities and governments have entered into partnerships to co-manage particular areas or resources.

The impacts of protected areas on poverty are very context specific - every good example can be countered by a bad one - and hard, quantitative data is surprisingly hard to find. One key lesson, however, is that we need to focus more on improving the quality of existing protected areas than on striving to create new ones. And state-owned protected areas are not necessarily the best option for either conservation or poverty reduction. Indigenous territories and other forms of community conserved areas are often more effective in delivering ecological, cultural and spiritual benefits to local people. In addition, many productive landscapes are managed in ways that promote conservation, without being labelled as such. Recognising these as part of the protected area network and looking beyond endangered species and habitats to include components of biodiversity that local people value will ensure that protected areas underpin the international drive to both conserve biodiversity and reduce poverty.

The recently established Poverty and Conservation Learning Group, an international initiative coordinated by IIED, will be one channel for exploring the linkages between protected areas and poverty.

Contact: Dilys Roe, dilys.roe@iied.org or visit www.povertyandconservation.info. See also the article by Tom McShane in arbor*vitæ* 23.

protected areas news in brief

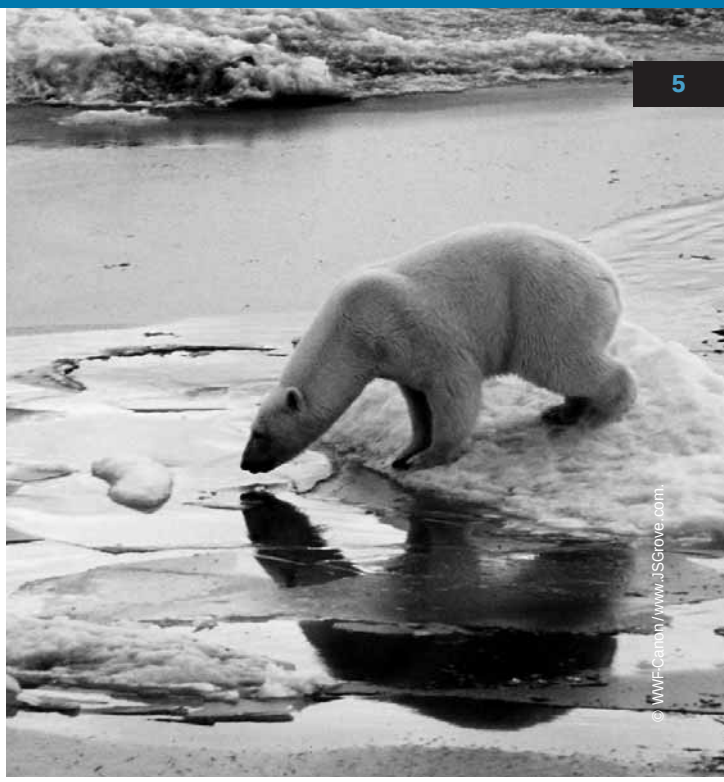
New parks in Cameroon: The government of Cameroon declared in October the creation of two new national parks, covering a total area of more than 600,000 hectares. These parks are the result of the historic Brazzaville summit last February, where the governments of Cameroon, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Congo committed to protecting millions of hectares of forest.
Source: www.panda.org, October 11, 2005

Community-led parks in PNG: Papua New Guinea increased its protected area coverage by nearly 50% in October, with the gazetting of 12 new protected areas that include some of the country's most biologically diverse forests, wetlands and coral reefs. All the protected areas were requested by customary communities who own the land and who will manage these 'wildlife management areas'. “We hope these proposed protected areas will help some of the country's least developed communities to improve their livelihoods,” said PNG's Environment Minister William Duma. “They have been established for many reasons, including increasing fish stocks, ensuring sustainable harvest of animals and forest products, clarifying land boundaries, drawing tourists and protecting sacred areas”.
Source: www.panda.org, October 26, 2005

Fee hike for hikers: Mount Kilimanjaro climbers face a 100% increase in fees from next January, as part of Tanzania's National Parks Authority's new marketing strategy aimed at encouraging high value, low volume tourism. Entry fees for Serengeti national park will also increase. “We need to protect the environment. There is a lot of demand from tourism and we need to control the numbers in order to maintain the ecological integrity” said Allan Kijazi, a planning officer in the parks authority.
Source: news.bbc.co.uk, October 24, 2005

The World Summit 2005: a view from the environmental trenches

Andrew Deutz, IUCN's Special Advisor on Global Policy, takes a critical look at where the World Summit took the global dialogue on environmental issues.



The environmental agenda stayed afloat but did not advance at the summit

The 2005 World Summit was originally billed as an opportunity to take stock of progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), five years into their 15-year timeframe. The process quickly morphed, however, into a comprehensive stock-taking of the entire multilateral agenda. Against this background, environmental issues fared rather well. From start to finish, the treatment of the environmental agenda expanded from one line on climate change to three and a half pages in the final document, addressing, *inter alia*, forests, climate change, biodiversity, desertification, water and sanitation, chemical and hazardous waste, oceans, natural disasters, energy, education for sustainable development, and the GEF replenishment. Of course, the document does not provide any new commitments or significant advances on most of these issues; rather, it tends to reiterate what was previously agreed in Johannesburg and elsewhere.

Climate change was the single most contentious environmental issue. That was not a surprise, given the focus on climate change at Gleneagles and the expectations that are building for launching a process at the UNFCCC COP/MOP in Montreal to develop climate change actions beyond 2012. The outcome on climate change can be characterized as a slight retreat from what had been agreed to at Gleneagles, but a clear expectation that Montreal is going to be a fight to launch a new round of negotiations.

What we did not achieve within the formal Summit proceedings, was a significant advance in our understanding of how the environmental agenda supports the development agenda and vice versa, and how both environment and development support peace and prosperity. Nevertheless, outside of the official process, the Summit did provide a platform for a host of assessments which articulated this perspective, including the Millennium Project reports, the *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*, the latest UNDP *Human Development Report*, the World Bank's *Where is the Wealth of Nations*, the *World Resources Report*, as well as the Poverty Environment Partnership's (PEP) *Environment for the MDGs* report, which was led by IUCN. All of these reports describe the essential role of ecosystem services for poverty eradication and achieving the other MDGs.

One of the most significant development-related outcomes of the Summit is the call for a new round of national poverty reduction plans to be structured around the MDG framework. Most of the donor community understood the poverty-environment messages coming out of the series of reports and were calling for enhanced efforts to mainstream environmental sustainability in the next round of national plans. Numerous donor agencies have also been making commitments to increase funding for environmental sustainability. The bottom line is that the MDGs will continue to be the organizing framework for donors and for UN agencies, and poverty will remain central to the development discourse. The emerging trend is an enhanced focus on governance at both the local and national level. The launching of the High-Level Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor on the eve of the Summit is perhaps the clearest indication. For the conservation community, these trends mean that we need to be prepared to be at the table as the new poverty plans are developed to make sure environment is mainstreamed, and that we need to step up to define the emerging discourse around governance to address obstacles to effective and equitable conservation and natural resource management, particularly at the community level.

Contact: Andrew Deutz, adeutz@iucn.org

research in brief

Just how important are forests for poverty alleviation? How do different forest management regimes and policies affect the benefits to the poor? These are among the key questions being addressed in a four-year research project, the Poverty Environment Network (PEN). Facilitated by CIFOR (the Center for International Forestry Research) and IFS (the International Foundation for Science), PEN will involve over 30 research partners across the tropics collecting case-specific data using comparable definitions and methodologies. In this way it is hoped that PEN research will serve as the basis for the first global comparative and quantitative analysis of the role of tropical forests in poverty alleviation.
Source: www.cifor.cgiar.org/pen

Mangrove replanting, Indonesia

PES
and the poor

Can Payments for Environmental Services (PES) reap real benefits for the rural poor? Kirsten Schuyt of WWF-Netherlands reports on a new programme that aims to develop pro-poor PES mechanisms.

It is increasingly recognized that forest landscapes provide a wide range of environmental services including carbon sequestration, watershed protection, scenic beauty, and biodiversity. Proponents of Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) argue that the failure of society to compensate land managers for these services is a key factor contributing to forest landscape degradation seen today throughout the world. PES mechanisms therefore seek to transfer rewards from those who benefit from the environmental service to those who manage it.

Although designed as conservation finance instruments, PES mechanisms can also serve as sources of compensation to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor. Theoretically, there are several ways in which poor land managers can benefit from PES, including direct payments to individual farmers and households, community-level benefits such as hospitals and schools, and indirect benefits such as community empowerment and land tenure security.

However, as is widely known, the objectives of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability are not necessarily complementary. Without jointly addressing these two interlinked issues from the start, the long-term sustainability of PES mechanisms is highly questionable. Therefore, WWF-Netherlands' Forests Programme, together with CARE and IIED, has designed a PES programme that aims to deliver equitable PES mechanisms - i.e. mechanisms that provide substantial benefits for the poor, with payments being made in a just and equitable way. This will require that resources are applied to the priorities and needs of the poor; that local values, knowledge and practices are incorporated into natural resource management practices; and that women and marginalized groups directly participate in, and benefit from, the PES mechanism.

The Programme is currently negotiating funding with DGIS and Danida and is expected to start in early 2006. It will focus specifically on payments for watershed services of forest landscapes, including erosion and flood control, in selected watersheds in 5 countries: Guatemala, Peru, Tanzania, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Contact: Kirsten Schuyt, kschuyt@wwf.nl

Research in brief

The urban poor bring the forest to town. A study cited in *World Resources 2005: The Wealth of the Poor. Managing Ecosystems to Fight Poverty*, published by WRI and presented at the World Summit (see page 5), shows that non-timber forest products (NTFPs) continue to be an important income source for recent migrants to urban areas. The study in a rapidly growing city in Bolivia found that recent immigrants, and particularly the poor, benefit from NTFPs in two ways: some family members (mostly men) go to the forest for a few months each year to collect Brazil nuts and palm hearts to sell to processors, while others (mostly women) work in the Brazil nut processing plants in and around the city. The poorest households obtain 47% of their income from NTFPs in this way.

Source: Stoian, D. 2003. *Making the best of two worlds: rural and peri-urban livelihood options sustained by non-timber forest products from the Bolivian Amazon*; available at www.catie.ac.cr/bancoconocimiento/C/CeCoEco_Publicaciones_2004/BONN_2003_Paper_Stoian.pdf

Mark Hurley/WWF

Indigenous people and forest certification in Peru

Working to achieve certification has brought clear economic benefits to the indigenous communities involved, reports Julia Cass.

Shipibo-Konibo people milling wood at the harvest site

The indigenous Shipibo-Konibo communities live along the Ucayali River in the Peruvian Amazon. Traditionally, their subsistence economy has relied on fishing, hunting, and cultivating corn, beans, yucca and plantains. Up until recently, their livelihoods have been precarious - a poor year for crops or fishing meant they went hungry - and their young people have been leaving to find work in cities. Illegal loggers would pay them 20 soles (about US$6) for every tree they cut down on their land, contributing to the decline of mahogany in Peru. Now, by working with WWF's Global Forest & Trade Network (GFTN) and other organizations, the Shipibo-Konibo have achieved a more stable standard of living and reconnected with traditional values.

In 2000, the Peruvian NGO AIDER received funding from the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands to help the Shipibo-Konibo start an economic development programme. “We focused on forest management from the start because we saw that commercializing the forests would be the best means of economic development in these communities,” said Jaime Nalvarte, AIDER's president.

The project started by providing training in tree species identification and low impact methods of extraction. AIDER also bought logging equipment for the communities with the more valuable forests, and small barges to take the wood to the port town of Pucallpa. Those individuals who showed the most interest were trained as 'tecnicos indigenas' in skills such as record-keeping, accounting, pricing, marketing and negotiating.

At first, the Shipibo-Konibo were suspicious of AIDER's motives. “In one community we visited to explain the proposed project, the leaders said they wouldn't meet with us unless we paid them,” said Pio Santiago, an AIDER forester. “Almost all of their interactions with outsiders had involved either exploitation or paternalism. They had never been equals.” The breakthrough for the Shipibo-Konibo came three years after the project started, when they shipped timber to Pucallpa and were paid for it. “Many people have to see to believe,” Nalvarte said. “When a tree brought 1,000 soles instead of 20, this wasn't a discourse or talking pretty or putting up signs. This was business.”

WWF joined the project in 2003 when it became clear that FSC certification could bring multiple benefits to the Shipibo-Konibo communities. The certification process provided a good structure for responsible forest management, set apart these forests from others, and enabled the communities to get help from WWF's GFTN to find new markets for their wood. Following many meetings, five communities decided to seek certification and WWF-Peru, with financing from USAID, provided technical assistance for the certification process.

“These kinds of projects are complex, but what's the alternative?” said Steve Gretzinger, WWF GFTN coordinator for Latin America & the Caribbean. “Poverty and illegal logging are even more costly.”

Today these five communities manage their own forests, harvest the trees and market the timber. In a considerable achievement for a people with no previous business or forestry management experience, they expect to receive certification in the coming months for 35,000 hectares of their rainforest. This will be the first FSC-certified forest in Peru and now hardwoods from these indigenous communities are beginning to make their way to international markets.

In 2004, the communities sold 45,000 board feet of timber, worth approximately $13,200. Part of the profit, after paying salaries, transportation and supplies, goes to community projects and the remainder is reinvested in the business. Since the local people have seen the employment and income opportunities from sustainable forestry, they have set up a vigilance committee to keep illegal loggers away. And the young people are no longer leaving in such numbers. Indeed, young people from the five communities participated in a series of forest management workshops in November and ended up creating an organization of indigenous young people to help sustain both their forests and their culture.

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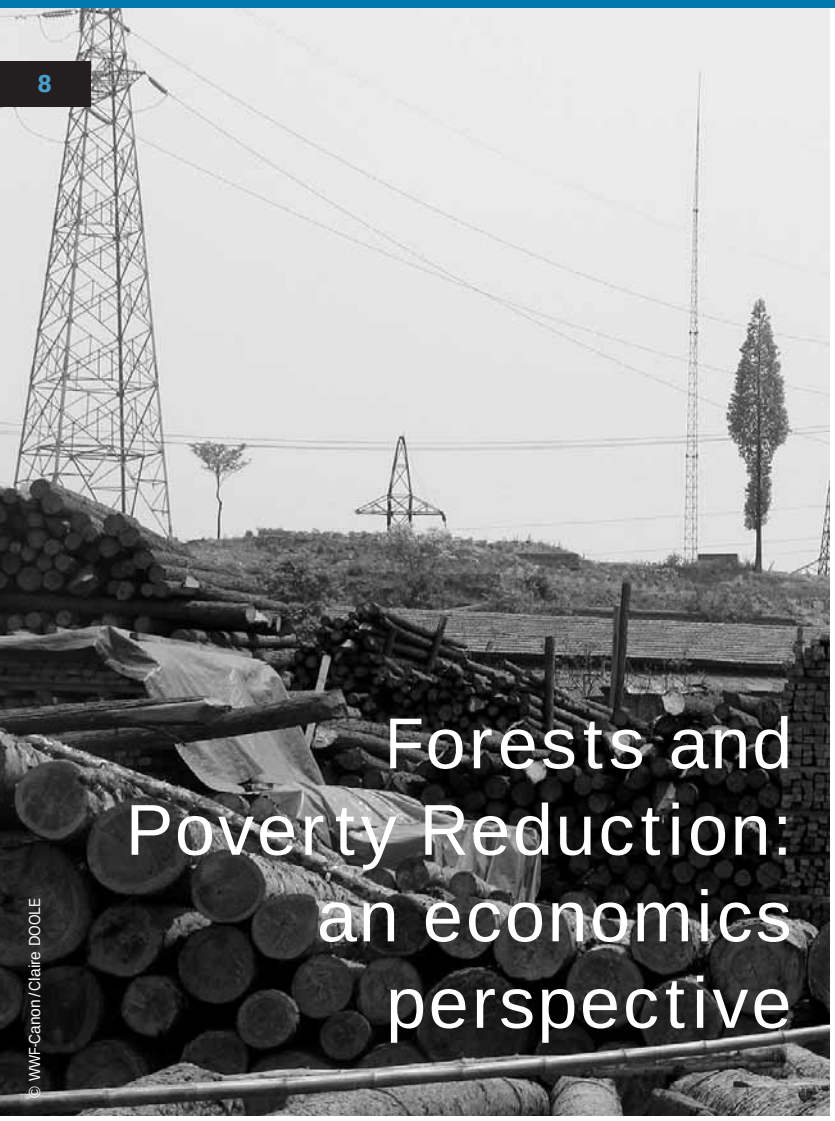

Forests and Poverty Reduction: an economics perspective

What is pro-poor economic growth and how can forests contribute to it? Paul Steele, an environmental economist, sets out the issues.

Forests can help fuel economic growth: but is it pro-poor?

Many low-income countries will need strong, pro-poor economic growth if they are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty and improving the lives of poor people.

Economic growth occurs if a country produces a higher value of goods and services this year than last year as measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These goods and services are generated by a country's assets. This asset base is made up of human capital, man-made capital and natural capital. Growth can be increased either by increasing the output of the existing asset base (for example, through exports or consumption), or by increasing the asset base through investment.

So, how do the poor fit into this? Well, the poor also hold certain assets - their own human capital, limited man-made capital and some access to natural capital, such as forests. As with national economies, the incomes of the poor will rise if more income is generated from their assets than last year, or if their total asset base increases.

Forests, economic growth, exports and employment

Forestry provides more than 10% of the GDP of some of the poorest countries, and 5% of GDP for many more countries, as shown in the table below. While over 90% of developing country production is consumed domestically, there are nonetheless about 10 developing countries where forestry accounts for 10% or more of total national exports. These countries range from the Solomon Islands (where forestry makes up 60.3% of its exports) and Liberia (42.8%) to Gabon (10.6%) and Chile (9.8%).

The forest sector is also an important source of employment in many developing countries. It is estimated that the timber industry provides 10 million jobs in developing countries, plus 30-50 million informal jobs in the wood industry.

Developing countries with highest regional contributions of the forest sector to Gross Domestic Product

Country	% share of GDP
Africa	
Liberia	17.8
Guinea-Bissau	12.4
Equatorial Guinea	10.3
Asia	
Bhutan	14.0
Malaysia	6.7
Cambodia	6.6
Oceania	
Solomon Islands	7.1
Papua New Guinea	5.1
Latin America	
Paraguay	4.2
Guyana	4.1
Brazil	3.4

Source: FAO, 2004

It is clear then that forests can contribute to growth, and are important for the livelihoods of poor people. But while forest products are vital to maintain incomes and prevent further vulnerability, can forests actually provide a way to escape from poverty?

Forests and poverty reduction

The challenge in making forest-based growth pro-poor is to (i) generate growth, (ii) ensure that the poor benefit from growth, and most crucially (iii) sustain growth by managing the forestry resource. There are two main ways in which forestry can contribute to reducing poverty:

- *Through national economic growth that creates jobs* and adds to overall growth and government revenues. Forest revenues from forest taxes can be used for pro-poor purposes, both at the national level and in areas near to forests with high poverty - as tried in Ghana and Cameroon.

- *Through opportunities for small and medium scale enterprises* both as producers and processors of forest

products - as tried through joint forest management in India or out-grower schemes in South Africa.

In order for national forest benefits to support poverty reduction, forest management needs to be unsubsidized, the profits needs to be taxed by the government and used for pro-poor spending.

Five top strategies for making forest-based growth pro-poor

1. *Make sure large-scale forest harvesting is not subsidized*: Many countries lose money from their forests. Valuable natural forests are distributed for political gains ignoring revenue generation, as in Cambodia and Indonesia. Timber processing is linked to the political elite and benefits from artificially low log prices and subsidised credit. However in the medium term, low timber prices encourage excessive processing capacity - which eventually will destroy the viability of the industry. Many countries, particularly in Africa also continue loss-making state plantations, though some of these subsidies are now being removed.

2. *Ensure that forest concessions and plantations do not harm the poor*: Despite the growth in participatory forestry, commercial logging still dominates in the forest-rich tropics. Many of these concessions negatively impact on the poor and should be cancelled where proper management plans do not exist.

3. *Increase value added of the forest industry*: This can by done by investing in more productive plantations and technologies for more value added processing - but without reaching overcapacity. The $150 billion annual global timber trade remains dominated by industrialized countries. Most of Africa's timber exports are still unprocessed logs from natural forests. In contrast to Asia, Africa still has very few plantations, despite favourable conditions. South Africa is the exception here - and its private plantations are certified for sustainable management.

Plantation workers in South Africa

4. *Capture forest profits through taxes*: Countries such as Cameroon and Ghana are raising forestry earnings through timber auctions and timber taxes despite some resistance. In Cameroon forestry now provides 25% of tax revenue.

5. *Make sure that revenues raised are used for pro-poor expenditure*: This can be achieved by leaving some revenues with local authorities in forested, low-income areas. In Bolivia, municipal governments keep 25% of forestry fees, while in Guatemala municipalities keep 50%.

How to benefit small and medium-sized forest enterprises

Most forestry value added production is capital-, technology- and skill-intensive, requiring secure land tenure. In order to benefit from this value added, poor producers need to group into associations to negotiate better terms - as has happened in Latin America and in some African countries, such as Uganda and South Africa. Whether poor producers operate as individuals, small businesses or community groups, they can be supported by:

- *Increasing the value of their forest assets*: This can entail improving transport infrastructure, overcoming local-level purchasing monopolies and supporting poor producers' efforts to achieve certification.

- *Increasing the productivity of their forest assets*: This can be done through, for example, providing technologies and information to use lesser-known wood species.

- *Creating investment, institutions and policies to increase their forest assets*: Over 20% of the forest area in developing countries now has some control by poorer households. Countries such as Guatemala and Laos are experimenting with community logging concessions.

- *Helping them invest in their own future assets*: To manage natural forest and plant trees on private land, poor people need secure tenure as provided to an extent by India and Nepal's forest programmes.

How to sustain forests in ways that benefit the poor

The loss of natural forests can impose high social costs on poor people. But too often the poor suffer from blanket forest restrictions, as in China, or restrictive controls on harvesting and transport which reduce smallholder prices as occurs in Mali and Sri Lanka. Plantations to reduce pressure on natural forests, should not be on lands that are important for the poor, or done in ways that negatively affect the poor by, for example, reducing natural springs.

In conclusion then, forest-based growth needs to be more pro-poor in order to contribute effectively to poverty reduction. The key is to achieve a balance between logging, forest protection and tree planting that minimizes the negative impacts on the poor and maximizes the benefit flow to the poor.

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Forests and Poverty Reduction: a brief history of the relationship

A raw deal? Social forestry tended to yield limited benefits for local people

R.J. Fisher, a member of IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, looks at the general trends behind the links between forestry and poverty reduction.

Traditional forest science up to the mid-1970s was primarily concerned with providing timber for industrial purposes. In this context, international foresters such as Jack Westoby argued that forestry could make a major contribution to economic development. In what was essentially a 'trickle-down' view of economic development, the poor would benefit from economic growth and broad national development. However, by the late 1970s it was increasingly recognized that this was not happening and increasing interest was being paid to ideas such as community forestry, which aimed to provide trees and other forest products to rural people who had lost access to forests under state-managed forestry. Westoby, in a sort of second incarnation, became one of the principal advocates of community forestry and the appearance of the FAO publication *Forestry for Local Community Development* in 1978 was a major landmark in the emergence of community/social forestry.

In practice, however, the early days of social forestry tended to be associated with rather limited benefits to communities, often restricted to the provision of fuelwood through village woodlots. People's participation in forestry tended to be limited and usually involved little or no role in decision-making. There were increasing calls for greater distribution of benefits to local people and these benefits gradually began to flow in programmes such as Joint Forest Management in India and community forestry in Nepal and elsewhere.

These were positive developments, but these were generally limited to providing forest products for subsistence (especially fuelwood) and non-timber forest products. Access to high-value products such as timber was almost invariably excluded and timber was directed to industrial forestry or, increasingly, tree species were protected for conservation purposes. Where there was local participation in decision-making, this was usually limited to relatively routine matters such as timetables for community activities and distribution of workloads and products. Local people were rarely involved in the setting of objectives for forest management, such as whether forests would be managed for timber, for conservation or for locally desired products.

Concerns about inequitable distribution within communities had been expressed in many countries, including concerns that the poor were not targeted in community forestry and that, in fact, they sometimes became worse off as a result of these programmes. In practice, the approach continued to be trickle-down. A specific concern with focused efforts at poverty reduction only emerged as a major strand of policy discourse in the late 1990s, heavily influenced by the commitment of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to eradicate extreme poverty by 2010. Poverty reduction has now become a dominant concern of donors.

Efforts to direct forest programmes towards effectively addressing poverty reduction have been hindered by a number of institutional factors and structural power constraints. These include concerns over the need for forest conservation, combined with a distrust of the capability or willingness of local people to manage forests sustainably. Such viewpoints are used to justify the maintenance of strong oversight of community forest management by forest authorities and the imposition of detailed regulations (rather than minimum standards) that set higher standards of accountability for communities than for the forest authorities themselves. Another constraint is the difficulty faced by outsiders (including forest departments) in ensuring that the benefits from local forest management reach the poor rather than being appropriated by wealthier and more powerful members of communities.

There is no magic bullet to enable forest conservation to contribute more directly to poverty reduction. Three things which may help are: (1) a move towards more genuine local participation in decision-making, including in the setting of objectives for forest management; (2) allowing local people access to the benefits of valuable forest products; and (3) crafting local institutional arrangements which prevent the capture of benefits by local elites and make sure that the poor obtain a meaningful share of benefits including income. Devolved decision-making is crucial, but this needs to be accompanied by empowerment of the poor in such decision-making.

Contact: R.J. Fisher, rjfisher@ozemail.com.au. This article draws on the recent IUCN publication, *Poverty and Conservation: Landscapes, People and Power*, of which R.J Fisher is lead author (see book review on page 16).

Forest Plantations and Poverty

Do plantations reduce or exacerbate poverty? How could plantations play a bigger role in poverty reduction? James Mayers of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) looks at these questions.

Rubber plantation worker, Indonesia

Forest plantations currently contribute about one-third of the global supply of industrial wood and FAO expects them to contribute nearly half by 2040. With plantations increasing in developing countries too, forest-based industries and some government departments frequently promote the poverty-reducing powers of plantation forestry and fibre/wood processing. However, strong voices of protest can also be heard. They contend that plantations harm the environment, do little for the rural poor through local economies and take up land more rightly suited to poor people's food production. The World Rainforest Movement, for example, is currently demanding a moratorium on FSC certification of timber plantations in part because of its claim that certification legitimizes practices that harm local livelihoods.

So have plantations pulled many people out of poverty? The answer seems to be no. The number of jobs created by plantations seems to be in the order of 1 to 3 per 100 ha of plantation.[1] In some cases these jobs work to the benefit of the poor. In others they displace other jobs from the land and may perpetuate low-wage labour and poor conditions of employment, locking some poor communities into dependency. Increasing mechanization is the norm in the plantation industry and can also have major social costs. As governments have generally sold or corporatized their plantation assets, this has in some cases concentrated power and privilege amongst elite groups and caused conflicts with land-use by poor rural people.

At the same time, the negative impacts of plantations hit poor people hardest. Environmental hazards, including fire, pollution, herbicides, invasive species and reduced water supplies can affect poor people's wellbeing, health and livelihoods. Plantations have also caused many poor people to lose access to land and customary use resources, thereby heightening pressure on other land and sometimes exacerbating local tensions. Recently in Brazil, some 120 families of the Landless Rural Workers' Movement occupied the 8,695 hectare Agril estate at Vila do Riacho on which the pulp and paper company Aracruz Cellulose is establishing a eucalyptus plantation.

The increasing use of outsourcing within the plantation industry is causing additional problems. A recent study in South Africa noted that the outsourcing of most plantation operations to contractors has been accompanied by a 60-70% decrease in wages, later improved somewhat by minimum wage legislation.[2] Workers have little bargaining power, their incomes are insecure and without financial safety nets in the form of health insurance or pensions. Their vulnerability is further increased by high levels of HIV/AIDS and risks of injury.

A more promising development is the increase in out-grower schemes. In Brazil for example, pulp and paper company Klabin works with timber out-growers in a variety of schemes that generate annual income for farmers ranging from US$76 to $217 per hectare, whilst in South Africa the schemes run by Sappi and Mondi provide participating households with an annual income of about $130 per hectare. However, out-grower schemes have their own shortcomings and have yet to take households out of poverty.

Wood and fibre from several tropical estate crops, including rubber, coconut and oil palm, could also have major poverty-reducing impacts as these industries have substantial small-grower and out-grower sectors. Between them these crops cover over three times the area of intensively managed planted forests.[3] However, there are many challenges to overcome given that most investment in plantations is from private capital - favouring fast-growing species and fast returns.

In conclusion, plantations are neither inherently good nor bad for poverty reduction - it depends on the context and the ways in which they are planned and managed. It depends crucially on tenure and access rights, the labour demand of the plantation and the level of associated downstream processing. So, as is so often the case, 'it all depends'. But the evidence in favour of poverty-reducing plantations is not impressive. Plantation proponents must do much more to ensure that they do no harm, and to increase the likelihood that they will do some good.

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[3] Kanowski, P. 2005. Intensively managed planted forests. The Forests Dialogue Background Paper. June 2005. http://research.yale.edu/gisf/assets/pdf/tfd/impf/Kanowski%20TFD%20Background%20Paper.pdf

debates: forest conservation and poverty reduction: compatible or competing?

Has poverty alleviation hijacked conservation?

A recent round of the longstanding debate on the tussle between conservation and development has been played out in Oryx, the international journal on conservation. Here we summarize the views of Steven Sanderson and Kent Redford of the Wildlife Conservation Society, who initiated the discussion and later responded to reactions from other authors.

Achieving the millennium development goal of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 will, say Sanderson and Redford, either mark the true beginning of sustainability or the end of biodiversity at the hands of the best-intentioned policies. At present, they say, the traditional strategies for poverty alleviation fail to adequately take into account the linkages and trade-offs with biodiversity conservation. Without reshaping these strategies, they argue, biodiversity will yet again pay the price for development.

Sanderson and Redford see the currently dominant perspectives on poverty alleviation as a recycling of the economic development model of the 1950s, which emphasized significant increases in productivity of labour, land and capital. While they admit that this model was successful in making great gains in human welfare, they stress that these gains came at huge environmental costs. Applied now in an increasingly urban world, this strategy will, they project, put even more pressure on both the rural poor and biodiversity. In pursuing this flawed strategy, the global community, say the two authors, risks travelling back to the future and repeating the mistakes of the past.

The battlefields of this contested relationship between conservation and development are, according to Sanderson and Redford, the tropical forests in developing countries where mining biodiversity means short-term economic gains but long-term damage to the world's biodiversity. If we are to avoid biodiversity being sold out, they argue, we need to search for ways in which conservation can practically contribute to poverty alleviation efforts - for example by working with small-scale low-output producers on the ecological frontier. Indeed, they posit, human-oriented, small-scale conservation could be as important to poverty alleviation as micro-credit is to development finance. But, they warn, these types of synergies will be effectively created only if we respect the individual weaknesses of poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation efforts, as well as the inherent trade-offs between them.

Other respondents in the Oryx debate counter that, while biodiversity should not pay the price for development, neither should the poor pay the price for biodiversity protection. Roe and Elliott (2004) see the continuous drive to increase protected area coverage as a real threat to sustainable development. Brockington and Schmidt-Soltau (2004) call for better recognition of, and compensation for, the social costs of protected areas.

Sanderson and Redford point out that their lament is not that poverty should be ignored; but rather that protected areas are on the defensive, described as obstacles to poverty alleviation. At the same time, they stress, statements such as the commitment issued at the 2003 World Parks Congress that “Protected area management strives to reduce, and in no way exacerbates poverty” are simply unrealistic. The management of these areas, they say, can not ignore destructive practices in order to avoid negative economic impacts.

Instead, say Sanderson and Redford, conservationists need to respond to these criticisms of protected areas and conservation by staying in the field, remaining open and sensitive to the powerless and the poor, and building partnerships locally with both rural people and developmentalists.

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Improved human wellbeing and forest conservation in developing countries: compatible goals?

William Sunderlin of CIFOR addresses this question.

Forests are highly relevant to poverty elimination for several reasons. First, areas with high levels of poverty and natural forest cover tend to overlap in the same remote areas. Second, the poor are disproportionately reliant on forest resources. And third, even though timber and NTFPs do not have a strong record in enabling poverty elimination, they are vital for poverty avoidance and mitigation by having a strong role in fulfilling basic needs, in providing seasonal 'gap filler' income, and in serving as a safety net.

However, in spite of the common assumption that improvements in human wellbeing and the conservation of forests are compatible goals, such win-win outcomes occur only under specific conditions in most countries. More often, these two goals are at odds with each other. This is because the economic development behind the establishment of sedentary agriculture, urbanization and industrialization - in developing countries today as in developed countries in the past - is simultaneously responsible for improvements in human wellbeing and removal of large amounts of forest cover.

How then can forests possibly survive the process of socioeconomic development? The prognosis is dire, but need not be cataclysmic. A minimum level of forest cover will survive in developing countries, and forest area might stabilize or perhaps even increase in the future. This is due to the geographical remoteness of some natural forests and a process called the forest transition, by which increased per capita income can be consistent with forest cover stabilization and growth. Among the key factors potentially limiting pressure on forests are: rural to urban migration; a reduction in agricultural land coverage through efficiency gains; a shift from wood fuel to fossil fuel and from timber to other materials in construction; increased citizen preference for conservation and increased state capacity to achieve this end.

Does this mean that to achieve both poverty elimination and forest conservation, we need only sit back and wait for the process of economic growth and socioeconomic development to unfold? Absolutely not. Many developing countries' economies are not growing and the 'turning point' for achieving the transition is decades away. In the meantime, an unacceptable level of social and environmental devastation would occur. And, as the transition is likely to be achieved largely through increased per capita reliance on fossil fuels, it will produce a different and potentially worse set of environmental challenges.

What then are the most promising approaches for promoting improved wellbeing for forest dwellers through use of forest resources? Among them are the following:

- Removal of anti-poor laws and regulations that have long deprived forest dwellers of timber and NTFP rents.
- Help in further levelling the playing field by: helping establish small producer associations; providing market information; and promoting value added in forest product processing and marketing through education and extension services.
- Development of community forestry initiatives that incorporate a clear and realistic strategy on how to not just sustain, but also improve livelihoods.

At the same time, forestry specialists must recognize certain limits of forest resources for lifting people out of poverty. Some of the anti-poor qualities of timber cannot be changed fundamentally, e.g. the long gestation period of timber being at odds with the need for immediate income, and the fact that smallholder plantations require what the poor tend not to have - secure access to land. On the other hand, forestry experts would do well to recognize recent trends that increase possibilities for forest-based poverty alleviation, including the greatly increased area of forests now owned by or under the control of rural communities, the growing opportunities for supplying wood products in peri-urban areas, and the growing interest of rich countries to compensate forest dwellers for their role in keeping forests standing.

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Gathering fuelwood on the outskirts of a protected area in Nepal

Mining the forests: the poverty crisis in Zambia's Copperbelt

Charcoal for sale at roadside, Zambia

One of the wealthier countries in the sub-Saharan region two decades ago, Zambia now ranks as one of the least developed countries in the world. Nearly 73 per cent of Zambia's population is defined as poor (i.e. unable to meet the minimum daily calorific requirements) and average income levels have halved since the 1960s. The Copperbelt province now has the largest share of the country's poor, with most of its inhabitants suffering from a lack of food and water and insufficient access to health and education services. Life expectancy has dropped from 45 years in 1996 to 32 years in 2004, largely due to the high HIV/AIDS infection rates.

The economic situation of the Copperbelt area has been in crisis since the collapse of copper prices in the 1990s and the subsequent closure of the area's copper mines. High unemployment levels have forced many former mine workers to settle in the nearby forests to try and make a living out of charcoal production and agriculture. This in turn is putting huge pressures on the area's wet *miombo* woodlands.

A WWF project that began in July last year is trying to help tackle this downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation. The project focuses on the headwaters of the Kafue river which retains some important biodiversity and includes several protected forest areas. The project aims to reduce poverty in the area by safeguarding and restoring the woodlands and freshwater ecosystem goods and services that are essential for local people's livelihoods. At the same time, the project will strengthen local civil society organizations' capacities to participate in ecosystem management efforts, and will encourage government policy and planning frameworks that provide incentives for equitable and sustainable development.

To be effective, the project will need to look for joint poverty-environment solutions, by identifying economic activities that have the greatest contribution to poverty reduction without posing a serious threat to the environment. Given that charcoal production is an inevitable reality at least in the short term, the project is trying to make it more sustainable by encouraging the use of selective felling and improved kilns. And, as many of those who have settled in the forest know little about farming, the project is showing them more effective, less destructive ways of living off the land.

However, the challenges are enormous. The population in the Copperbelt is a transient one, made up largely of immigrants from other regions. People move around wherever they can find a job, and those who have settled in the forest were authorized to do so by local vote-seeking politicians. Halting the encroachment or resettling people out of the forest will be impossible without the support of these same politicians. The WWF project is putting a good deal of effort into convincing government departments (and mining companies) of the need for urgent action and building their capacity to create an enabling policy environment. In the end, such an environment is the only way to make radical changes happen at the field level.

Source: van de Veen/Bureau M&), 2005. Managing the Miombo: *Economic Crisis Threatens People and Nature in Zambia's Copperbelt.* WWF DGIS-TMF Programme Living Documents.

This project is funded by the Netherlands' government under a WWF programme, Poverty Reduction through Improved Natural Resource Management, which started at the beginning of 2004. The programme is being implemented in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Ecuador and Peru. As in the Copperbelt project, the other projects are following a similar approach by combining poverty reduction field activities with capacity building for civil society organizations and the promotion of policies that favour equitable and sustainable development.

WWF news in brief

Staff changes: Duncan Pollard is WWF International's new Forests for Life Programme Director. He takes over from Chris Elliott who left in September to take on a new position at WWF Canada. Duncan, who joined WWF International in January 2001, was Head of the European Forest Programme. Before joining WWF International, Duncan worked for the Scottish Woodlands Ltd UK as Development Manager, and set up the first FSC group certified scheme in the UK. He has also worked in Chile, Uruguay and South Africa.

Forest conversion: The Forests for Life Programme has launched a new brochure on its Forest Conversion Initiative, available at www.panda.org/forests/conversion.

Non-timber forest products in Russia: trading on tradition

Nikolay Shmatkov of the IUCN Office for Russia and CIS reports on a project that is reviving traditional uses of non-timber forest products to help boost local people's livelihoods.

Drying honeysuckle berries for use in herbal teas

An IUCN-CIDA forest conservation and management project in the Russian Far East has been promoting NTFPs as part of local sustainable livelihoods along with tourism, cultural activities, hunting and herding. By providing business training and support and encouraging the marketing of traditional NTFPs, the project aims to strengthen local incomes and take the pressure off the area's biodiversity-rich forests.

Working on the Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin Island, the project focuses on groups who have rarely had the opportunity to participate in small businesses or natural resource management - particularly indigenous people and women. The project team and the local people identified several NTFPs that showed good market potential and matched well with the local social and ecological conditions. One such product is dwarf Siberian pine syrup, traditionally used for medicinal purposes by the Tarija Itelmen native community and now sold locally to tourists and in Moscow via health stores. Another product, herbal tea, has found a good market in Moscow and Canada and is now being packaged locally using sustainably harvested birch bark. In this way, the local people are capturing the maximum amount of economic benefit from the product. The NTFP Fair and Forum, started by the IUCN in Moscow in 2004 and now held every year, provides the local communities with additional opportunities to approach distant markets. As intended, local community groups have taken over the production and marketing activities. These groups, operating as cooperatives, are largely composed of indigenous women.

Getting local communities to buy into the project has not always been easy. Interest in the preparatory stage and the training workshops was somewhat patchy, but once local communities began receiving orders for their NTFPs their interest picked up dramatically. This enthusiasm was demonstrated recently in a birch bark weaving workshop led by a local master in traditional weaving techniques. People came from all over the Kamchatka peninsula to attend the workshop and many have since begun teaching others in their home villages these techniques. Although community economic development is the primary goal, the revival and sharing of indigenous knowledge about NTFPs - especially for younger people - has been identified by participants as a key concern, and is a focus of educational materials being developed through the project.

Over the years, the project has demonstrated some significant achievements, supporting the start-up of more than 30 new NTFP-based businesses, involving hundreds of people on a permanent or seasonal basis. At the same time, the project continues to face sizeable challenges. Interestingly, one of the major difficulties has been the skepticism of local residents and authorities to the idea of community economic development in general and NTFP-based business development in particular. People tend to think that harvesting in large volumes and selling as raw materials is the only worthwhile way to market NTFPs. A lack of information and business skills also prevents many people from setting up their own businesses. A complex tangle of poorly developed legislation on small business development, as well as sizeable tax barriers, also has a suffocating effect on entrepreneurial activity. In this environment, the project's focus on training, communication, and long-term mentoring and support to emerging businesses has proved vital. By working to involve the local people in both the design and implementation stages, and develop new partnerships with a range of different stakeholders, the project has been able to make a real impact on local livelihoods and the local economy.

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IUCN news in brief

Poverty initiative: IUCN launched a new US$300 million Conservation for Poverty Reduction initiative at the World Summit 2005. This global programme involving a wide range of members and partners aims to scale-up IUCN's ongoing work on poverty reduction through improved ecosystem management in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

On the brink in the Med: IUCN and its Species Survival Commission have published *The Top 50 Mediterranean Island Plants* - an easy-to-read description of the area's wild plants facing a high risk of extinction and what is needed to save them. Among the plants are two trees, *Abies nebrodensis* and *Zelkova sicula*.

arbor*vitæ*

ISSN 1727-3021

The next issue of arbor*vitæ* will be produced in April 2006 (copy deadline end of February 2006). If you have any material to send or comments please contact:
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Back issues of arbor*vitæ* can be found on: www.iucn.org/themes/fcp/publications/arborvitae/avnewsletter/avnewsletter26_30.htm

This newsletter has been edited by Jennifer Rietbergen-McCracken. Managing editors Sandeep Sengupta of IUCN – the World Conservation Union and Soh Koon Chng of WWF International. arbor*vitæ* is funded by IUCN and WWF. Design by HMD Graphic Design Ltd UK. Printed on paper manufactured from 100% post consumer waste.

Acknowledgements:
Mark Aldrich (Switzerland); Mette Bovenschulte (Switzerland); Julia Cass (USA); Soh Koon Chng (Switzerland); Andrew Deutz (USA); R.J. Fisher (Australia); Vincent F.B.Florens (Mauritius); John Hudson (UK); Mark Hurley (USA); Stewart Maginnis (Switzerland); James Mayers (UK); Li Ning (China); Viviane van Oven (Bolivia); Chantal Page (Switzerland); Duncan Pollard (Switzerland); Kent Redford (USA); Beatrix Richards (UK); Simon Rietbergen (Switzerland); Dilys Roe (UK); Steven Sanderson (USA); Nikolay Shmatkov (Russia); Kirsten Schuyt (Netherlands); Sandeep Sengupta (Switzerland); Paul Steele (Sri Lanka); Wendy Strahm (Switzerland); William Sunderlin (Indonesia).

Reviews in brief

Stopping the drift
Available from:
www.iucn.org/themes/fcp/publications/livelihoods.htm

John Hudson of the UK's Department for International Development reviews a recent IUCN book on poverty and conservation.

Few of us acknowledge it but the conservation and development communities have drifted further apart in the last five to ten years. There are a number of reasons for this but two are particularly important. First are changes in the theory and practice of development policy, driven by a strengthened determination to reduce poverty. Second is the failure of integrated conservation and development programmes to consistently achieve integration with satisfactory outcomes.

The authors of *Poverty and Conservation: Landscapes, People and Power*, who bring with them many years of personal experience of both conservation and development as well as the institutional experience of IUCN, take a fresh look at how to reconcile poverty reduction and conservation. They see little merit in trying to disentangle further the contradictory evidence of causes and effects that links conservation and development, concluding instead that the best way forward is to think and operate beyond the level of the individual site, to identify and find solutions to institutional constraints, and to negotiate outcomes.

The landscape-level solutions the authors advocate - meeting objectives in different parts of the landscape instead of trying to deliver them all on one site - are intuitively attractive but present difficult decisions about the scale and level of analysis and intervention. The concept of "progressive contextualisation" that is introduced to help deal with this would perhaps be more clearly understood, and be no less useful for want of an academic title, if described as "keeping your wits about you and making it up as you go along".

Case studies from Thailand, Tanzania and Lao PDR are used to illustrate some aspects of the approach proposed (which the authors wisely have not named) and there is an appendix summarizing economic instruments.

This is a well written, readable and useful book that will help re-direct the diverging paths of the conservation and development communities.

Read all about it
Available from www.earthscan.co.uk

The new *Earthscan Reader in Forestry and Development*, edited by Jeffrey Sayer, is a very timely addition to the literature. The stated intention of the editor to go beyond a university reader and compile something that is of interest to a broader audience including forestry professionals and journalists has without doubt been achieved. The 22 chapters are divided into five sections (The Forest Resource; Forests and Livelihoods; Threats and Opportunities; The Challenge of Sustainable Management; The Way Forward: Forestry for the Future), each with a pithy introduction highlighting the main issues and controversies dealt with.

There are some self-declared gaps in the reader's contents - plantations, forest certification, wood processing technology and restoration. Whereas the first two of these gaps are well-covered elsewhere in the literature, the latter are becoming increasingly important as a driver behind and an objective of forestry practice respectively, and might have merited commissioned chapters. Furthermore, there are other developments that are changing the face of forestry, such as the rapid divestment by forest product companies of their forest land holdings in some of the main wood-producing regions of the world. Nevertheless, any attempt at comprehensiveness would probably have been futile, given the way in which the forestry literature has blossomed - or ballooned, depending on one's point of view - over the last decade.

In the media

A new edition of the *Environment and Poverty Times*, a periodic newspaper-format publication by UNEP/GRID-Arendal, was launched at the World Summit 2005. The paper reports on progress on the millennium development goals and looks at a wide range of issues with environment and poverty links. Visually appealing, with eye-catching graphics, the paper can be downloaded at www.environmenttimes.net

A new multi-media presentation by FAO showcases three timber producer stories to illustrate how farmers can maximize their profits from growing trees on their land. *Smallholder Timber: Sustaining Livelihoods and Biodiversity* is a six-minute narrated presentation that highlights the main benefits of trees for smallholders and the ways in which farmers can add value to their timber products. A hefty 408 Mb file, the presentation is slow to download but makes a useful short introduction to the issues. Available at www.fao.org/forestry/site/32207/en

Thanks for the feedback!

Many thanks to all those readers who took time to participate in the arbor*vitæ* readership survey. So far we have received over 200 responses. Your feedback is much appreciated and we will report on the main findings of the survey in the next issue of arbor*vitæ*.