



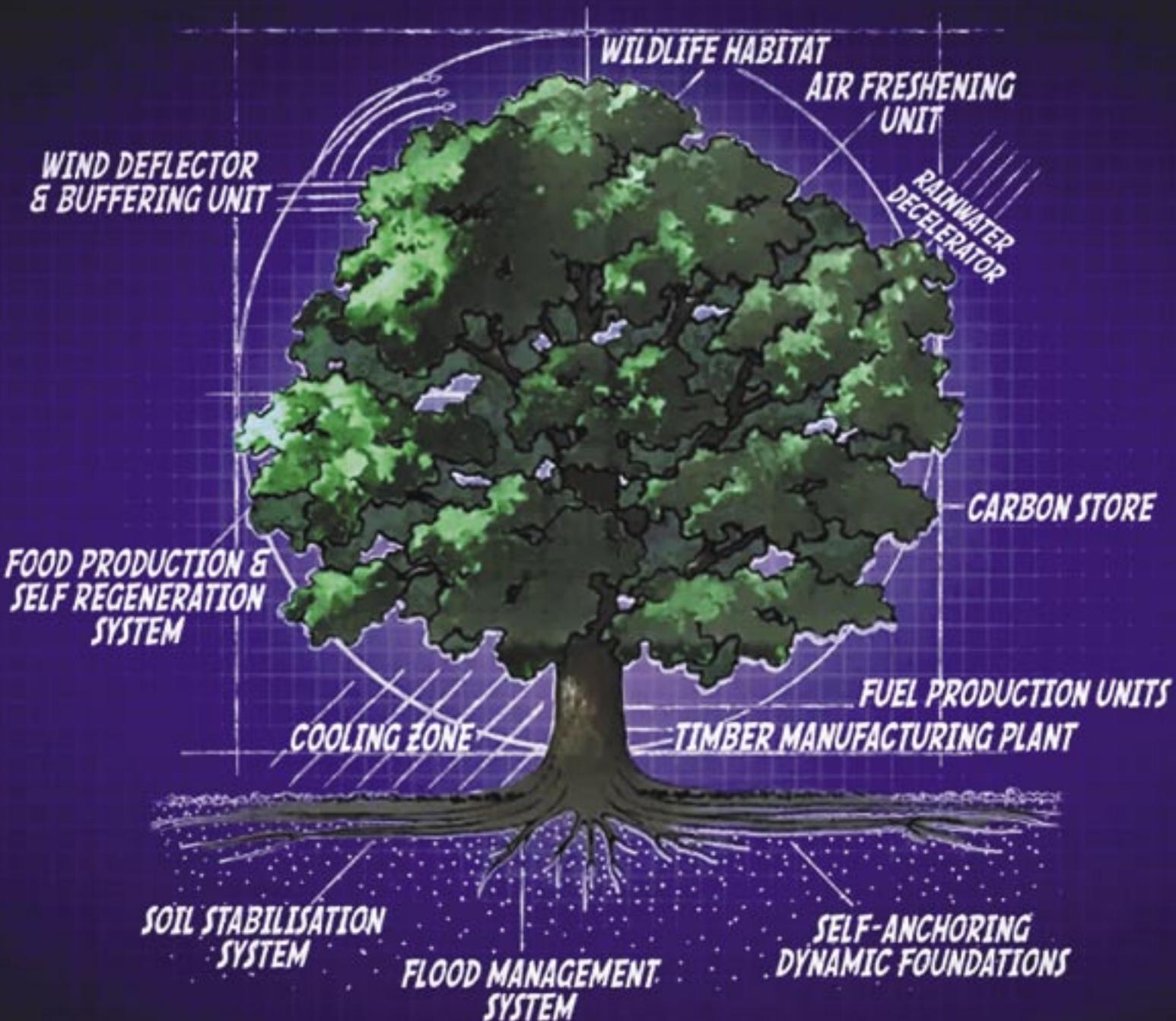
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NEWS OF UGANDA'S COMMERCIAL TREE PLANTING FUND FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR

No. 22, NOV. 2008 - JAN. 2009

Some of the world's top engineers and scientists were asked to develop a machine that soaks up carbon from the atmosphere: a device that would lock up CO₂ for potentially quite a long time. It would have to be environmentally friendly, efficient, reliable, easy and cheap to produce. This is the blueprint they came up with....



The SPGS is a joint Government of Uganda and European Union initiative. At the 3rd SPGS Commercial Forestry Seminar in Sept. 2008, the SPGS celebrated achieving its target of supporting 10,000 hectares of timber plantations planted since 2004; read more inside.

DISCLAIMER: The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the SPGS and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.





SEED & SEEDLING UPDATE - OCT. 2008

by Celia Nalwadda & Alex Atuyamba

1. SEEDS

Species	Seed Source	Org.	Kgs Available	Seeds Per Kg	Sale Price per Kg UGX	Comment
<i>Pinus caribaea</i> var. <i>hondurensis</i>	FPQ Australia*	NTSC	-	35,000	2.3 M	47 Kg expected to arrive by the end of Oct.'08.
	Brazil	NTSC	-	20,000	950,000	200 Kg expected to arrive by the end of Oct.'08.
<i>Eucalyptus grandis</i> (Kalitunsi)	Fort Portal	NTSC	> 120	150,000	90,000	No improved seed is expected from RSA.
<i>Maesopsis eminii</i> (Musizi)	local	NTSC	> 1000	400	50,000	Collected from South Busoga and Masaka.
<i>Terminalia superba</i> (Umbrella Tree)	local	NTSC	120	4,000	50,000	From Nandang, Mukono.
<i>Terminalia ivorensis</i>	local	NTSC	500	4,000	50,000	<i>ditto</i>
<i>Pinus patula</i> (weeping pine)	local	NTSC	6	50,000	500,000	Seed collection currently ongoing from Kabale.

* UTGA is also importing PCH seed from Australia for its members – see page 18 for details.

NB. NTSC stands for National Tree Seed Centre located in Namanve on the Kampala-Jinja road.

To calculate how much seed one needs to purchase:

$$\text{No. of Kgs of seed} = \frac{\text{No. of ha to be planted} \times \text{No. of seedlings required per ha}^*}{\text{Estimated number of seedlings per Kg of seed}}$$

* When planting for timber and using improved seed, we recommend a spacing of 3m x 3m: the number of seedlings required per ha is thus $10,000 \div (3 \times 3) = 1111$. An additional 20% of plants should be procured to cater for replacement of damaged plants during handling and transportation and for beating up. Planters are advised to procure their seed early to allow for proper timing of the March – April rain

2. NURSERY ISSUES:

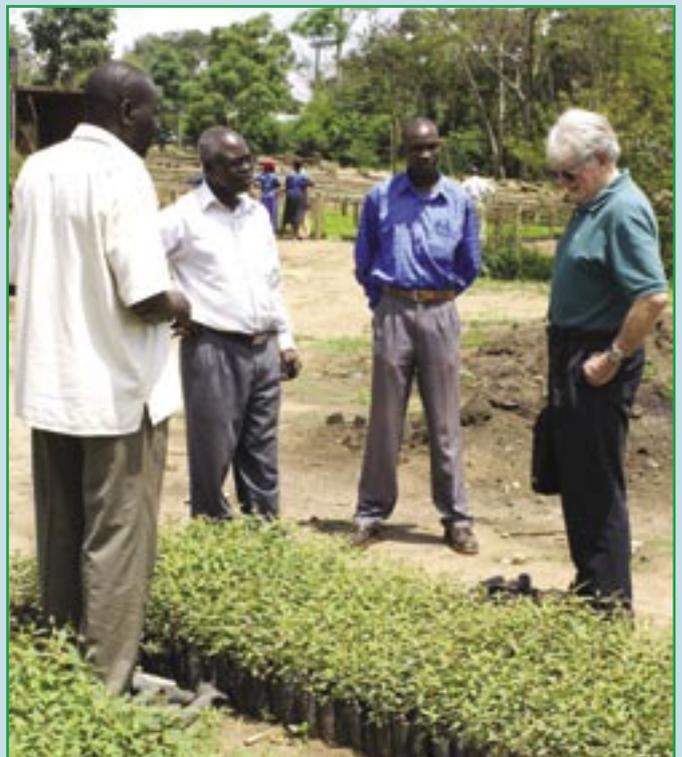
There have been some management changes at NTSC, with Mr. Stephen Khaukha resigning after three and a half years at the head of this nursery. He will be replaced with Mr. Musiimo Byenkya Simon as the Acting Manager. Mr. Byenkya has been the Tree Improvement Specialist at NTSC since 2000 and can be contacted on mobile 0752 653 981 or 0772 653 981. Check with NTSC regarding seedling availability.

SPGS has also commissioned NTSC to raise some more Hoop pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*) seedlings which we hope will be ready for planting in 2009. Interested planters should make their bookings through SPGS. Some of the SPGS recommended private nurseries also have seedlings available for planting in the current season:

- Busoga Forest Co., Mayuge have 100,000 PCH Brazil; contact Jossy Byamah – 0772 471 164.

- Corewoods, Hoima – 50,000 PCH Brazil: Fred Babweteera on 0772 466 336.
- Fred Ahimbisibwe in Luwero: 100,000 PCH Brazil: Fred - 0772 392 175.

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John Spears visiting the NFA's National Tree Seed Centre in Sept. 2008. Stephen Khaukha (2nd from left) and Supervisor Paul Ocom have both since left for new pastures. Simon Byenkya (left) is now Acting Manager.

The UK Forestry Commission is acknowledged as the inspiration for this Newsletter's cover.



Editorial

by Allan Amumpe,
SPGS Project Manager

The great challenge of establishing commercial timber plantations in the country is producing mega results. In only four years, private planters have established over 10,000 hectares of timber plantations under the SPGS. Given the depressed state of the sector for many years, this is a great achievement and it proves that the private sector is willing to invest in commercial tree planting here, particularly with the incentives of a planting grant and technical support. As a project, we are happy to say that we have achieved our targets but the main thanks go to all our clients and partners who made this possible. Well done to the trail-blazers!

As we reported in the editorial of the previous issue, the future funding of the project is now looking much more promising. During the 3rd SPGS Commercial Plantation Seminar on 24th Sept. 2008, Ms. Véronique Lorenzo from the EC Delegation in Kampala, formally announced - to the excitement of the audience - that the EU together with the Norwegian Government shall be co-funding the next phase of SPGS. To work out the modalities, a project evaluation and appraisal team has been commissioned and they will be carrying out their mission before this year is over.

The review and appraisal process will document experience and lessons learnt from the current project's implementation to help guide the relevant design for the next four years - 2009-2013. We will ensure

that many of our current planters and partners will have a chance to share their views with the team and influence the direction of the new and exciting phase of the SPGS.

Until the donors and the GoU have formally agreed the next phase, however, we cannot enter into any new contracts but it is hoped that not long into 2009, the expanded SPGS should be underway. If you are a prospective planter and you have not yet applied, we recommend that you submit your application like 'yesterday'. Our office is always open (well during office hours at least!) for free advice and for you to pick our free practical Plantation Guidelines to help you. Like the old adage goes, "the tree does not fall on those who are absent".



The EU's Véronique Lorenzo (left) handing over a cheque to Ampaire Rhoda marking a major milestone for the project - being the 10,000th ha supported by the SPGS since 2004. Rhoda has planting 40 ha in Kitonya CFR, Kiboga district and has continually impressed us with her quality operations.

The Seminar on 24th September 2008 was a big success. The day's programme was a varied and interesting one, including John Spears, from USA as Guest Speaker. John was the World Bank's Senior Forestry Advisor for many years. We also had presentations on Carbon Financing, Climatic Change and Research, plus regional speakers from South Sudan, Kenya and Tanzania. In short there was a lot in sharing experiences and answering questions from the audience.

The seminar was very well attended, with no less than 112 there for the day. Read the full story on pages 4 and 5.



In the coming months, the SPGS team will be out to visit and advise the new applicants especially those who have indicated that they have started planting. However, no payments can be expected for such planting without a formal SPGS contract!

Our last clients' safari of the year (the usual format of a day's field visits followed by a formal morning meeting) is to take place 26-27th November 2008. We are planning to head towards Jinja via Mukono. This should particularly interest many

of you, as we shall be visiting both eucalypt and pine plantations in addition to seeing some of the SPGS-supported community planters adjacent to the famous Mabira Forest. In case you have not yet received your invite and would like to attend, please write to SPGS.

Most of you will be aware that SPGS provides an opportunity for small-holder farmers to utilise their pieces of land as a capital asset to plant trees for timber and poles. This is done under our community planting initiative, which is being executed by the SPGS's Plantation

Officers. In the last few weeks, our POs have delivered seedlings to communities in Nakasongola, Luweero, Mukono, Rakai, Masaka, Mbarara, Bushenyi and Ibanda. Read Charles' feature on page 17 inside.

And finally, as this is the last SPGS Newsletter of 2008, may we take this opportunity of wishing all our readers a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. All of us at the SPGS look forward to scaling up our support to you in 2009.



FORESTRY: An industry that can do much more than just grow trees

by Paul Jacovelli

This article's title was the theme for the 3rd SPGS Commercial Forestry Seminar that took place on Sept. 24th 2008 and it was extremely successful. I can confidently state that because of the overwhelmingly positive feedback project staff have received from those who were there. In fact the main complaints were that the cakes ran out at tea-time and that the air-conditioning was too cold for some! I believe that its success was down to two main things, namely, a varied (and highly topical) day's programme but also the great mix of people who attended - and not just from the forest sector either. I heard many people say that it was an excellent networking day and they had made many contacts to pursue in the future.

The day was divided into 3 main sessions, entitled Green Shoots, Burning Issues and Beyond Borders, which hopefully gives you a flavour of the proceedings. We were most fortunate to have as Guest Speaker a real 'big man' on the world forestry scene - John Spears. From his first job in 1952 as Conservator of Forests with the Kenyan Forest Service based in Mount Elgon, John became the Senior Policy Advisor for the World Bank and even in 'retirement' still remains heavily involved with many global forestry initiatives. John was very impressed with what he saw not just at the Seminar but in the 2 days' safaris we organized for him prior to the meeting. He saw great potential for the SPGS to work together - especially with the NFA and UTGA - to build on the solid foundations.

You can now access John Spears' presentation - along with all the others - on a free CD which is available from our Kampala office. For those hooked up to the internet, they are also downloadable (mostly in smallish pdf files) from our web site - www.sawlog.ug Following is a brief summary of just some of the presentations: others we will feature in the next issue.

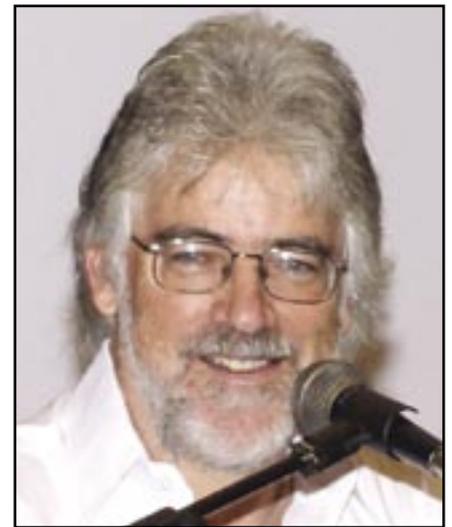


Allan Amumpe (*SPGS Project Manager*) kicked things off by reminding everybody about the importance of tree plantations to Uganda - to meet increasing timber and fuelwood demands, creating massive rural employment and saving on imports just to mention a few. He stressed other benefits that will come in time from Uganda developing a major plantation resource - namely, mitigating climate change, taking pressure off natural forests and further job creation as value is added to the products from the plantations.

Uganda's USPs (Unique Selling Points) in terms of commercial forestry, were clearly illustrated: the looming timber supply crisis which will be here within a few years (>80% of Uganda's 20,000 ha of plantations are under 5 years old) and secondly the potential for excellent tree growth in many parts of the country.

Allan then focused on the SPGS itself, starting with an announcement that the project had just approved its 10,000th ha for payment (see photo p.3). This has been achieved in just 4 years through supporting more than 100 growers large and small and doesn't even include the ½ million seedlings planted by communities around the country. For those not familiar with the SPGS, he showed how the project has achieved its results - including sound technical advice (e.g. frequent site visits from trained staff and publishing

practical Guidelines); running practical training courses; exposure to commercial forestry in other countries; good communication (regular Newsletters and growers' field meetings); very focused consultancies and supporting the independent growers' Assn. - UTGA. Allan's final slide - entitled '*SPGS - a Successful Partnership*' was beyond



doubt.

Paul Jacovelli (*SPGS CTA*) then took the audience on an imaginary journey to the future - to 2030 to be exact - to emphasize what a well-planned and supported commercial forestry industry could do for Uganda. You really need to see the pictures to appreciate this tour and on the day it certainly seemed to have made people see the plantation forest industry in a different light. To illustrate that commercial forestry can be a really great industry for rural development, the very real example of Swaziland was used. In this small Southern African Kingdom, some 160,000 ha of plantations have been established since 1949 and the industry now contributes massively to the nation's economy (15% GDP and employing 17% of the workforce). Figures that should grab the attention of every politician one would think.

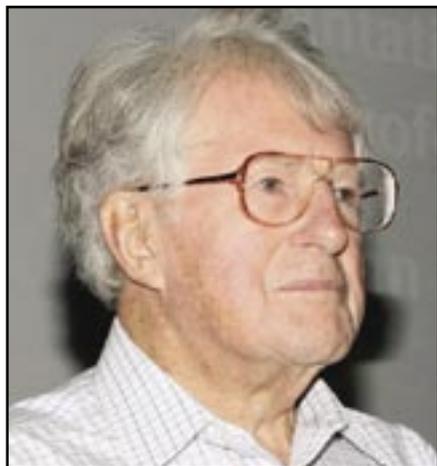
Bringing the audience well and truly back to 2008, however, it was stressed that the scenario of a

cont'd on pg 5

sustainable forest-based industry in Uganda will remain a dream unless some key issues are tackled very soon - namely:

- ◆ Encroachment in selected Central Forest Reserves (CFRs).
- ◆ The NFA's CFR planting permit allocation and monitoring system needs reviewing.
- ◆ A Plantation Strategy for Uganda should be drawn up with private sector involvement.
- ◆ The bigger 'core' investors need better support as these are the ones who will invest in modern processing plants, which will benefit all growers.
- ◆ The SPGS will need funding for the 1st rotation (around a further 10-15 years).
- ◆ Practical issues of research, training and plant supply.

The industry was seen as being at a crossroads today: a great start has been made in a remarkably short time but to achieve the vision of a sustainable forest industry, more commitment is required from a few key people and organisations in both the public and



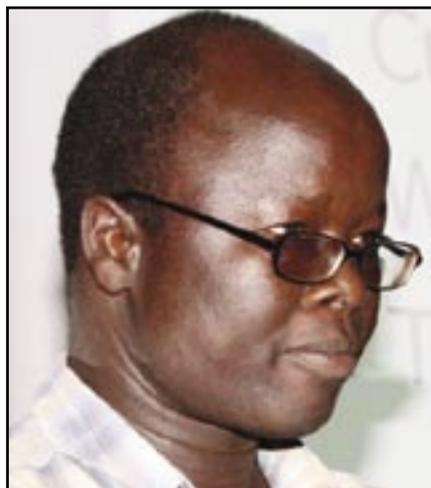
private sector.

John Spears then took a much more global perspective showing the ever increasing demand for paper and solid wood products as populations increase and technological advances continue - e.g. medium-density fibre-board and oriented strand board. John then surprised many with the fact that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) contribute up to 90% of all forestry enterprises in many developing countries. Using the striking example of India, he

also highlighted the importance of agroforestry and on-farm woodlots in terms of meeting the needs for wood products. Some interesting worldwide trends were shown too - in the last 20 years plantation ownership has shifted away in many countries from the public to the private sector; over the same period, both corporate ownership and small holder plantations have increased sharply too.

John stressed the vital role forests play in the whole climate change/global warming scenario and noted that FAO estimate that no less than 13M ha of forests are being lost per year globally, and this accounts for 20% of man-made greenhouse gas emissions. Ending on a positive note, he highlighted the opportunities to benefit from Carbon-sequestration through both new tree planting initiatives (like the SPGS) and from avoided deforestation - the so-called REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation).

[Ed's note: John also had some great suggestions for the next phase of the SPGS, particularly for scaling up community involvement and linking the tree planting more with conservation: this will involve close cooperation with organizations inside (e.g. NFA) and outside Uganda (e.g. the Forests Carbon



Partnership Facility and the Global Forest Partnership].

Philip Nyeko, an Assoc. Prof. in the Faculty of Forestry & Nature Conservation, Makerere University, gave a very lucid presentation that left nobody in any doubt of the importance for Uganda to start

a commercial forestry research programme.



Lamenting the current lack of focus of government institutions on research to support the current wave of commercial tree growing, Philip highlighted some positive recent signs - namely:

- ✓ The formation of COMFORT (Commercial Forestry Research and Training Steering Group) in Jan. 2008 - where the key players are addressing the most urgent needs in the sector.
- ✓ The SPGS recently commissioning 2 studies (ongoing) at Makerere University: one on pests and diseases the other looking at tree growth and plantation yields.
- ✓ B.Sc. in Commercial Forestry is planned (hopefully) to start in



2009 at Makerere.

Bill Farmer was no stranger to many in the audience, having ably lead the technical team that undertook the reform of the Uganda forest sector (1999-2004). Bill established the Uganda Carbon Bureau (UCB) in 2006 to be a provider of carbon offset services to local projects and enterprises and it is clear that things are now happening!

Bill took us by the hand through the complex Carbon maze, starting by defining a Carbon credit as 1 tonne of CO₂ which can be traded as an allowance or as a project offset. The Carbon market is now growing exponentially with \$64B traded in 2007 (of which \$265M was in the voluntary market): it is set to become the largest global market. The trade is currently dominated by China, India and Brazil.

cont'd on pg 17



GROWERS' ASSOCIATIONS & RESEARCH: Seeking inspiration down south

by Philip Nyeko, Sheila Kawamara-Mishambi, Robert Nabanyumya, Allan Amumpe & Paul Jacovelli

In July 2008, four Ugandans (along with their English tour guide and driver) boarded a South African Airways' plane in Entebbe and ended up in the city of Pietermaritzburg (capital of Kwa-Zulu Natal), in good time for supper. The SPGS sponsored this 'safari with a difference', with the twin objectives of learning from their experience with private growers' associations and also their commercial forestry research set-up. The visit exceeded everyone's expectations and was a real 'eye opener' for us. Our hosts went to extraordinary lengths to make the week such a success and a very big 'thank you' to all those noted in the text box.

OVERVIEW

The vast majority of RSA's 1.3M hectares are owned by private companies – dominated by Mondi and SAPPI. The commercial forestry industry is recognized as a major export earner and employer but is also currently facing some difficulties (especially pending land claims and water use restrictions). Over the next two pages, we have summarized the main aspects of this trip that we thought were of particular interest to our Uganda situation. The authors take the blame for any factual errors. We start with the formal Associations we met with and then move on to the research establishments visited.

FORESTRY SOUTH AFRICA (FSA) is a voluntary and highly successful, non-profit organization. There is much we can learn from them, especially with UTGA in its infancy. With 98% of the 1.3M ha owners as members, FSA has a very powerful voice. Its main role is lobbying on behalf of its members, though it remains apolitical. Its financial support comes from a levy of R1.10 /T (UGX225/=) timber sold – this being collected at the processing mills.



Philip Ascough showing us Mondi's sophisticated hydroponic nursery system for raising clonal Eucalypt 'mother' plants.

Many thanks to our hosts (and sorry if we have overlooked anybody!):

- **Forestry South Africa:** Mike Edwards, Roger Godsmark & Nathi Ndlela.
- **SAPPI:** Andrew Morris, Grant Boreham, Wayne Jones & Craig Ford.
- **MONDI:** Philip Ascough & Philip Croft.
- **NCT:** Craig Norris, Rob Thompson, Marius Nesor & Ferdie Braückmann.
- **ICFR:** Colin Dyer, Tammy Swain, Colin Smith, Sally Upfold & Désirée Lamoral.
- **SAFCA:** Michael Hlengwa.
- **University of KZN:** Michelle Warburton.

Other aspects of FSA that were of particular interest for us were the way they are split into 3 groups, representing small, medium and large growers. The Executive Committee has representatives from all 3 groups, with a Chairman who is rotated annually. FSA forms Working Groups only when the need arises, for example, water and environment; land; R&D etc. and they meet as necessary. FSA also directly fund R&D – giving over \$1M per year to ICFR (see later) and FABI (pest & disease R&D) – and also provide bursaries for forestry training. They also put a lot of effort into ETGs (Emerging Timber Growers), who they see as becoming increasingly important for the country's wood supply.

THE NATAL TIMBER COOPERATIVE (NCT) was formed in response to the smaller growers' concerns over being dictated to by the bigger companies. NCT appears to have bucked the trend of many cooperatives by being extremely successful. It has done this by having tight financial control systems and a strong extension service. NCT members pay a levy of ca.4% of mill price and committed members (i.e. those who 'commit' their crops to NCT – currently 80%) receive regular bonuses. We visited their chipping plant in Durban harbour (chips are exported to Japan), which has proved a very profitable concern for NCT's members. We also visited some NCT species trials: they don't carry out tree breeding themselves (which is contracted out to ICFR and CSIR) but they offer sites for testing germplasm.

THE SA FORESTRY CONTRACTORS' ASSN. (SAFCA) focuses on training of small business and financial management skills. They also are involved with setting standards and undertaking productivity studies.

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From pg 4

SPGS RSA Safari

We were surprised to hear that there is a countrywide shortage of trained foresters and also that Aids is having a major impact on the industry, with 36% of their workers HIV +.

For the research part we visited the ICFR (housed at the University of KZN in Pietermaritzburg) and Mondi and SAPPI's Research Centres – around Hilton.

THE INSTITUTE OF COMMERCIAL FORESTRY RESEARCH (ICFR) was a model of excellence. The staff's enthusiasm and their highly scientific approach really made an impression on us all. They undertake highly applied research for the industry, having a focused, project-based approach. Each project group has a Steering Committee with industry experts on - e.g. Tree Improvement, Re-establishment and Sustainable Forest Production. ICFR also impressed with their professional outputs, clearly having a strong emphasis on not just publishing their work (in peer reviewed journals and international fora) but also disseminating the recommendations in a way farmers can understand (no disrespect to farmers intended of course!).

At **MONDI** we visited their ultra-modern nursery where they are constantly seeking ways to improve productivity and plant quality - e.g. through tissue culture (which offers rapid multiplication of clones) and micro-hedges (which are considered more effective and produce better roots than conventional 'mother gardens').

At **SAPPI**, Dr Andrew Morris and his team left us in no doubt about the high priority such companies place on research: indeed research is seen as an integral part of the business process. Impressive productivity gains are now being achieved through a combination of tree improvement and silviculture. They stressed the importance of adopting sound scientific principles, especially regarding trial design and locations.

After a few days' reflection, everyone was asked for some key issues that they thought should be acted on in the near future: here are just some of them:

GROWERS' ASSOCIATIONS:

1. FSA's Constitution should be studied to see where UTGA can learn from.
2. Establish Working Committees for priority areas.
3. Regular communication with members is important.
4. Follow-up needed on training courses - especially on business management skills.
5. Need to broaden UTGA membership (consider bringing small, emerging growers on board?).
6. Need to reconsider UTGA's finance options.

7. Guidance needed on formation of marketing coop (like NCT?): UTGA members are already thinning their crops and have no market for 1st pine thinnings.
8. Need to investigate ways of developing and supporting a contractor base.

RESEARCH:

1. Country R&D strategy for commercial R&D needed but it must be driven by private growers' needs (build on COMFORT?).
2. Need to raise awareness of the importance of R&D to support a profitable and sustainable forest industry.
3. Explore possibility of establishing a commercial forestry research unit.
4. Lobby for funding for above.
5. Research must be of high scientific and practical value.
6. Learn from RSA organizations re. communication and dissemination of R&D findings.
7. Explore collaborative arrangements with researchers in RSA and elsewhere.

Any comments on this article would be welcomed: email UTGA (miken@sawlog.ug) or SPGS (allana@sawlog.ug).



Craig Ford, showing Sheila their pine 'mother' plants - mostly PE x PCH hybrids - at SAPPI's research nursery facility.



PUBLICATIONS

In our expanding library are some new arrivals.....

"Climate change is one of the greatest challenges we face – both in terms of its potential impacts on our societies and the earth, and in terms of the scale of the international cooperation that is needed to confront it" – sobering words from the Chairman of the UK Forestry Commission, the Right Hon. Lord Clarke of Windermere's opening address in:

FORESTRY & CLIMATE CHANGE by P.M. Freer-Smith *et al* (published 2007 by CAB International; 253pp; \$120).

In late 2006 some of the world's leading scientists and policy makers from the fields of forestry, climate change, biodiversity and bioenergy met in the UK for an international conference on forestry and climate change. This book presents the papers and summaries of the discussions that took place. Although the gathering was before the big Bali 2007 conference, this excellent publication contains many 'must read' articles for anyone who wants to understand the issue that no-one involved in forestry can afford to ignore.

FORESTS & ENERGY: KEY ISSUES is the title of a new FAO publication: Forestry Paper No. 154 (2008); available free to download at www.fao.org/forestry/publications/en/

Did you know that energy consumption in developing countries is expected to surpass that of developed countries by 2010? Neither did I until I read this most timely publication. It goes on to predict that bioenergy from wood and agricultural sources will regain its importance even for countries that currently rely on fossil fuels for energy: *"While fossils fuels are likely to remain the dominant source of energy for some time to come, a long-term and gradual conversion from fossil fuels to solid and liquid biofuels is an increasingly likely scenario for many countries in the coming decades"*. This book explores the impact this will have on forests and is an excellent place to start if you want an up-to-date global overview of this rather 'hot' topic.

Thanks also to the Commonwealth Forestry Association for some useful books recently given to the SPGS: you will have to wait until the next issue for a review of them though – Ed.

From pg 2

SEED UPDATE

- UMOJA Farmers, Kakiri, Wakiso: 30,000 PCH Brazil & 20,000 *E. grandis* RSA: Jocelyn Rugunda - 0712 429 922.

Addressing challenges in tree seedling production technology in Uganda

As commercial forestry investment continues to grow in Uganda, meeting the demand for quality tree seedlings is a major challenge. As usual, SPGS's role has been to engage with (and support where possible) all those players with an interest in commercial forestry. Lately, commercial flower and vegetable growers around Entebbe are becoming more and more interested in raising trees too. These professional nurserymen already have improved technology for raising seedlings and/or cuttings in cavity trays and under irrigation: such facilities can be adjusted to produce tree seedlings commercially. SPGS is still discussing with these investors the possibility of this. This could be the solution to the unanswered questions of unmet demand for tree seedlings and complaints from our clients about the low quality of some of the seedlings they are currently purchasing. We will keep you posted.

3. EUCALYPT CLONES:

Uganda Gatsby Trust currently has over 300,000 cuttings of *Eucalyptus* hybrid clones ready for planting. Each cutting costs UGX 350. Interested planters should book with the UGT Nursery Managers on the following numbers: Moses (Mbale) – 0772 595 545; Samson (Fort Portal) – 0782 153 659; Simon (Kifu nr. Mukono) – 0752 644 995.

NURSERY WARNING!

There has recently been a proliferation of 'roadside' tree nurseries as many projects and NGOs support tree planting around the country. Whilst the interest in tree planting is fantastic we must warn readers that anyone growing trees commercially (i.e. to maximize the sustainable yield and to have straight, healthy trees) must be very careful where they obtain their seedlings from. Only buy seedlings from nurseries you can trust to be using seed from species and origins recommended by the SPGS. The use of improved seed is crucial for commercial growers and by 'improved' we mean seed collected only from superior parent trees from a seed orchard or managed seed stand. It is an unfortunate fact that Uganda has lost virtually all such seed orchards and thus we must rely on imported seed for some time for our main commercial species.

PHOTO GALLERY I - 2008 SEMINAR



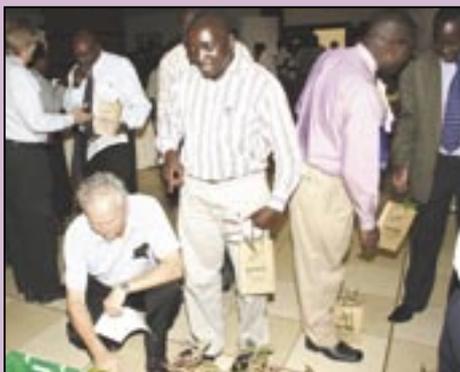
Patrick Mbonye (UTGA Committee Member) expresses his concern for the lack of research to support planters.



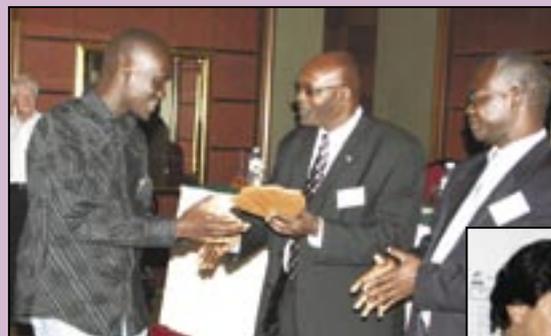
Solveig Verheyleweghan from the Norwegian Embassy (far right) and Véronique Lorenzo from the EC Delegation (centre) handing over the Honorary SPGS award to Peter Karani for his outstanding services to the sector.



Hon. Winnie Matsiko, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Natural Resources Committee asking a question.



The SPGS/UCB 'carbon offset' initiative for the seminar's delegates proved immensely popular. Here Charles Baguma (centre standing) from Prime Forests confers with Tony Waldron (Headmaster of Watoto School).



Willie-Joe Haguma, NAO, Min. of Finance (centre) and Cornelius Kazooru (Sustainable Dev. Centre) presenting Johannes Mokwena from Sustainable Use of Biomass with their award for the SPGS's best large-scale planter of 2008.



SPGS's Bric Milligan (left) with Africa Forest's Roland Freyer & David Parkhill (Af. Forests have a teak operation in S. Sudan).



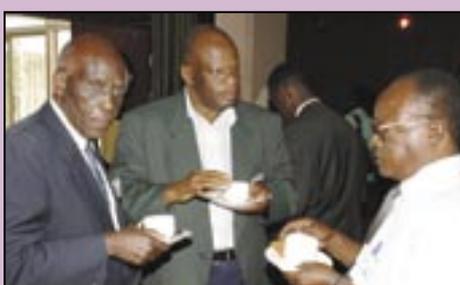
Margaret Mwebesa (Farm Income Project, FSSD) with Mansom Tweheyo (Makerere Lecturer) and Fred Babwetere (CFA Regional Rep.). Manson and Fred are also Core Woods partners.



The ladies enjoying their tea-break - (left to rt) Margaret Bamukyawa (LEMA Community), Dr. Sara Mirembe (Katoomba Group, working with Uganda Carbon Bureau) and the new Dean of Makerere's Faculty of Forestry, Gorettie Nabanoga.



The Kenyan delegates confer: Anthony Maina of the Kenya Forest Service and Scott Geller (rt) - LTS International, currently working with KFS.



(left to rt) Peter Karani (Forestry Consultant), Geo Dutki (Bwindi Management Conservation Trust) and Ambrose Karyoke (President, Uganda Foresters' Assn.).



Two 'role model' SPGS clients - Prossy Tumushabe and Robert Bariho - discussing issues with Damien Akankwasa (far rt), the NFA's ED.



Hon. Baguma Isoke, NFA's Board Chairman making his point to Godfrey Bahigwa, PMA Director.

PHOTO GALLERY II



Robert Nabanyumya (tree grower and UTGA Vice-Chair) talking to the manager of a small grower cooperative that pools logs from growers and then sells to NCT (see article on P. 6).



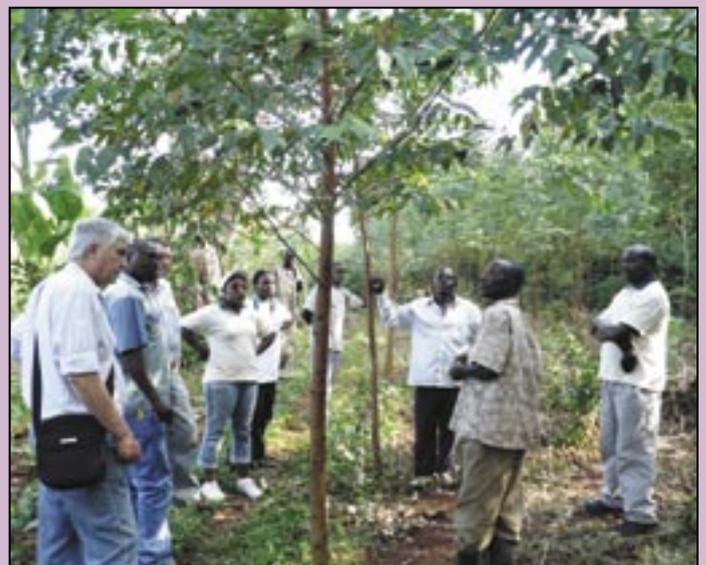
The SPGS's CTA, Paul Jacovelli, with trainees at the SPGS's June 2008 Planning & Establishment course in Oruha CFR, Kyenjojo.



The SPGS safari to South Africa in July 2008: here ICFR staff describe one their Eucalyptus species/provenance trials (see report pages 6&7).



The Ugandan delegation in heated debate within an NCT hybrid Eucalyptus trial, near Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The superb trees on the left are 6 yr old GU hybrid clones.



A team from SAFCOL (Polla du Plessis, David Mbulaheni & Antonie Odendaal) visited the SPGS in Sept. 2008 to learn about the project: here they meet an SPGS-supported community association on the boundary of Mabira Forest. John Tabula (COFSDA Secretary, 2nd from right) tells the group about the Association.

PHOTO GALLERY III



Participants at the 3rd SPGS Commercial Forestry Seminar held at the Sheraton Hotel, Kampala, on 24th September 2008

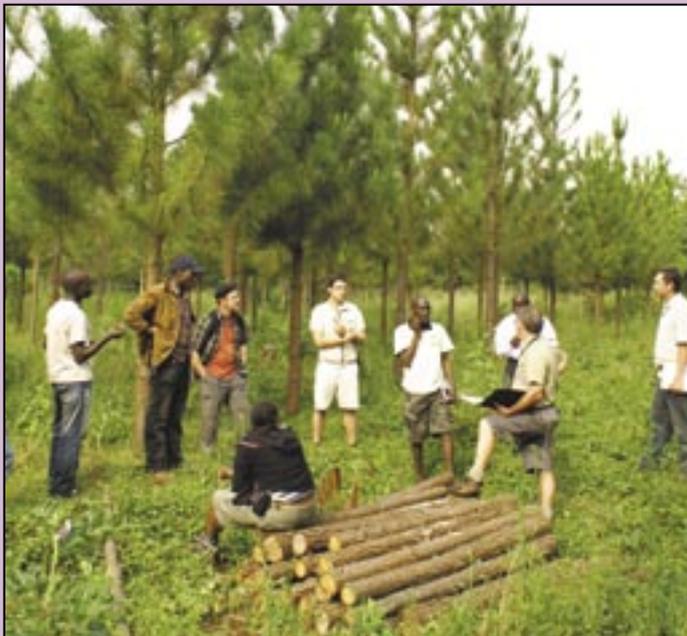
PHOTO GALLERY IV

2008 SPGS AWARD WINNERS



Part of the highly impressive, good quality pine plantation established by the SPGS's 2008 BEST Small & medium scale grower - BESEPO (U) LTD, in Mubende.

Such good results can only be achieved through good planning, use of improved seed and timely maintenance activities.



A well thinned pine (4-yr old PCH) plantation at Sustainable Use of Biomass in Kikonda CFR, Kiboga district. SUB was the SPGS's 2008 BEST Large Scale Grower: they have planted over 750ha of good quality plantations under the support of SPGS since 2004.



Former Programme Officer Rural Development in the European Union, Margaret Kasekende, demonstrating her pruning skills during one of the SPGS clients' meetings. Margaret received an Honorary SPGS award for her extraordinary commitment and support to the SPGS.



The irrepresible Margaret Bamukyawa, the SPGS's 2008 BEST Community Mobiliser. Margaret has mobilised 5 communities in Luwero district (under LEMA) that has resulted in over >450 individuals receiving support from the SPGS.



Peter Karani measuring a 5-yr old GC hybrid Eucalypt at Kifu nursery, Mukono, in 2007.

SPGS 2008 AWARDS

The SPGS Awards are presented annually to those individuals and/or companies whose performance and contribution to the commercial forestry industry in Uganda makes them stand out. "How do we decide?" you may be asking. Well we start by looking for those clients who have shown exceptional performance in terms of establishing good quality plantations but as we have quite a number of these, we then move on to consider other aspects – in particular their overall planning and commitment to the business; the way they treat their labour; their environmental responsibility and even the interaction (or support) for adjacent communities.

We had 3 categories this year, namely:

- ❖ Small/medium scale growers (< 500ha).
- ❖ Large scale growers (> 500ha).
- ❖ Community planters (smallholder growers who have benefited from SPGS support).

After much deliberation amongst the SPGS team, we eventually reached a consensus and the winners were....

BESEPO (U) LTD took the trophy for the best small/medium scale grower. The director - Mr. Besesa Ponsiano - is a veteran in forestry business: a former saw miller and now a major tree grower. BESEPO (U) LTD has been a beneficiary of the SPGS from the start (2003) and to date has established over 400ha of pine in Kasana Kasambya CFR in Mubende district. Ponsiano has led by example and has encouraged many others into the business of commercial tree planting. He is also an active member of UTGA and always present at the SPGS Clients' meetings.

In 2nd position in this category was **HON. SHEILA KAWAMARA MISHAMBI**. Formerly a politician and member of East African parliament, her talking skills (typical of politicians) have unconsciously made her an excellent ambassador for the commercial forestry sector. Sheila, who is the Secretary General of UTGA, has planted over 100ha of timber trees in Kasana Kasambya CFR in Mubende. There is definitely something going on in Mubende!

SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOMASS LTD beat some stiff competition to win the title of Best Large-Scale Grower. There is every reason to justify this: the professional approach to their business placed them ahead of their rivals into is incomparable to any of the closest contenders.

- ❖ SUB employs 10 qualified, permanent staff and >200 other jobs created during peak season.
- ❖ They have a programme for placement of university students each year from which potential employees can be identified.

- ❖ > 800 ha of good quality timber plantations have now been established in Kikonda CFR in Kiboga.
- ❖ SUB has demonstrated good social responsibility by supporting over 300 neighbouring farmers with seedlings worth of 200 ha.
- ❖ SUB is also an active member of Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA).



Runner-up in the large scale category was **BUSOGA FORESTRY CO. LTD** (a subsidiary of Green Resources Ltd.). BFC have established 1000 ha of quality plantation in Bukaleba CFR in Mayuge, and were the early pace-setters for commercial planters under the SPGS. They have a well trained and motivated team and are providing hundreds of jobs. BFC's Manager, Jossy Byamah, is the Chairman of UTGA.

BAMUKYAWA MARGARET of Luwero Environment Management Association (LEMA) took the award for Best Community Mobiliser for organising 5 communities in Luwero with over 450 individuals benefiting from the SPGS's seedlings. Thanks largely to Margaret's guidance and enthusiasm, LEMA has altogether planted over 90 ha of trees in the region.

AMANYIRE DEO of Rwoho Environment Conservation & Protection Association (RECPA) was the 1st runner up in the community category for his stirring efforts organising 37 individuals to plant 35 ha of plantation in Rwoho CFR, Mbarara.

And last but certainly not least, two special Honorary SPGS Awards were presented for the first time to two individuals in recognition for their support to the SPGS:

MR. PETER KARANI, a former Commissioner for Forestry, a one time minister, a senior forestry consultant and one of the longest serving foresters in the country (over 50 years in service), was recognised for his technical support to the SPGS and forestry in general in Uganda. Peter remains a committed and thoroughly professional forester 'of the old school' and serves as a great role model for young foresters coming into the sector.

And finally **MRS MARGARET KASEKENDE** - for many years Programme Officer, Rural Development in the European Commission's Delegation in Uganda - was honoured for her extraordinary commitment and support to the SPGS from its infancy. Margaret has always been a staunch supporter of the SPGS, always attending Clients' meetings and Steering Committee meetings. She was highly influential (along with her ex-bosses - Christer Hermansson and more recently, Véronique Lorenzo) in lobbying within the EU for an extension of SPGS funding. We wish Margaret well in her new job with Children of Uganda.



SPGS / CFA 2008 ESSAY COMPETITION



During August 2008, the SPGS - together with the Commonwealth Forestry Association - ran an essay competition open to all members of the general public entitled *"Discuss the impact of forests (both natural and man-made) on climate change."* The response was overwhelming with over 60 entries from more than fourteen districts and from primary school pupils, university students to forestry consultants. The judges had a rough time sieving out the top three essays out of the many great entries received and we even learnt a few facts we didn't know about forests and climate change! Eventually, three winners were selected.

1. **Ms. Miranda Nabbanja** - a finalist student of Bachelor of Tourism Management at Makerere University and also working as a Marketing Executive at Excel Graphics in Kampala.
 2. **Mr. Bernard Sabiti** - a radio journalist with Straight Talk Foundation with a passion for nature and the environment.
 3. **Mr. Daniel Wandera Naku** - a consultant for Environment and Development Issues with PED Group of Consultants, and now moving on to lecturing at St. Johns' University of Tanzania.
- Miranda's winning entry is reproduced below: Her prize was a high quality Sony digital camera. All prize winners were also given annual membership of CFA.

The impact of forests (both natural and man-made) on climate change by Miranda Nabbanja

A forest is an eco-system, a community of plants and animals interacting with one another and with the physical environment. Climate change refers to the variation in earth's global climate or regional climates over time-scales ranging from decades to millions of years. These changes can be caused by processes internal to the earth, external forces like variation in sunlight intensity or, more recently, human activities.

The world's forests provide many important benefits. Home to more than half of all species living on land, they help slow global warming by storing and sequestering carbon. Forests are also sources of wood products, they help regulate local and regional rainfall, are crucial sources of food, medicine, clean drinking water and provide immense recreational, aesthetic and spiritual benefits for millions of people.

Forests play a major role in the water cycle. Many municipal and regional water systems are dependant upon healthy forest eco-systems to catch and filter rain. However, increased forest productivity may also decrease

water that flows from forests into rivers, streams, reservoirs. Thus in areas of forest eco-systems suffering from increased disturbances, water quality will be affected by increased soil erosion and contamination.

Carbon accumulates in forest eco-systems through the absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide and its assimilation into biomass. Carbon is stored in standing timber, branches, foliage, roots as well as in dead biomass - including litter, woody debris, soil organic matter and forest products. Any activity that affects the amount of biomass in vegetation and soil has the potential to sequester carbon, or release carbon into the atmosphere. This is an important function as an increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide above the threshold level, results in the climatic phenomenon known as global warming. Carbon dioxide is one of the so called green-house gases (others include methane and nitrous oxide). Forest degradation also results in carbon loss. In tropical Asia, the loss of carbon resulting from forest degradation almost equals that caused by deforestation.

Forests are affected by a number

of disturbances like fires, drought, diseases and insects. Under global warming scenarios, as forest eco-systems change and move in response to climate change, they become more vulnerable to disturbances, with the outbreaks more likely to increase in severity. Climate change will affect recreational and tourism industries in different ways too. Tourism being a nature-related activity, through nature walks, hiking, trekking, is likely to change in relation to change in the vegetation.

Changes in forest cover could thus induce feedback effects on the climate by modifying surface temperatures and by influencing carbon dioxide concentrations. Forests have a lower albedo (i.e. reflectiveness) than other ecosystems and through their extensive root systems, have more access to soil water than other types of vegetation. In consequence, they absorb more solar energy, which can lead to heating, and lose more water through evaporation, which can lead to cooling. In tropical zones, evaporation processes tend to dominate and the net effect of forests is to cool and moisten the atmosphere. At higher latitudes,

Cont'd pg. 15

From pg 14

albedo effects are more important, thereby leading to local warming.

Forests that have been managed primarily for timber production should also be managed for climate mitigation and other environmental values. Expanding forest area by promoting regeneration of native trees, allowing trees to grow larger, employing harvesting methods that reduce damage and waste, and establishing conservation set-asides within production forests can all increase the average long term quantity of stored carbon. These management options also tend to have beneficial effects on biodiversity, and on other key ecosystem services such as maintaining watersheds.

Restoring forests also tends to improve habitat quality, especially for wide-ranging forest birds and mammals. Letting trees grow larger before harvesting generally increases a forest's structural diversity and provides habitat for a broader range of forest species. Healthy forests that retain their natural complexity and diversity in age and habitat structure generally have greater stability and resilience to withstand disturbances associated with climate change.

Trees grow quickly when they are young, but growth slows as they mature. To increase average carbon storage over time, harvests should occur after the annual growth rate falls below the average growth rate. Because timber companies have a strong economic incentive to harvest when prices are most favorable, however, many forests are harvested well before this optimal age. Lengthening the time between harvests or retaining older trees through successive harvests could significantly increase the carbon stores. Establishing a carbon market and a sound regulatory framework could provide financial incentive to lengthen harvest cycles. Reducing damage to non-harvested trees and disturbance of forest soils during logging operations can also substantially reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Advantages of reduced-

impact forestry include immediate carbon benefits at modest cost as well as a decrease in the risk of fire.

There is a widespread and misguided belief that logging or clearing mature forests and replacing them with fast-growing younger trees will benefit the climate by sequestering atmospheric carbon dioxide. While younger trees grow and sequester carbon quickly, the fate of stored carbon when mature forests are logged must also be considered. When a forest is logged, some of its carbon may be stored for years or decades in wood products. But large quantities of carbon dioxide are also released to the atmosphere - immediately through the disturbance of forest soils, and over time through the decomposition of leaves, branches, and other detritus of timber production. One study found that even when storage of carbon in timber products is considered, the conversion of 5 million hectares of mature forest to plantations in the Pacific Northwest over the last 100 years resulted in a net increase of over 1.5 billion tons of carbon to the atmosphere.

Using forest products as a source of biomass energy can present a conflict between climate mitigation and other environmental objectives. This is because a trade-off exists between leaving carbon in standing forest and producing a sustainable flow of renewable woody biomass that can be used to produce energy (instead of fossil fuels) or building materials (instead of energy-intensive steel or aluminum). While increased forest carbon storage yields climate benefits, greater mitigation may be possible over time by managing forests for the long-term production and use of bio-fuels. Managing for biomass should only be an option if deleterious effects on biodiversity can be avoided (that is, fully compatible with the Forest Stewardship Council's guidelines for biomass management).

Mature forests and other forest areas with recognized high conservation value should be fully protected.

Even careful commercial forestry operations in high conservation value forests impose substantial costs to other forest ecosystem services such as biodiversity conservation, watershed maintenance, recreation and other forest amenities. These forests should not be managed for timber or biomass.



Historical forest fire regimes should not be altered to increase carbon storage. Forest fires release large quantities of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to the atmosphere and are estimated to contribute 20% of annual global emissions. Fire, however, is a natural disturbance factor upon which many forest processes depend. Suppressing fires to protect timber resources, or private property thus leads to fuel accumulation, exacerbating the risk of future catastrophic wild fires. When forests are lost or degraded, their carbon is released into the atmosphere in the form of carbon dioxide, the most important greenhouse gas. By continuing to lose forests, we contribute to climate change.

Future El Niño events - the periodic upwelling of warm waters in the Pacific Ocean which affect weather patterns across the globe - could increase incidences of fire, particularly in the forests of South America, releasing millions of tones of stored carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Forests are being rapidly cleared for agricultural activities, pasture, destructively logged and mined, degraded by human activities. This has forced their stored carbon to be released back into the atmosphere during harvest and through respiration, thus becoming net contributors of carbon than they emit.

If forests are to continue to serve the earth and its people, we must protect the most significant and threatened forests, promote and encourage responsible forestry, and restore lost or degraded forests to a more authentic state.



PESTS & DISEASES IN COMMERCIAL TREE NURSERIES AND PLANTATIONS IN UGANDA

by Philip Nyeko (Makerere University)



"What's killing my trees?" is an increasingly common question from tree growers up and down the country to the SPGS team. And surprising though it may be, we at the SPGS do not always know the answer. So to help us all we enlisted the help of an expert, namely, Assoc. Prof. Philip Nyeko from Makerere University's Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation. Whilst we await the final report from Philip, we have below pulled out a summary from his recent presentation to the COMFORT¹ meeting at SPGS.

Background: with increased interest in commercial forestry in Uganda there is an increasing evidence of Pest and Disease (P&D) problems and it is clear that we currently know little about them.

Objective: the study aimed at establishing a P&D baseline - by determining the main P&D; noting their incidence and severity and to provide SPGS with a management strategy and also information to disseminate to growers.

Method: the study covered the range of agro-ecological zones where most commercial planting is being carried out. P&D were scored for incidence and severity and samples were collected for laboratory analysis.

Results: 22 private growers' plantations were visited (21 of who were SPGS clients) plus 14 nurseries. A further 7 NFA sites were visited as were 2 of James Finlay's tea estates and 2 UGT clonal nurseries.

Below are listed the main P&D found:

Nurseries:

- *Leptocybe invasa* (BGC²) on Eucalyptus
- *Aphis* sp. (aphids) on Eucalyptus
- Bacterial blight on Eucalyptus
- Powdery mildew on Eucalyptus
- *Mycosphaerella* leaf spots on Eucalyptus
- *Fusarium* wilt on pines
- Birds on pines

Plantations:

- BGC on Eucalyptus
- Termites on Eucalyptus
- Black pine aphids on pines
- *Phymateus viridipes* (grasshoppers) on various tree species
- *Botryosphaeria* canker on Eucalyptus
- Bacterial blight on Eucalyptus
- Yellowing and wilting of pines
- Browning of *Cupressus lusitanica* foliage
- Others: rats, moles, monkeys, livestock

Conclusions:

- A number of P&Ds exist in nurseries and plantations around Uganda.
- Magnitude and type of P&D problems vary in the different regions of Uganda.
- High priority P&D for management currently could be: BGC, termites, bacterial blight, *Botryosphaeria* canker, *Fusarium* wilt, mammals and birds.
- Need to monitor P&D with low incidence and severity currently, and new ones that may emerge.
- The field pine wilt requires further work to confirm the causal organism.

Dissemination methods:

- ✓ Development and distribution of P&D specific guides for tree growers.
- ✓ Short trainings for technology transfer for tree growers on P&Ds.
- ✓ Presentations: e.g. at SPGS Clients' meetings or seminars.

An excellent piece of work we say but it is only the beginning of a crucial area of support to the sector. Philip's final report will be made freely available from the SPGS office and on www.sawlog.ug when completed. The SPGS is further supporting Philip to attend specific training on the control of BGC in Israel in Nov. 2008 – Ed.

¹ COMFORT – Commercial Forestry Research & Training Steering Group, which represents the main players in the commercial forest sector in Uganda – NFA, UTGA, NaFORRI, MUKFoF, NFC, UGT & SPGS.

² BGC – Blue Gum Chalcid – the common name for the *Leptocybe invasa* wasp.

COMMUNITIES DEMAND MORE TREES



by Charles Odeke (Plantation Officer – SPGS)



SPGS staff meeting with Rukokoma community, Ibanda district – one of the many associations supported countrywide by the SPGS.

With the arrival of the rains, we have been busy delivering seedlings to our supported communities. We have also started mapping the previous plantings of some of the communities as one way of evaluating their progress: this has already been carried out in Muzira, Rukokoma and in Luwero communities and the exercise is continuing. Watoto Child Care Ministries were given extra 1,200 *Pinus caribaea* seedlings specifically to plant to offset the carbon foot-print arising from the travel of 118 delegates who attended the recent SPGS 3rd Commercial Seminar. The money for these seedlings was additional to the budget allocation for community seedling support.

In the last newsletter, we asked for readers' suggestions on how best we can expand our support to communities during the next phase of SPGS but we did not receive much response! So please you can still send in your suggestions before we take any decisions (see SPGS contact details at the bottom of the back page of this newsletter). In case you have been taking this lightly, think twice: at the time of going to press we had received a total of 34 community applications from 22 different Districts requiring close to 3 million seedlings!

By the way, in this season of Sept/Oct' 08 alone, we have supplied a total of 84,322 seedlings of mostly *Pinus caribaea* as well as some *Eucalyptus grandis* & *Musizi (Maesopsis eminii)*. 14 communities have benefited this season including: RECPA and Kiyaaga Young Farmers' Assoc. in Mbarara, Kalagi – Kawututu in Mukono, Watoto in Mpigi, Kaswa in Luwero and Kabaale in Nakasongola.

This brings the total number of seedlings supplied to date as 583,072. If only 70% of these seedlings survived, at least we are sure of some 370ha of trees on the ground now. Quite an achievement from so-called small growers. So as SPGS continues to plan on how best to expand community support in the next phase, we encourage you the members who have received the seedlings to plant them immediately (as long as it is wet enough), weed them well and protect them from livestock – especially every tree planters' enemy – goats! You should also remember that fire damage is indeed a reality: make proper firebreaks and sensitise the neighbouring community members on the risks of fire as the dry season peaks up. For those communities who have not yet been supported, as they say – 'patience pays'.

Editor's note: John Spears, our eminent Guest Speaker at the SPGS Commercial Forestry Seminar, was highly impressed with the success of the project in mobilising communities to plant trees and gave us some excellent suggestions as to how we could build on this – especially to combine tree planting with conservation of key natural forest areas. To attract further support for such work (and to tap into the REDD funds), he stressed the importance of the main players working together – e.g. NFA, SPGS and UCB. Good advice indeed.

Cont'd from pg 5

2008 SPGS SEMINAR

There are 2 main markets – the UN's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and the voluntary market. Bill clearly recommended the latter for most cases as it is less complex and more suitable for smaller projects. The voluntary market also offers exciting opportunities for payment for eco-system services, such as water, biodiversity and eco-tourism. In fact, UCB are now hosting an 'incubator' facility for carbon and payment for ecosystem services, being supported by the highly respected Forest Trends and the Katoomba Group. Thanks also to the day's co-sponsors - **Lasher Tools** and **New Forests Co. Ltd.**

[The talk on Bioenergy by Unique Forestry's Kai Windhorst will feature in the next issue as will a summary of the afternoon's regional roundup, with reports from Tanzania,



An Interesting Interaction

by Mike Nsereko (Projects Manager, UTGA)

What? You mean UTGA now has an office, a Project Manager and has published such a beautiful newsletter? You mean all these people and companies listed in the newsletter are members of UTGA? I can't believe this. What have I been waiting for to join this wonderful association? Please get out your receipt book and I will immediately pay the membership and subscription fees so that I also become a member".

This was the reaction of one timber grower upon being introduced to me in early this month. After joining, he sat down and said "now that I am a registered member, tell me all about UTGA".

I told him that UTGA is a trade association that brings together timber growers in Uganda - both big and small - to have a collective voice. I told him that UTGA's objectives are to lobby and source for appropriate financial services for members, to facilitate industry-focused research and training, to promote best practices for commercial forestry, to promote public awareness of the commercial forest industry and to ensure access to affordable and appropriate inputs such as seeds, chemicals and equipment for the members. UTGA is also establishing strategic partnerships with national and international stakeholders and lobbying for an improved investment environment.

After a long silence, he said "I don't know about others, but if you asked me, I would

say- if one is a timber grower in Uganda and he is not yet a registered member of UTGA, then he probably is in the wrong business." There, you heard the man! Please come and join the winning team.

Meanwhile, UTGA is in the process of importing PCH seed from Australia (expected late Oct. 2008). Members who are interested are urged to book and pay for the seed ASAP as there is very high demand. Those who booked earlier are urged to pay now. Each Kg will be priced at 2,000,000/=. You will also be advised when the next seed batch is expected.

Contact us on 0772-979824 or come to the SPGS offices in Bugolobi, where we are based.



FSC PROGRESS

by Thaddeus Businge, SPGS

The subject of forest certification under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) continues to generate interest and excitement in Uganda. There has been considerable progress over the past few months and a growing awareness of what certification is all about. Of course the potential benefits from certification cannot be ignored as one of the driving forces of the excitement and interest.

First, the five members of the FSC group certification pilot scheme under SPGS are very eager to have the first 300 hectares of FSC plantings in Ugandan soils come the rains. Following the June training in certification, the FSC group members went back to their sites ready to apply their gained knowledge. Judging from our recent site visits, the training is clearly bearing fruit: land preparation has been done ahead of planting, bearing in mind environmental and social responsibility. The recent visits have been aimed at monitoring the social and environmental responsibility as well as accurate record keeping.

Interestingly, all the large-scale planters here - notably, New Forests Co., Busoga Forestry Co. and Sustainable Use of Biomass Ltd. - are all heading down the FSC route themselves (NB. by virtue of their size, they are not eligible under the SPGS Group Scheme). Some of them have even had pre-audits already.

We also held the first FSC stakeholders' meeting in August this year, aimed at bringing together all forestry stakeholders so as to forge a way forward. In this meeting two FSC contact people for Uganda were nominated (Bric

Milligan and Edward Mupada), who will be our link with FSC. These two will be responsible for spearheading the formation of the FSC Working Group for Uganda, which will among others things, be tasked with the drafting of the FSC standards for Uganda (more about these in the next newsletter).

As for the group certification pilot scheme, we hope to have our pre-audit in November 2008 and (depending on the outcome), a main audit later in 2009. I can already see the FSC certificate on its way. For those other small and medium scale planters interested in joining the FSC group, watch this space to know when the gates will be opened to you. I must warn you, however, that it requires a lot of hard work!



Silvicultural standards in Uganda have greatly improved over the past few years though more effort now needs putting on improved planning and environmental and social issues. This is the 4-yr old PCH demo. planting at Kasagala CFR, Nakasongola.



Of hot days, mountains, forests & bagpipes

by our roving SPGS reporter, Celia Nalwadda

Anyone heard of Bulgaria? It is a country in SE Europe, bordering the Black Sea, between Romania and Turkey. I was lucky to attend the 36th Annual International Forestry Students Symposium (IFSS), in August 2008. Before you ask why then would I be at a student's symposium, apart from being an SPGS Plantation Officer, I also double as the Youth Officer of the Commonwealth Forestry Association (CFA) and it was in this capacity that I was invited to attend.

I was able to inform the participants (over 100 from 34 countries) about the CFA and of course a great deal about what we are doing in Uganda with the SPGS. The reaction was interesting, based on the many questions that were fired my way: ranging from 'how do the growers plan to get the best out of their investment?' to 'how does SPGS avoid the infamous monster of corruption?'. The general consensus was that we are onto a potential jackpot, but only if we move forward wisely. Not to mention that most of the audience nearly fell off their seats on seeing the growth rates we have in this country!

We were also taken on a country tour of the beautiful countryside. Although the summer sun was at its best with temperatures 33-35 °C, the breathtaking views of the forests, mountains, clear lakes and colourful flowers more than made up for the sweltering heat. During these two weeks, I learnt many things and would love to share a few of these with you:

Let me begin with the forestry students, whom I believe should be curious to know more about the International Forestry Students Association (IFSA). This is simply a group of forestry students from all over the world, who meet annually at the IFSS. The goal of the gathering is to provide a platform where students can meet their counterparts from other countries, discuss their ideas and views and create an atmosphere of solidarity and inspiration. They also use this opportunity to set targets of what they would like to achieve as an association and to elect a new leadership committee. It is not all work as the group takes off time to learn about the forestry

and culture of the host country. For this case, we went on rifle shooting and hunting expeditions, game viewing, mountain climbing, rafting, swimming, hiking, horse riding, wine tasting, camping and fire dancing to the tune of bagpipes. If this has picked your interest and you would like to join, it is really simple: form a local forestry students club and register with the IFSA direction on www.ifsa.net. You can also contact me at celian@sawlog.ug and I will be happy to help. You could be at the next IFSS in Indonesia 2009.

Now to the foresters, who must be itching to know what Bulgarian lessons I brought back to improve our Ugandan forestry. Forestry in Bulgaria is a very

important sector with a total forest cover of 4.1 million hectares (33 % of the total land area). The dominant species are Birch, Spruce, Pines and Beech - most of which are naturally regenerated. The average age of the forest is 49 years. The major purposes of the forests are for conservation, erosion control and bequest purposes; meaning that not much silviculture or harvesting is done here. Nevertheless there are important lessons we can learn

from them. Although Bulgaria is half the size of Uganda, its population size is a fifth of Uganda's. The implication is that, there is far less pressure to cut down Bulgarian forests for settlement, agriculture or energy. The passion and pride with which these forests are conserved is also challenging. Every forest we visited had well documented information about it, and was teaming with people (including locals not just foreign tourists) learning more about the biodiversity therein, teaching their children about the value of forests or simply picnicking in the eco-sites. Only to think, that we have far more diversity in Uganda, yet we are more or less just sitting on our hands!

Finally, a few tips to those with a tourist bone, who feel tempted to get on the next flight to Sofia. If your skin is black, be prepared for the shocked stares; most Bulgarian people have never seen a real life black person. Next, you will need to polish up on your language skills, 95% of the people only speak Bulgarian. Here is a phrase to start you



Celia (far rt) with her fellow young foresters seeing some of the sights around Bulgaria.

OUR CLIMATE IS CHANGING

The Facts: climate change is happening: the world is becoming warmer, ice caps are melting, sea levels are rising and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent. There is now a broad consensus that global warming is caused by increasing levels of greenhouse gases (GHG), of which CO₂ is the most important. Energy production from burning fossil fuels is by far the biggest source of GHGs.

The Role of Forests: forests act a giant Carbon stores: as trees grow they absorb CO₂, store Carbon (C) in biomass and release O₂ into the atmosphere. Forests contain around 80% of all above ground terrestrial C and 40% of terrestrial below ground C. When forests are cleared and/or burnt, they release the C back into the atmosphere. Deforestation accounts for 20% of worldwide GHG emissions. See pages 14-15 for more details.

What Can We Do About It? In military-speak, an attack on 3 fronts is required:

❶ **Control Deforestation:** efforts to reduce the massive deforestation (and degradation) currently occurring in Uganda must be intensified; we also need to reduce the threat of forest fires.

❷ **Carbon Sequestration:** plant more trees and look at changing silvicultural practices that would store more C in the trees or in the soil – e.g. not burning trash prior to planting, minimizing cultivation and lengthening rotations.

❸ **Substitution & Energy-Saving:** increase the use of wood in construction and furniture; and establish bioenergy plantations to reduce use of fossil fuels; also need to promote more efficient ways of burning wood.

What is the SPGS Doing About It? Quite a lot actually:

- ✓ Working with partners (e.g. Uganda C Bureau and NFA) to attract C-funds to finance conservation of natural forests.
- ✓ Lobbying for increased funds to support tree planting.
- ✓ Ensuring high (and sustainable) standards of plantation management are adopted.
- ✓ Raising awareness of the huge role forests play for the well-being of all Ugandans.
- ✓ Consider supporting bioenergy plantations, which are renewable and sustainable.

TRAINING UPDATE

Another of our *Plantation Planning & Establishment* courses took place in June 2008 in Kyenjojo District. The demand for this course was very high but we always restrict numbers to 25 to ensure each participant receives sufficient time with the trainers. Participants went through the basic, practical aspects of planning, land preparation and planting of seedlings: they also were exposed to pictures of good and bad plantation practices worldwide. **Richard Angubo** working for Robin Jade, planting near Hoima, took the coveted SPGS book prize of *Plantation Forestry in the Tropics* by Evans & Turnbull. We will be running the same course again from **8-11th Dec. 2008**. Contact Josephine at the SPGS office to enrol but you will have to be quick. Remember – we teach your Supervisors and Managers to grow **Fast Growing, High Yielding** plantations: focussed and practical training that is unique to the SPGS.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- ✎ **Bioenergy:** prospects for Uganda.
- ✎ **E & S Africa** Plantation Review.
- ✎ **SPGS beyond 2008:** the future?
- ✎ **Tree Growth** in our plantations.
- ✎ **Student Placements:** Stories from Nyabyeya students in the field.

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Visit our web-site for all Guidelines and past Newsletters and 2008 Seminar Proceedings.

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