



SAWLOG PRODUCTION GRANT SCHEME

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

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Planting trees in Uganda is a profitable business. It also creates jobs, stores carbon, protects watersheds and produces many useful products including timber, poles and bioenergy in a sustainable way. What better vehicle for rural development?

The SPGS is supported by the European Union (EU) and the Government of Uganda. This innovative project has supported the planting of over 9,500 hectares of timber trees by private growers in Uganda since 2003. Thousands of rural jobs are being created and the foundations laid for a profitable and sustainable forest industry.

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SEED & SEEDLING UPDATE - 27 JUNE 2008

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 (Fiji stands)	NTSC	60	35,000	2.1 M	Superior, advanced generation Seed Orchard material
	Brazil	NTSC	10	20,000	875,000	200 Kgs expected soon; from Seed Production Stands
<i>Eucalyptus grandis</i> (Kalitunsi)	Fort Portal	NTSC	> 100	150,000	90,000	Seed Production Stand: seed collection ongoing
<i>Maesopsis eminii</i> (Musizi)	Masaka (local)	NTSC	> 1000	400	35,000	From superior 'plus-trees'
<i>Terminalia superba</i>	Jinja (local)	NTSC	> 200	4,000	50,000	From superior 'plus-trees'
<i>Pinus patula</i>	Kabale (local)	NTSC	> 30	50,000	500,000	Unknown sources

* NTSC – National Tree Seed Centre

The Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA) has taken over from SPGS the mantle of importing improved seed (so... have you joined yet?). Plans are underway to import some 40 Kgs of *Pinus caribaea* var. *hondurensis* from Australia. The low quantity is due to prolonged heavy rains in Australia that hampered the harvesting process. Interested UTGA members are advised to make their booking requirements with Mike Nsereko, the new UTGA Project Manager, on 0772 979 824.

II. SEEDLINGS:

NTSC has plans of raising 900,000 PCH seedlings and 500,000 *E. grandis* seedlings. Costs per seedling are: *E. grandis* (Fort Portal) – UGX 100; PCH (Australia) – UGX 300; PCH (Brazil) – UGX 250. Other available species are Musizi – UGX 400 and *Terminalia superba* – UGX 200.

For bookings please contact the manager, Mr. Stephen Khaukha, on 0772 561 227

III. HYBRID EUCALYPT CLONES

Uganda Gatsby Trust clonal nurseries are busy producing hybrid *Eucalyptus* clonal cuttings for the Sept.–Oct. 2008 planting season. As word is spreading about the spectacular performance of these



7-year old GC clone at TBP's nursery, Kenya (see article on Pg. 8)

clones from those planted last season, the demand is likely to be high so book yours now! And please don't forget the SPGS Plantation Guideline No.18 – *Planting Hybrid Eucalypt Clones in Uganda* – is available free from SPGS office or at www.sawlog.ug This publication has recommendations for which clones are suited to various parts of Uganda. Interested growers should place their booking requirements with a 30% deposit at the UGT nursery nearest to you:

1. Mbale nursery: contact Moses on 0772 595 545.
2. Fort Portal nursery: contact Samaon on 0782 153 659.
3. Kifu (near Mukono): contact Simon on 0752 644 995.

NB 1. You can read more about the success of these hybrid eucalypt clones in Kenya on pages 8 & 9.

NB 2. When planting the eucalypt clones, make sure that you keep records and clearly demarcate on the ground which clones are planted where. The different clones should be treated as separate species as they can react differently to sites and pests for example.

COVER PHOTO: Main cover photo is of a thinned pine plantation being grown for timber at Shiselweni Forestry Company, Swaziland.



Editorial

So much has been happening in the last few months that we have had to expand this 21st edition of the SPGS Newsletter to 20 pages. We feel that it was worth the extra effort and hope you agree with us.

On the future funding front, matters appear to be progressing well. The Delegation of European Commission and the Norwegian Embassy are currently discussing with the Ministry of Water and Environment, ways of collaborating to support the next phase of the SPGS: they will carry out a joint evaluation and appraisal of the project within the coming few months. This will give many of you – including our many partners and growers – a chance to have your say and influence the direction of the next, expanded phase of the SPGS.

Of course when it comes to money, everyone gets excited and before some rush out to plant expecting SPGS support to follow – a word of caution: in terms of financial support, the next phase of the project will be similar as the current one, whereby support will only be for planters who were **contracted prior to planting**. This is for two main reasons: firstly we have to be sure that our planters (we call them clients) have an approved management plan that has taken note of the main silvicultural issues (e.g. species choice; no clearing of intact natural forests etc.) as well as specific environmental and social issues. Secondly, we do not have unlimited resources and thus have to strictly ensure that the number (and area) of contracted clients we have is within our budget.

Whilst we do not want to put people off planting (far from it!), we are strictly bound by the rules agreed between the donors and the

Government as to how we operate. So if you have no contract with us, please don't expect any financial support from us. However, whether you have a contract or not with us, we always offer professional advice – whether it be through our free Plantation Guidelines, a one-to-one meeting at our office and sometimes (depending on staff availability and the size of the potential planting programme) a site visit.

The timing of the next phase of the project (and thus the earliest we could start signing new contracts with growers) will depend on how quickly the bureaucratic wheels turn: we hope that by early 2009, the new funds will be available. For all new applicants, we will be developing new guidelines over the coming few months: these will be similar to the current ones but (as we have been hinting of late) there will be some additions to include more environmental and social issues. For those who have already formally applied to the project over the past few years, we will be in touch individually over the coming few months. We will, of course, keep everyone informed through the Newsletters and our web site.

We have many other interesting articles in this issue too. There is a special feature (pages 6 & 7) on why we believe that it is so important to start an applied research programme in Uganda. There is also a report on a visit to Kenya by SPGS staff, where they learned the hows and whys of their highly successful commercialization of eucalypt clones (see pages 8 & 9). On page 14, we have a fascinating article from the Uganda Carbon Bureau, which will answer many of your questions

on this most topical of subjects. Then there is a summary report from an important meeting hosted by the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) and the World Bank, where the SPGS and UTGA made sure that some of the major constraints affecting private planters were raised and debated (see page 4). And finally, there is news (and some great pictures too) from our recent clients' safari to the New Forests Company's big operation in Mubende. If you weren't there, you certainly missed out on a great day (see pages 12 & 13).



Jan-Erik Studsrod (NORAD) and Solveig Verheyleweghen (Norway Embassy, Kampala) visiting Ferd'sult's planting at Lugazi, Mukono in May 2008.

We hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter and that if you are a potential tree planter that you are inspired to start soon in this profitable and satisfying business venture. Please remember that we are always open to readers' comments, articles (however short) and any interesting pictures: send them to us at info@sawlog.ug or drop them off at our office.



Uganda Joint Favourites for 2010 World Cup



Hon. Jessica Eriyo (rt), State Minister of Environment and Prof. Maggie Kigozi (ED UIA) at the UIA Workshop in June 2008.
Photo courtesy of Joseph Kariuki (Vision Group)

All right - the title of this article is not quite true but we thought that if we called it *Forestry Stakeholders' Consultative Workshop* - you might quickly move onto the next page. As it is this turned out to be far from a dull meeting so you might as well read on now.....

The Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) in conjunction with the World Bank organized a half-day workshop on 24th June, which brought together many key players from both the public and private forest sector. It proved to be a morning well spent since it was a rare opportunity to discuss some of the burning issues affecting private tree growers with the powers that be. Prof. Maggie Kigozi (UIA's ED) first introduced the day's two formal presentations - one from the Government's perspective, the other from the 'sharp-end' (i.e. the growers) - which formed the basis for some lively debate later on.

Mr. Gershom Onyango, Director, Dept. of Environment in the Ministry of Water & Environment, set the scene with a very clear presentation of the current status and opportunities in the sector. Gershom couldn't disguise the worrying trend of reduced forest cover (now less than 24% of land area) and the huge (> 90%) dependency of a rapidly expanding population on biomass. "Uganda moved into a net fuelwood deficit country in 2000" we were informed. On a more positive note, he highlighted the opportunities in the sector - namely employment (ca.100,000 full-time, formal jobs and over 7 times this in the informal sector) and investment (high rates of return possible - with a looming supply deficit and excellent growth rates).

Gershom then highlighted the parts of the 2001 National Forest Policy that relate to the private sector, which says that the GoU will encourage the private sector to play a major role in plantation development as well as promoting their involvement in wood processing. As hands were shooting up in the audience to challenge these last points, the **Hon. Sheila Mishambi** took the floor. Sheila had two hats on - her private growers' one and her Secretary of UTGA one - and both fitted well. Sheila started by

stressing the importance of timber plantations to Uganda and showed some pictures that left nobody in any doubt about the great start that has been made by private growers over the last few years (with most supported by the SPGS we were happy to see).

And thenthe smile faded as Sheila focused on what she termed the "ugly threat to commercial forestry development" - referring to the encroachment in Central Forest Reserves that escalated since the Presidential Order of Feb. 2006, which halted evictions. Sheila also appealed to the NFA to change their strategy of targeting all CFR encroachment (which is not gaining them any friends) but to prioritize on where the problem directly affects planters now. Stressing that security of tenure was crucial for long-term tree crops, she urged the GoU and NFA to come out and clearly support investors better. Sheila then expressed something that the many have been articulating of late - namely, the NFA's unclear plantation strategy and concern over how they allocate and monitor planting permits.

The rest of the morning was taken up with comments and debate from the floor. The key points that emerged were as follows:

- Policy statements are all very well but the public are not seeing the support from GoU and NFA - especially on encroachment issues.
- Many strongly challenged the NFA's activities which are in direct competition with private sector - notably new planting and harvesting.
- The NFA are holding onto large areas of plantable land but are not planting significantly themselves at present: the NFA's plans regarding planting were unclear.
- The NFA's licencing strategy needs reviewing: too many licences are being given out (leading to fragmentation); the more serious investors are thus being frustrated by lack of land and also the NFA are not closely monitoring the performance of many licencees and thus the land is not being fully utilized.
- A number of speakers recommended that the experience gained by the SPGS should be better utilized by both the NFA and the Farm Income Enhancement project.

In summing up, both **Prof. Maggie Kigozi** (ED UIA) and the State Minister for the Environment, **Hon. Jessica Eriyo** agreed that the NFA should not compete with the private sector and recommended that the organisation's role needed reviewing. Whilst this is fine, we came away somewhat concerned. Whilst the successes of private growers over the past few years have clearly shown that they are willing to plant commercially here, where will the money come from for the NFA to fund their crucial conservation role if not from timber plantations? In the midst of press reports that Government are looking to curb the NFA's control over Central Forest Reserves, this issue needs to be addressed soon.

Tree Planting by Communities: Some New Ideas



By Charles Odeke (Plantation Officer – SPGS)

Small scale tree planting by smallholder, rural communities is a viable way of increasing timber supply in the country. Under the SPGS since 2005, a total of 29 communities in 15 districts have planted over 500,000 tree seedlings on their small pieces of land (1 – 5 acres) to date. Some of such communities include: Muzira in Bushenyi, Watoto (Mpigi), Nabukonge (Masaka), Nkalwe (Rakai) and WLAA (Gulu). The

members; their relative location in a community and the level of organisation - among others. For successful communities, SPGS organises a visit to appraise and train the community members on tree planting skills as well as do species site matching. During the training, farmers are informed of their responsibilities such as preparing the land to the required standard, planting and maintaining the trees. The final list of seedling requests is then

in the country. However, the current SPGS staff whose main focus is on commercial forestry can not offer adequate support to meet this interest. Consequently, we recently put our heads together and came up with the ideas that could cater for the ever expanding requests for community support: these are summarised below:

- Need to regionalise community support in the country in such a way that a specific number of Districts neighbouring each other constitute a given region.
- Need to recruit resident Community Plantation Officers (CPOs) to manage each region.
- Need to assign one full-time Plantation Officer based at SPGS office to co-ordinate community support activities.
- Improving seedling delivery by purchasing a suitable vehicle preferably with a customised trailer for seedling transportation to communities.
- Purchase of some specialised and appropriate tools for communities like pruning saws, slashers etc.
- Occasionally organise joined community meetings / tours to other areas for exposure, like is done with the SPGS's more commercial planters and
- Hold end of year inter-community planters' awards.



Rukokoma Community, Ibanda District, at their excellent pine plantation in March 2008. This community has been supported by the SPGS since 2006.

interest has kept growing within these communities and we are also receiving many requests from new communities to receive similar support.

SPGS community support to date has been largely based on interest expressed by communities to plant trees for timber (or poles) on spare land. Whether a community is supported or not depends on a number of criteria – e.g. proximity to commercial tree growers; the number of

obtained and then the seedlings are delivered to the communities at the start of the rains. Thereafter, SPGS's role is to periodically visit these communities to offer on the spot technical advice while assessing the conditions of the planted trees. The results from these assessments form the basis for giving further support to a given community.

As is common with any results-oriented service delivery, SPGS community support has attracted a lot of interest from other districts

As we are starting to plan for the next phase of the SPGS, this is a good time for you to contribute your ideas. Please send your suggestions on how to involve communities more in tree planting to charleso@sawlog.ug or josephinem@sawlog.ug or post it to the SPGS at P.O. Box 5244, Kampala (marked Attention Charles Odeke).



Restoring Uganda's Reputation in Forest Research

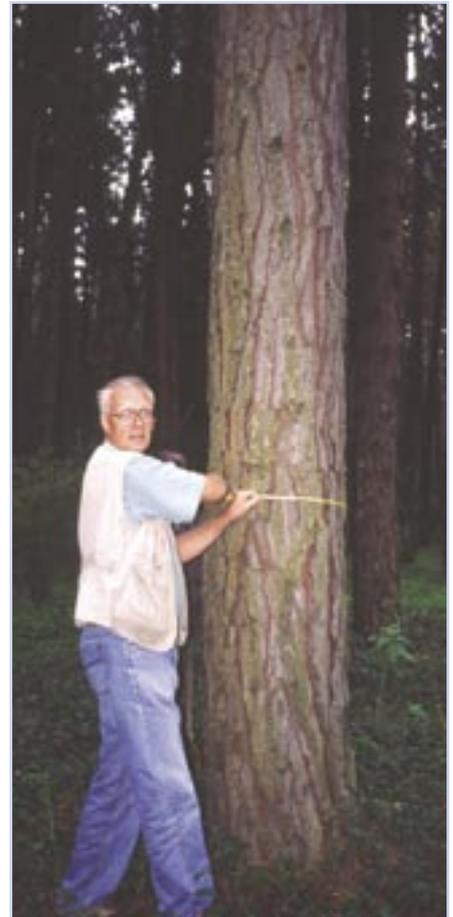
By Paul Jacovelli

Those of you new to the tree planting business here might not be aware of the high esteem with which Uganda was once held with regard to forestry research (and management). Of course this was maybe a couple of rotations ago but nevertheless I believe it is important to be aware of what has been done here, especially as we embark on the development of a potential large scale, forest industry.

Whilst much of this research was into natural forest management systems (the search for the foresters' 'holy grail' of sustainable production), there was considerable effort put into plantations too - investigating numerous exotic and indigenous species. The long list of detailed Technical Notes and other publications is testament to the dedication of the foresters back then. In contrast, foresters published very little over the past 30 years or so, save for studies on policy issues, social (or community) forestry and agroforestry: consequently the

many new techniques developed for plantation forestry largely passed the country by. Hence it is not surprising that since we embarked on the 'new wave' of planting some six years ago, we have had virtually no support from the established research and training institutions here. This worries us at the SPGS and we believe it should also concern all those currently investing (or about to) in large-scale tree planting in Uganda.

Plantation development on the scale currently happening (and planned) in Uganda, will not be sustainable without a carefully targeted and well implemented research programme to support it. The warning bells have been ringing for a while now and we must start acting before we have a catastrophe on our hands. We have been lucky (so far thank God) with *Pinus caribaea* but the chalcid wasp attacking eucalypts here has given us a scare. Indeed, experience from other countries tells us that it is only a matter of time before there are other such uninvited visitors to our plantations.

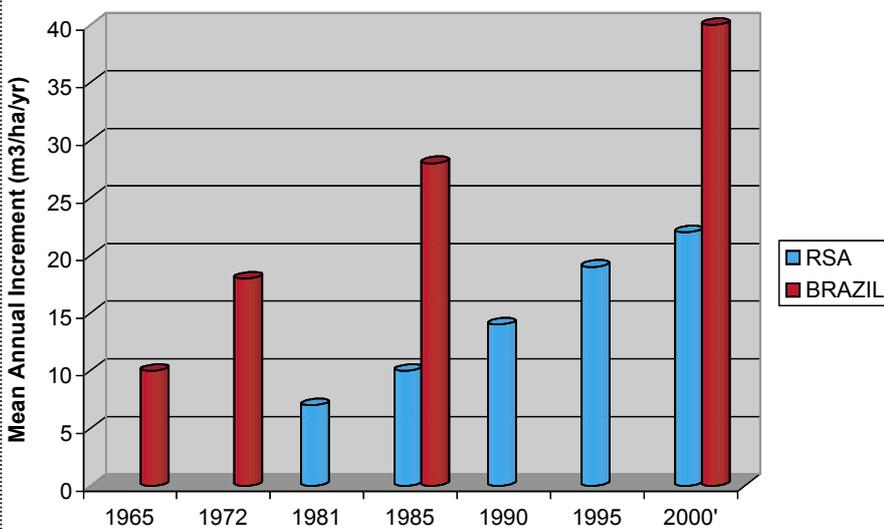


Tony Finch (CTA to the EU programme 1997 - 2002) measuring one of the 'plus' pine trees in 1998 undoubtedly converted to planks by now.

"But I thought we had government research (and training) institutions here?" is a cry we often hear. That is true, but these institutions have not moved with the times - at least in terms of the many advances in plantation forestry over the last 40 years or so (most notably clonal forestry, scientific site-species matching and improved establishment methods). Most of these intensive silvicultural practices now being adopted by growers here (particularly those under the SPGS banner) are not familiar to staff in these organizations: hence they cannot offer the services required by those investing in commercial plantations here.

When times are hard the first budget in many organizations (including

Proof That Research Pays: Eucalypt Productivity



This enormous increase in eucalypt productivity in both RSA and Brazil is due largely to applied tree breeding (especially the deployment of highly productive hybrid clones and the development of mass propagation methods), improved site classification and the site-specific application of these technologies.

government) is often research and development. Why? Because sometimes it is hard to justify and see the benefits in the short-term. Then along comes a problem: in our plantations it might be a severe pest outbreak; it might be a species struggling on certain sites or it might be a shortage of quality planting material. And all of a sudden everybody is moaning that the research is not being done to assist them. Sounds to me like the road we are heading down in Uganda at present.

For the doubting Thomas's amongst you, spare a moment to study the chart on page 6: if this doesn't convince you that research pays, then I don't



Drs Jolanda le Rouz & Bernard Slippers from FABI inspecting E. grandis trees badly affected by the Chalcid wasp (Leptocybe invasa) in 2007. Uganda must develop its own strategy for dealing with future pest outbreaks.

know what will. Of course, there is research and research. The applied research that has paid such dividends in both South Africa and Brazil had a very clear focus and it will come as no surprise that the impetus came largely from the private sector, though in both cases there has been government support for what was recognized as an important export-earning, job-creating sector.

So what can be done? An encouraging start has been made with the COMFORT group where some of the main players come together to at least get a feel for various interests and capabilities (see text box). One early result of COMFORT has been the SPGS funding two research projects to start the ball rolling: one to conduct a base-line survey of the pests and disease in the plantations (and nurseries); the other to assess the Permanent Sample Plots (PSPs) throughout the country and to start looking at growth models for the main species – PCH and *E. grandis*. Interestingly, both these studies are with staff from Makerere University's Faculty of Forestry, who have shown encouraging signs that they are prepared to embrace change .

For the long-term, however, we really need to look closely at the existing research and training organisations to see whether there is a will to change and adapt to the increasingly commercial environment. There is a clear gulf between what these organizations are doing and what the commercial tree growers need from them. The SPGS's basic training and research projects have at least increased awareness with regard to commercial tree planting but much more is needed in the long-term. Surely it would be better for the SPGS to now start building capacity within capable organizations in Uganda, which would then be able to carry on supporting the sector long after the project has ended.

This is our vision: to leave behind highly professional research and training capabilities to support the world-class, commercial forestry industry that we know Uganda is capable of developing. To achieve this requires commitment from the right circles: private growers (or the SPGS) will not pump money into an organization just for the sake of an organization (or its history) but they will look to develop the required skills and encourage 'demand-driven, results orientated' research and training where appropriate.

cont'd on pg 13

COMFORT

Discussions with the Chairman of UTGA, Jossy Byamah, and the SPGS lead to the formation of the Commercial Forestry Research & Training Steering Group at the beginning of 2008. COMFORT comprises SPGS, UTGA, NFA, MUK, NaFORRI, UGT (Uganda Gatsby Trust) and NFC (Nyabeyaya Forestry College). The group has met regularly and an encouraging start has been made. The first outcome was generally agreeing on priorities (NB. not in any particular order):

1. **An Applied Tree Improvement Programme** – to include:
 - New species trials.
 - Clonal forestry (eucs & pines).
 - Tree selection and breeding.
 - Pests & diseases.
2. **Silvicultural Trials** (e.g. weeding, spacing and fertilizer trials).
3. **Utilisation & Market Research** (esp. wood properties and markets for thinnings).
4. **Training:** practical training for modern plantation silviculture.

The next COMFORT meeting is planned for NFC (Masindi) on 17-18 July.



A good example of a highly visible weeding trial by SAPPI at Kwambonambi, RSA. The plot in the foreground was not weeded; behind was fully weeded: clear proof for cynics about the importance of thoroughly weeding eucalypts.



KENYAN FARMERS ADOPT CLONES BIG-TIME

By Celia Nalwadda, Zainabu Kakungulu & Paul Jacovelli

Thanks to our collaboration with Uganda Gatsby Trust (UGT), we thought we had done well with almost 45,000 eucalypt clones being planted by SPGS growers in the season just past. This self-congratulation rather faded into insignificance, however, when we heard that over our Eastern border, Kenyan growers had planted some six million clonal eucalypts over the last 6 years or so.

And so in mid-June 2008, three of us from the SPGS headed to Nairobi to learn how this technology was embraced so much faster than in Uganda. We visited the Tree Biotechnology Project (TBP) which has clearly been very successful in commercialising and promoting the planting of eucalypt clones throughout Kenya.

Our host, Benson Kanyi, Manager of TBP, explained that the TBP started in 1997 as a collaboration between Mondi South Africa, Kenya Gatsby Trust (KGT) – an offshoot of the Gatsby Foundation (a UK charity) – ISAAA (International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications) and the Kenyan Forest Research Institute (KEFRI). Mondi supplied the clones as well as technical advice and support, whilst Gatsby provided funding for the trials and the establishment of the clonal nursery. Interestingly, the TBP's start-up was prompted by the devastating cypress aphid pest that wiped out many of the country's *Cupressus lusitanica* plantations.

From the early trials with selected Mondi clones - GU, GC, pure *E. grandis* - the GCs generally proved most suited to much of Kenya's site and climatic conditions. Improved *E. grandis* and *E. urophylla* seed was also imported from Mondi SA. The target of the TBP has always been small growers, whose main objective is the production of fuelwood and poles rather than sawlogs. Kenyan growers are increasingly planning to grow their eucalypts for transmission poles too, with a major supply-demand deficit (does that sound familiar?).

We visited TBP's nursery on the outskirts of Nairobi and whilst Paul spent time with Benson and David Hopkins (a Trustee of TBP). Two of us (Celia and Zainabu) were lucky enough to join in with a nursery entrepreneurs' training course. We also visited three private growers to see the trees' performance for ourselves. Our main observations are summarized below.

Nursery: TBP's production capacity is around 6 million – 60 % clones; 40% seedlings. 12 clones are in production, with 7 new ones on trial: the seedlings are mostly *E. grandis* though they also raise *E. urophylla* and *E. dunnii*. TBP have successfully commercialized their nursery – whereas in Uganda the process has been painfully slow

(the Kifu nursery did not seriously produce cuttings until this year when UGT took over the reigns from NaFORRI). The clonal nursery has 4 main sections: the mother garden; the cuttings shed; the rooting area (under shade and irrigation) and finally the hardening-off area.

Outreach programme: entrepreneurs are identified and undergo a 2-week (partially subsidized) training course at TBP. The training includes practical clonal and seedling nursery management as well as small business skills. The trainees leave with a 'starter-kit' of some eucalypt clones and seed to start their own nurseries in the village. Loans can be accessed from a micro-financing arm of Gatsby (Kilimo) at interest rates well below commercial bank rates.

Communication: TBP adopted an aggressive marketing strategy to promote their clones and after that, word of mouth has been very important. They have not produced much in the way of guidelines for growers (everybody was very complimentary about the SPGS/UGT's guideline on clones for Uganda), which is one area where we are ahead of them. The TBP have also had to defend their promotion of eucalypts in terms of the plants' perceived environmental threats and thus they were pleased to see our *Eucalypts & the Environment* guideline too.

Field: as you can see from the photos, the performance of the clones (we saw only GCs) was very impressive and this is from generally drier conditions than in many areas of Uganda. The pure *E. urophylla* we saw, however, had poor form - certainly no good for sawlogs. One problem we did foresee was the need for thinning (and possibly wider spacing at planting) for those targeting the large pole market: we can certainly advise them here.

The main area of concern we saw was their lack of advice and support to growers. TBP say that this is really beyond their brief and thus rely on the Kenya Forest Service (KFS). In meetings with the TBP and KFS, the need for better extension work was stressed. They were also very interested to hear about our growers' association – UTGA - and requested more information on it (a Gum Growers' Group - 3G - was recently formed in western Kenya). We all came away convinced that such exchange visits are essential for us to gain from each others' experiences.

Many thanks to our excellent hosts at TBP – especially Benson Kanyi, David Hopkins, Ms Rose Makena, Ms Fiona Mwaniki & Mr Muraya Minjire – and also Scott Geller (TA, KFS).

PHOTO GALLERY I - KENYA TREE BIOTECHNOLOGY PROJECT

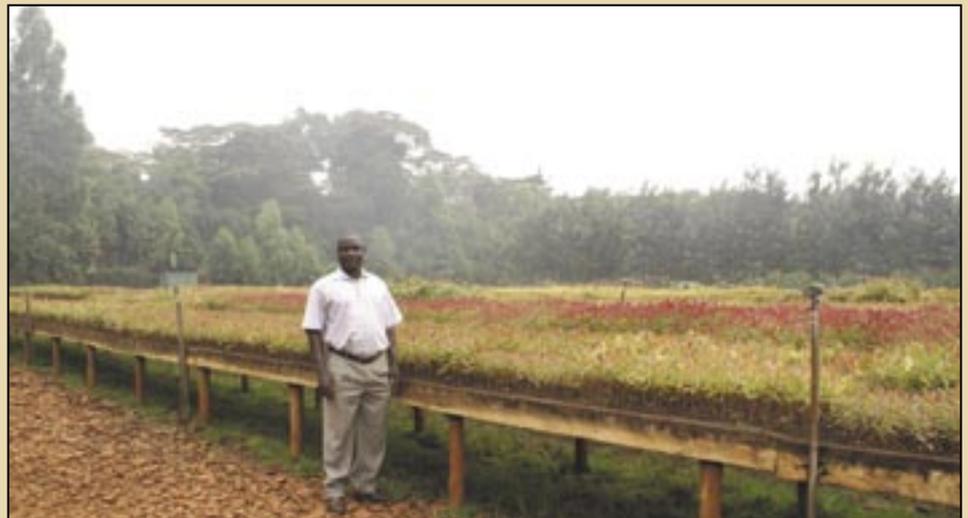


Part of the TBP's clonal mother garden at their nursery near Nairobi. These GC hybrids will produce cuttings every 2 weeks for up to 6 years.

👉 Impressive growth from a GC clone in Kenya - just 2 years old.



Benson Kanyi, Manager of the TBP in Kenya.



Abubaker Mwima (Ug Gatsby Trust) posing by TBP's outgrowing area. These plants are now ready for planting out.



This picture illustrates well the contrast between pure *E. urophylla* seedlings (left of road) and GC hybrids (rt). Both are 2 years on a private farm ca 40 kms outside Nairobi.



The TBP have honoured the memory of the late Errol Duncan (ex-Mondi BP, RSA) by naming their visitor centre after him. Errol was the main driver behind the clonal developments that we are now all beginning to benefit from. A rather nice gesture by the TBP in Kenya.

PHOTO GALLERY II



☛ Solveig Verheyleweghen of Norwegian Embassy was suitably impressed with Ferdsult Engineering's efforts at Lugazi, Mukono. This planting was 12 month old PCH ex-FPQ (Australia) seed orchard seed.



Mak Matic Acoyo Women's Group in Gulu (June 2008) are being supported by the SPGS and are clearly doing a good job.



Showing the Norwegians the potential of forestry in Uganda! Jan-Erik Studsrod (NORAD) and Solveig Verheyleweghen (Norwegian Embassy, Kampala) were with SPGS's Paul & Celia, getting a feel for the SPGS's business in May 2008. This 38 year old Araucaria stand is in Kifu CFR, Mukono – one of the very few early trials to escape being harvested.



JC Forestry Enterprises – one of our best clients in the North of Uganda (Opok CFR, Gulu) – has established 57 ha to date, mostly PCH but also some Hoop pine and teak.

PHOTO GALLERY III



➤ Identifying the transition between wetland zone and where planting should start is an important part of FSC: clearly here the pines were planted too close. The new SPGS guidelines will incorporate such improved environmental (and social) standards.

☞ Cori Ham (from Forestry Solutions SA) teaching us how to identify wetland soils during the 4-day FSC training course organized by the SPGS in early June 2008: meanwhile Bric was doing the hard work!



Zainabu (SPGS) and Alfred Jakweyo (Nileply Supervisor) admiring their 15-month old PCH planting at Ngereka CFR, Jinja, during an inspection in June 2008.



Brazilian PCH seed germinating well at Busoga Forestry Co.'s nursery in Bukaleba CFR, Mayuge. BFC have just had all their 500 ha SPGS contract approved (at least for the 1st SPGS payment).

PHOTO GALLERY IV-Clients Meet at NFC



The SPGS Clients being welcomed by New Forest Co. at their Namwasa plantation, Mubende. NFC has planted over 3,000ha in just 2 years (500ha under SPGS).



The interest in these Clients' meetings just keeps growing. Hope you like our new SPGS banner too – so at least we can be more visible now.

Thaddeus sharing his knowledge about thinning with one of the group of Clients at NFC.



All Roads Lead to New Forests Company In Mubende

By Zainabu Kakungulu (SPGS Plantation Officer)

At least they did on the 25th June anyway. The SPGS clients meetings are the most eventful days on the calendars of SPGS clients, staff and other partners in the commercial forestry industry. This time round, it was an extraordinary one with a great mix of current and potential future SPGS clients – some 75 in total. By mid-morning we were at New Forests Company (NFC) who are planting at Namwasa CFR in Mubende. NFC is the largest commercial forestry company in Uganda with over 10,000ha of land and 3,000ha of eucalypts and pines already planted. Many had not seen such extensive planting before and couldn't actually believe that this was happening here in Uganda.

In the field, the SPGS Plantation Officers stressed to the clients about the importance of good weed control with emphasis on young eucalypt plantations. Most important to note was that weeding is an essential activity for plantation establishment and that eucalypts are more susceptible to weeds than other species such as pine. There was a discussion about environmentally responsible commercial forestry. Emphasis here was on conservation of ecologically sensitive areas such as wetlands, rivers and streams and preservation of intact natural forests. Good road planning and construction was also discussed as one of the ways of reducing impacts of soil erosion.

After a whole morning of both physical and mental energy expenditure, it was time to lay into the sandwiches and pies, proving that forestry work demands great physical energy hence every forest worker should have sufficient food supplies. It was a great lunch I believe, because the afternoon session was even livelier.

In the afternoon, the discussion mainly dwelt on thinning plantations for sawlogs. We learnt that any plantation grown for sawlogs MUST be thinned on time regardless of whether there is market for thinnings or not. This helps to reduce competition and concentrates the volume on fewer trees, hence producing larger sawlogs. There were also discussions on nurseries and basics of raising seedlings. Participants were able to appreciate the costs and expertise involved in having tree nurseries which provides a good platform for decision making on whether or not to operate own nursery. As a matter of fact, own nurseries can only be cost effective when operating on large scale; above 100 ha per season.

NFC made a presentation about their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and community relations. It was noted that NFC has played a big role in improving the welfare of the neighbouring communities and building good relations. Examples include building schools, construction of shallow wells and giving seedlings to local communities. This was a challenge and lesson for all growers that it is every one's responsibility to engage neighbouring communities to create good working relations and to live in harmony.



After the long day at NFC, the Nobel peace prize winner and former US Vice President, Al Gore, had a message to convey to the clients through his video: "AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH". The award winning documentary on global warming and climate change is very inspiring and motivational.

The following day we held the more formal meeting at ENRO Hotel in Mityana. Judging from the level of interest and comments, it was an excellent session, with sufficient time for people to ask lots of questions (NB. these are summarised on pages 17 of this newsletter). To be sure my observations were unbiased, I sought the views of some participants and this is what they had to say about the meeting:

Prossy Tumushabe (planter in Mubende): "Very educative. There's always something new to learn every other time. It was interesting to learn that even large scale growers share the same challenges with small scale growers".

Prof. Mondo Kagonyera (CEO NSSF, Vice Chancellor MUK and planter in Kabale): "Fantastic! An eye opener of what can be achieved in a short time."

Sekyewa Mohammad (planter in Masaka). "I can only miss an SPGS clients meeting if I must. Otherwise I am always looking forward to attending because it's always an opportunity for me to compare notes".

If you weren't able to attend the meeting, there's always a next time. We'll keep you updated in our newsletters so just make sure you always get your copy.

From pg. 7

Forest Research

The SPGS is sponsoring a trip to Pietermaritzburg, South Africa in late July 2008, where the objective is to develop professional links with key organizations there. The small group (which comprises of 2 UTGA Committee members, 2 SPGS staff and a researcher from Makerere University) will focus on two aspects – research and the growers' organization. Forestry South Africa has kindly organized a busy week's programme, which we believe will be a great way to start clawing our way back to international recognition. The outcome will be featured in our next newsletter.

Any comments on this article are welcomed: the more debate the better. Emails to paulj@sawlog.ug



Trees, Climate Change & Carbon Finance



This very visual display was snapped at Bali in Dec. 2007 convention by UCB.

The Uganda Carbon Bureau has been operating for the past two years explaining the opportunities that exist for Ugandan businesses (especially forestry ones) in the international carbon credit offset market. We are now helping to create a Uganda carbon market - where carbon credits are bought and sold.

First the basics - A carbon credit is a tradable amount of a greenhouse gas (of which the UN recognises six - notably carbon dioxide and methane) that is either not emitted into the atmosphere, or is removed and stored. For example, 1 tonne of carbon dioxide stored in an approved tree plantation is equivalent to one carbon credit. Companies that produce emissions of greenhouse gases can buy carbon credits

of carbon finance - but this is quite modest compared to the income that trees themselves produce as sawlogs. There are a number of strict requirements that must be followed before a new plantation is an eligible source of carbon credits. Most importantly it must be proved that without carbon finance the trees would not have been planted anyway. In other words, 'business as usual' would have been no trees planted, and the provision of carbon finance must be the critical factor in making the planting go ahead. This is called the 'additionality test'.

Some of the other requirements that need to be followed include:

- careful record keeping of date, quantity and species planted;
- regular monitoring to prove that the trees are still present;

generated by projects in Uganda to balance out their impact on the global atmosphere.

Trees provide 'temporary' credits, as ultimately they die and most of their carbon is eventually released into the atmosphere. By maintaining a stand of trees over time a forest will store a measurable stock of carbon as old trees die and new ones grow up.

We are working on a number of different forestry and energy projects in Uganda that will produce carbon credits either by reducing emissions or by storing carbon in trees. Besides tree planting, the protection of existing threatened trees and 'green charcoal' are other carbon credit generating projects.

New tree planting

New tree planting can generate a useful stream

- long-term contracts between the growers and the credit issuing body;
- proof that the land was not deforested to make way for carbon credit tree planting.

Conservation and Restoration

At the Bali climate change conference in 2007, international support was given for the generation of carbon credits by protecting existing (but threatened) trees. This is a really significant development for tropical trees. If areas of forest are cut down for firewood and charcoal, the carbon dioxide stored in them is immediately released into the atmosphere, contributing to the process of global warming. The main release of greenhouse gases in Uganda doesn't come from vehicles or factories, but from the high rate of deforestation that the country is experiencing.

So, existing trees can now be protected using the finance received from carbon credit sales. Things are not quite as simple as they sound, but the Uganda Carbon Bureau is well connected with the key international groups who are dedicated to bringing these "Reduced Emissions from Deforestation & Degradation - REDD" credits to market. As with other carbon credit earning activities, a rigorous set of conditions must be met including:

- identification of the threats to the forested area;
- information on the land cover of the area for at least the previous 5 years;
- the area within the project boundary needs to have been classified as forest for at least the last 15 years;
- measures must be taken to prevent other trees from being cut in place of those being protected.



Cont'd pg. 18

The future Billionaires' club starts with you!



Hon. Sheila Kawamara Mishambi is a former E. African Legislator. As well as growing trees in Kasana-Kasambya Forest Reserve in Mubende, she is UTGA's Secretary. The SPGS's roving reporter, Charles Odeke, recently interviewed Sheila to find out what makes her tick.

Q. In which district were you born?

A. I was born in Kabarole District in Western Uganda.

What were your childhood ambitions?

I wanted to become a prominent writer and politician and travel the world as widely as possible.

What is your academic profession?

I am a teacher, journalist, and a political scientist, with a Masters degree in Development Studies, specialising in Alternative Development Strategies. I have a Bachelors degree in Education and a Diploma in Journalism.

Apart from politics and tree planting what other business interests do you have or practice?

I'm in cattle keeping and rearing, I do retail trade owning a supermarket and I also deal in real estate development.

Now, tell us what inspired you into commercial tree planting?

Tree planting was never anywhere near my dreams. Growing of trees was one of my late husband - Col. Jack Mishambi's - dreams. He interested me into tree planting and having got thoroughly hooked, I will keep his dream alive, partly as a memorial obligation, but largely because I now understand the value and benefits of tree planting. I have developed a love for trees but I also appreciate the challenges of tree planting. Tree planting is much like childbirth and child rearing, the love for the two 'callings' is so similar that as a mother I'm just hooked!

What challenges do you face in undertaking commercial forestry business?

Talk about tree planting in tropical Uganda and any practitioner will tell you his or her personal horror stories

of the weed menace. With the good rains in Uganda, the favourable deep soils and the fantastic growth rates our trees enjoy, the weeds too take their share. Since our business is not weed growing, a lot of money is spent on weed control. We also lack a pool of people with tree planting expertise to depend on. Many of our people learn on the job and this is very costly and often very risky especially when they are not skilled in what they are doing.

Also tree planting is not a very sexy business to the financiers in Uganda. As a result our investment in tree planting has to compete with so many other personal financial demands and this often impacts negatively on the pace of

commercial forestry expansion. I would sincerely appreciate if only the banks and other moneyed people could see that commercial tree planters are big time billionaires in the making and help them to grow their business. There is no doubt that there is money in tree planting. If in doubt, check this out in Brazil, South Africa, or even Australia, where commercial forestry is big business. I will definitely be a multi billionaire soon, harvesting over 1,300 acres of planted forest.



Sheila explaining to the FSC consultants in 2007 about her plantation development in Kasana-Kasambya CFR, Mubende.

Where do you see commercial forestry in 15 or so years to come in Uganda?

Commercial forestry is going to beef up Uganda's economy, making the country the richest in the region. With the anticipated 370,000 acres due to be planted, Uganda will be reaping billions of dollars. There are a lot of benefits the country will enjoy: commercial forestry is a job creator, right from the seedbeds to the value adding forestry industries. We shall have tackled the unemployment problem if the forestry sector can be given the support and attention it deserves. We have what it takes to be wealthier than the oil Sheikhs in Saudi Arabia if we can clearly put our country's priorities right.

You are also an active member of UTGA, what role will UTGA play to improve on commercial forestry activities in Uganda?

Cont'd pg. 19



Mike Nsereko.

FIRST THOUGHTS & IDEAS

By Mike Nsereko (Projects Manager , UTGA)

in Namwasa forest (New Forests Co.) and ENRO Hotel in Mityana.

These field trips and the reading I have done and continue to do from SPGS and UTGA literature have literally opened my eyes to the serious potential that the plantation forestry industry heralds for this country. Did you know for instance, that Uganda is facing a looming scarcity of timber resulting from irresponsible exploitation of natural forests without replacement and that this disaster can only be mitigated by engaging in plantation forestry? Surprised as I am, aren't you?

Before I started working for UTGA, my first thoughts were that this was a small organization with no established structures just struggling to start. Imagine my surprise when I came to learn that;

- ❖ UTGA is fully registered and has a constitution.
- ❖ UTGA already has a considerable number of registered members all of whom are big personalities and companies in this country.
- ❖ UTGA is already a member of the Presidential Investors' Round table.

- ❖ UTGA has met H.E the President to discuss a way forward in regard to promotion of plantation forestry and the process is on for another meeting with the President.
- ❖ UTGA has met the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources.
- ❖ UTGA has and continues to engage the Minister of Water and Environment to solicit her support for plantation forestry.
- ❖ UTGA has met the ED and the Board of NFA in regard to promotion of plantation forestry.

I could go on and on but because of space. Bearing in mind the above milestones achieved to date by UTGA, I urge every tree planter in this country to join UTGA as a registered member so as to take the industry to a higher level with one voice. To register, call the no. 0772 979 824 or come to SPGS offices.

I will conclude by expressing my profound appreciation to the SPGS staff for the support and guidance they have accorded me since I joined UTGA and also to members of the UTGA Executive, particularly Hon. Sheila Kawamara and Mr. Robert Bariho. Thank you all.

Email: miken@sawlog.ug

When I first reported to start my new job as a Project Manager of Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA) in June, 2008, I was amazed by the enthusiasm and the exceedingly positive attitude that I was received with by both the SPGS staff and the UTGA Executive. In my first few weeks I have been introduced to FSC certification, been to visit some commercial growers and attended the SPGS Client's meeting

FSC UPDATE

by Thaddeus Businge, SPGS

As part of the SPGS commitment to improve forestry standards in Uganda, we are pursuing the path towards forest certification. We have now embarked on a 'pilot' group certification scheme under the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) – the most respected of the international certification bodies. For starters, a group of five planters have been selected based on set criteria (one of which was the availability and status of uncleared land). The areas to be planted under FSC have now been mapped out after securing the consent and commitment of the planters. These planters and their managers will go through rigorous training in this rather sensitive topic.

As part of the training, the SPGS brought in an experienced and accredited FSC trainer from *Forestry Solutions South Africa* by the name Cori Ham, who ran a

forest certification course from the 2nd to 5th June 2008. The purpose was for the trainer to give us a broad picture of Forest Certification and the FSC. This intensive course which targeted and indeed attracted the entire SPGS technical and administrative staff, the selected members of the group certification scheme, commercial tree planters and other forestry stakeholders - NFA, FSSD, NEMA, UWA, Makerere University, Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development and the Donor community among others.

The course had a wide scope covering topics of environmental awareness, forest certification and certification schemes, forestry standards and checklists, FSC Principles and Criteria, the auditing process and wetland delineation among others. The classroom presentations and discussions combined with relevant video shows gave the course participants a good insight into FSC. The course was crowned with a field practical of wetland delineation and a mock audit.

Cont'd pg. 19

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Over the last few months we have received a number of questions about the project and about tree planting in Uganda in general. These come from many sources - by email, from visitors to our offices, in public meetings and especially at our regular Clients' meetings. As you know, we at the SPGS like to deal with such things right away so here are some of the responses to what we feel are the most important questions.

1. Is the SPGS going to continue?

We certainly hope so and the signs are very promising with the EU and the Norwegian Government currently discussing a jointly funded initiative with the GoU from 2009. The details of this next phase are not yet finalized but will build on the lessons learned during the current phase.

2. Why does the SPGS not support all private growers who have planted?

SPGS 'clients' must have contracts prior to planting so that the rules are clear and also the project has limited resources (NB. refer the Editorial on Page 3).

3. Why can't the SPGS assist planters by paying up-front?

The project's rules are set by its Steering Committee (inc. donors and GoU) and rules are clear: i.e. no payments up-front and no payments for what was planted prior to joining the project either.

4. Why does the SPGS not have more clients in Kabarole?

The project has tried (unsuccessfully) to recruit planters in this Western region, which has high potential for commercial forestry. The project will visit such areas and promote the business better in the build up to new phase. Current clients are urged to spread the word too.

5. Are there alternatives to Glyphosate, which is now getting expensive?

The alternatives are even more expensive and not widely available here yet. The SPGS is looking into this.

6. What compartment size is recommended?

Maximum 25 hectares.

7. Is the pruning and/or thinning grant applicable for non-SPGS planters?

Yes. Those interested must write to SPGS and the areas will be pre-inspected to ensure their readiness (NB. Refer SPGS Plantation Guidelines Nos. 16 & 17). NB. the grant is available only from October 2008 and a ceiling of 100 ha for any one grower will apply to ensure the funds are spread around.

8. Why does the SPGS not advertise more?

Although the project does periodically place adverts in the press, the best way is by word of mouth and by

people seeing the quality plantations now springing up around the country.

9. Why does the SPGS not promote indigenous trees more?

The project does promote Musizi (*Maesopsis eminii*), the local species most suited to plantations but otherwise, our focus must remain with fast-growing exotics for clear business reasons.

10. How can we get help with pests and diseases?

The SPGS has recently (June 2008) commissioned a study by Dr Philip Nyeko (see pages 6-7) to look at the current problem and will ensure that growers have support under next phase of the project. The project is currently drafting a new Guideline on the subject too.

11. What can be done to find a market for our 1st thinnings from pines?

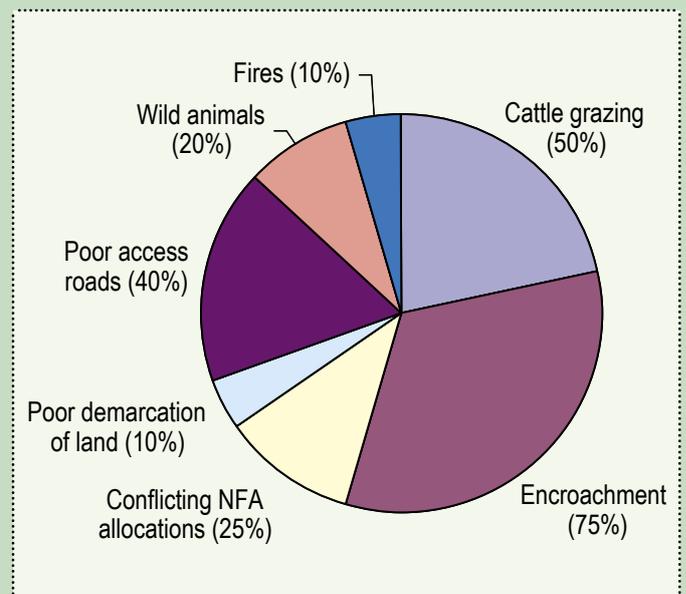
It is suggested that growers (through UTGA?) seriously start exploring potential markets. Note, though that whether there are markets or not for the thinned material, thinning is a critical operation for growers of sawlogs and large poles and must be carried out on time to ensure maximum growth of the remaining trees.

12. Will Cristiano Ronaldo stay at Man. Utd?

Of course - why would anyone move from the greatest club in the world?¹

Send your questions to us at info@sawlog.ug

¹Note that Paul (CTA) who answered this question has red-tinted glasses.



The chart summarises feedback from a questionnaire completed at the June 2008 Clients' Meeting at Mityana: these were the issues negatively affecting those planting in the NFA's Central Forest Reserves.

From pg 14

Trees, Climate Change & Carbon Finance

Uganda Carbon Bureau and SPGS

The Uganda Carbon Bureau is teaming up with the SPGS to explore ways for SPGS tree growers to earn carbon credits from the additional trees that they will be growing once the initial support from the SPGS is over. Growers with existing areas of natural forest will also be candidates to access carbon credits if they elect to protect these areas from deforestation. We will let all SPGS members know about these arrangements as soon as they are finalised.

In June 2008 the Bureau attended the Carbon & Communities in Tropical Forests meeting at the University of Edinburgh. Delegates learnt about the latest developments in forestry carbon credits, and the different ways of enhancing their value by measuring associated co-benefits of improved biodiversity and community support. There are several international accreditation standards that can be used to do this, and the Bureau is planning to work with the NFA and Makerere University to make these more accessible to Ugandan tree growers.

So, the good news is that existing forested areas and new plantings can both be sources of carbon finance, and the SPGS is working on this for the benefit of its members. It won't make you a fortune, but any cash during the long wait to maturity is always welcome.

Contact the Uganda
Carbon Bureau -

billfarmer@ugandacarbon.org

- www.ugandacarbon.org

THE REAL VETERANS



This Budongo Mahogany must be old but apparently is not the oldest tree in the world!

This time we have scoured the literature to find the oldest trees in the world. There are some ancient oaks (*Quercus* spp.) in England and Sweden that are around 1,000 years old and Germany claim an oak of 1300 years. Italy have some larches (*Larix europa*) in the Tirol reputed to be 2000 years old – on a par with the oldest remaining cedars (*Cryptomeria japonica*) and camphor (*Cinnamomum camphora*) trees in Japan. Little wonder that the Japanese revere such magnificent specimens.

Then there are some even older junipers (*Juniperus occidentalis*) growing in an inhospitable climate 3000 metres above sea level in Yosemite National Park in California's Sierra mountains. A relative (*Juniperus excelsa*) is also found in the limestone Taurus mountains in SW Turkey: these junipers are thought to exceed 2000 years old.

In fact for many years people believed that the biggest trees in the world – the giant Californian sequoias (redwoods) – were also the oldest, with some reaching 3000 years old. Until that is a scientist visited the White Mountains of California in the late 1950's and stunned the world with his discovery. Using a Swedish core sampler that takes a very small borer sample through the stem, Dr. Schulman of the University of Arizona found 17 gnarled bristlecone pine trees over 4000 years old and one of 4600 years. These appropriately named *Pinus longaeva* are barely alive, clinging to the rocks at 3500 m above sea level. Whilst they might not look as majestic as many trees, these bristlecone pines take the honour of the oldest living trees.

Next time we look at trees around the world with special cultural significance – don't miss it.

RECOMMENDED READING



In this new section we will choose just a few recent publications that are of particular relevance to those associated with forestry in the region. First off is a 2006 publication – *Growing Plantation Forests* – by Phil West. West is a Forestry Professor at Southern Cross University, NSW, Australia. The book is written for a wide ranging audience from forestry professionals through to small plantation growers and is an excellent introduction to the science and practice of growing plantations. A quotation from the book's introduction is particularly interesting:

"The smaller plantation grower faces special problems in establishing a successful plantation. It is not particularly difficult to plant trees on what appears to be a suitable piece of land and hope that they will eventually produce an attractive forest. Often they will. However, if the objective is to grow them rapidly, to yield a valuable wood product in a sufficiently short time to gain a worthwhile financial return, the advanced silvicultural practices discussed in this book will have to be used. To be commercially successful the small grower will often need to obtain outside, expert advice".

The author must have been reading our SPGS's Plantation Guidelines! A copy of this book is in our SPGS library but if there is enough interest we will import a number of them in the near future and sell them at cost price to you: all part of our service. We would also like to draw your attention to the following important publications received recently too:

- *Forestry-Based Carbon Sequestration Projects in Africa: Potential Benefits & Challenges* by R. Jindal et al, 2008. Natural Resources Forum 32 pp.116-130.
- *The Biodiversity of the Albertine Rift* by A. Plumptre et al, 2007. Biological Conservation 134 pp. 178-194.
- *The International Forestry Review* Vol. 9 (4), Dec. 2007. This includes an article by Makerere's Assoc. Prof. Gombya-Ssembajwe - *Monetary Losses Due to Illegal Pitsawing in Budongo Forest.*
- *South African Forestry* (Mar/Apr 2008) - includes features on fires, research, harvesting and pests.

NB. Please send us details of any publications that we may have missed for inclusion in this section – Ed.

From pg 15

The future Billionaires' club ...



UTGA continuously engages its members in learning more about forestry development. We share experiences amongst ourselves, with independent timber growers and other stakeholders. We want to create a conducive environment for the development of private commercial forestry in Uganda and raise public awareness about the forestry industry. We are also lobbying for affordable financial services, tax exemption, and accessing inputs for private commercial plantation establishments.

What message do you have for fellow ladies and politicians out there who have not yet started planting?

For people that have not yet seen the opportunity in tree planting, now that they can see tree plantations mushrooming up all over the country, there is no way they can miss being future members of the Billionaires' Club. We all need the money that is genuinely ours in order to live comfortable lives. Commercial forestry is one of those avenues that will lead us to "Prosperity for all".

As one of the representative of tree growers in Uganda, what message do you have for SPGS funders regarding its future beyond the current phase?

We should work jointly with SPGS to raise more funds for the development of commercial forestry in Uganda. SPGS has definitely done a marvellous job in giving financial and technical support to growers and I'm sure they would not want to lose those gains. Expand SPGS clientele and the Billionaires' Club will grow bigger.

Any other information you would like to put across?

I'm trying very hard to interest my children - Pearl, Rachael, Rodney and Jotham - to get into tree planting so that they can carry the legacy forward. Then the dynasty of the billionaires will never be lost.

From pg. 16

FSC UPDATE - Cont'd

By the end of the course, participants had a pretty good appreciation of forest certification, how it works, its benefits and how to achieve it. After the course, I can safely say now that I can see why certification makes good sense not just from a business sense, but for the environment and the workers welfare too. But it will require commitment from the growers and SPGS to succeed.

Many thanks to Cori for an excellent course, the SPGS administration for organizing and all the attendees for their active participation. I hope all that we learnt can be put into practice over the coming months.



Now that is what we call respect for trees: this café was spotted by Paul Jacovelli on an Italian safari in 2005.

TRAINING UPDATE

By the time you receive this issue, our very popular *Plantation Planning & Establishment* training course should be underway in Kyenjojo in the deep West. If you missed out don't worry it will be repeated later in the year. We will also probably run another *Plantation Maintenance* course too - depending on interest. Remember these very practical courses are aimed at field manager/supervisor level. A good understanding of English is essential and it strongly advised only to send only those who will benefit from such training and will pass on their knowledge to those working with them. Our rules are that tuition, handouts and all transport for the field work is free: trainees must pay for transport to and from the venue and for accommodation and (some) meals whilst there. For the 4-day courses it works out about UGX150,000 per trainee. Contact Josephine (SPGS office) to express interest in forthcoming courses.

Contractor Training has been requested by some too. We are currently in discussion with UIA, Min. of Finance, UTGA and other organisations and hope to announce something soon. Watch this space.

www.sawlog.ug

Have you visited our re-vamped web-site recently? If not, why not? You can find all our Guidelines and past Newsletters (from our amateur efforts of 2005 no less!) in easily downloadable pdf files. You might even find a picture of your plantation there too but only if it reached our high standards of course.

COMPETITION TIME!

In conjunction with Commonwealth Forestry Association, the SPGS is proud to announce an exciting essay competition with some excellent prizes. The theme is:

"Discuss the impact of forests (both natural and man-made) on climate change"

The competition is open to all (except SPGS staff). The word limit is 1500 maximum and the deadline is **Friday 22nd August 2008**. Send your entries (preferably typed but clear hand writing is OK) to the SPGS - marked clearly '2008 Essay Competition' - delivered to our office or emailed to info@sawlog.ug. Judging will be by SPGS and a CFA Committee member. The authors of the best 3 essays will be invited to the Commercial Forestry Seminar in Sept. (see below). The best entry will receive a fantastic (high quality) digital camera: other prizes include plantation forestry books and annual membership of the Commonwealth Forestry Association. Get those fingers tapping those keys!

The SPGS Seminar: Bigger & Better for 2008

Following from the success of last year's seminar, we are planning for a bigger and better gathering in September 2008. Those present in 2007 will remember the inspiring presentations from Mike Edwards (ED of Forestry South Africa) and Timm Tennigkeit (the Carbon guru from Unique Forestry Consultants). In 2008 we are hoping to have some very eminent speakers from the world forestry scene - watch our web site, which will post the details once we have confirmation of the speakers. Because of the huge interest being generated in tree planting here, we have to restrict the numbers and the event is thus invite only. Planters are requested to apply through UTGA, who we will allocate a number of seats. Others interested should apply to Josephine at the SPGS office - or email info@sawlog.ug. You could always enter the essay competition too!

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **SPGS - 2009 & beyond:** details of the exciting next phase.
- **South African Safari:** highlights from SPGS and UTGA's July visit.
- **Certification:** the latest from the FSC pilot group.
- **Pests & Diseases:** a new full-page feature (in gory close-up - be warned!).
- **Climate Change:** how the SPGS will contribute towards saving the planet.

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