

SAWLOG PRODUCTION GRANT SCHEME



*News of Uganda's commercial tree planting fund for the private sector
July - August 2005*

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An important message for the SPGS's contracted clients:

Clearly many people in the private sector are becoming more serious about investing in commercial forestry in Uganda. As we go to press (mid-June 2005), 19 clients have received their first payment with five 'new' ones just inspected and passed for payment, namely: Ferdsult, Abel Rwendeire, Wakitaka Farm Ltd, Nileply and Deutsche Forst Consult. **This takes our SPGS total up to 1,490 ha. Keep up the tremendous effort!**

This leaves some 13 contracted clients who have not planted or whose planting has not reached our minimum standards. Additionally, a few of the 19 clients who started well have clearly stumbled somewhat and have not planted according to their SPGS contracts.

Our cover photo shows the impressive SAPPI's Ngodwana nursery in Mpululanga Province, South Africa, which produces 17 million plants per year. Read more about it from page 3 onwards.

Given the urgency of our joint task to establish good quality plantations in Uganda, we cannot afford to wait around for the slow or non-starters to decide if they are going to plant. There are many other potential SPGS clients waiting to sign up and who deserve a chance to benefit from the Scheme if they are more serious in their intentions.

Thus we will soon be re-allocating SPGS acreage. The non-performers have already been contacted individually and given until the end of June 2005 to respond. We will also be looking to offer those who have clearly performed well to date, additional acreage under the SPGS (up to the 500ha limit).



As the rains now tail off, we hope you have all been busy planting away and also ensuring the weeds don't out perform the trees! We have been busy too - escorting a

group of Ugandan foresters to South Africa and also preparing our budget proposals to the EC (not Electoral Commission but the European Community - our pay-masters), so that we can continue to fund your tree plantings from July 2005.

As we promised much of this issue focuses on South Africa. "Why such an interest in South Africa?" we hear some of you cry. Well here are some very good reasons:

- The Republic of South Africa (RSA) is a tree-poor country and has had to rely almost exclusively on the development of exotic forest plantations to meet its demand for wood.
- RSA now has 1.35 Million hectares of commercial tree plantations.
- Pinus and Eucalypts form 90% of these plantations.
- The forest plantation industry supplies a huge export market (mainly pulp, chips and timber) and also provides massive rural employment opportunities.
- They have developed world-class standards in terms of sustainable forest management with some 60% of their plantations approved by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

FIRE PROTECTION GUIDELINE

The latest NFA/SPGS Plantation Guidelines (No. 18) has just been completed, namely - Forest Fire Protection. The timing is not a coincidence, since we all should now be preparing for the forthcoming fire season to protect our plantations. It contains some useful, practical information - drawing heavily from Paul and Bric's experience in Southern Africa, where fires are a massive threat.

If you haven't received your copy please harass Allan or Josephine (see contact details on last page) and start preparing those firebreaks soon.

INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN FORESTRY

We told you about this important consultancy in the last Newsletter. Well we have started the ball rolling in June 2005 with Cornelius Kazooru laying the foundations for the two International Consultants, who are scheduled to arrive here on 11th July 2005. Cornelius will be contacting some of you directly to hear your views.

SPGS July Clients Meeting - Be there! We are also planning to invite all SPGS clients to a general meeting with the LTS team on **14th July 2005** at **Fairways Hotel** in Kampala. Allan will be sending invites shortly. It starts at 09.30 sharp: please be there.

In terms of private sector involvement in forestry in Uganda, this could well prove to be the most important consultancy the FRMCP has commissioned. Make sure your voice is heard as we are targeting those people who have the clout to change the rules. It is about time we put forestry on the Government's radar screen by seriously promoting plantation forestry and creating the right investment environment for such a long term venture.

PCH Seed Update

The NFA recently imported 50 kg of PCH seed from Australia, which has gone like proverbial hot cakes from the baker's shop! We have heard from some SPGS clients that they are short for their current sowing. We are working hard to try and source more (for NFA and SPGS) but it looks like it could take a while. We also are talking frequently to Australia and South Africa to try and relieve the problem in the future: we promise to keep you informed of developments.

Technology moves on.....don't get left behind!

For those of you linked to the great World Wide Web, we now have electronic versions of the SPGS Newsletters and most Plantation Guidelines available. They are compressed as .pdf files and you need Adobe Reader to access them (this software is widely available free on the internet). Send an email to Josephine if you would like to be placed on the regular SPGS e-mailing list.

South African Plantations Tour

On Sunday 8th May 2005, six intrepid Ugandan foresters (our SPGS Administrator, Allan, now has been granted honorary forester status!) boarded a South African Airways flight to Johannesburg. The team comprised:

- Allan Amumpe (SPGS Administrator)
- Brenda Mwebaze (SPGS Client in Bushenyi)
- Denis Mutaryebwa (NFA Sector Manager, Kyenjojo)
- David Mununuzi (NFA Zone Manager, Mbarara)
- Jossy Byamah (SPGS Client in Mayuge)
- James Kuyonza (NFA Zone Manager, Lendu)

The Tour Guide and Driver was Bric Milligan, FRMCP's Plantation Advisor, who was rather familiar with the region having worked in RSA for many years until coming to Uganda in October 2004. Part of the deal was that each person had to write down some of their observations and impressions so that others back home could benefit. Over the following eight pages, we hand over to the team.



Nurseries

Seedling nursery – Ngodwana (SAPPI):

Brenda: First stop was Ngodwana nursery, which belongs to one of the biggest players in the forestry industry in South Africa called SAPPI. It is amazing that whereas some of us cry to produce a mere 100,000 seedlings a year, this nursery produces 17 million per annum! It has a capacity of 24 million according to the Nursery Manager and covers an incredible 20ha in total.

No wonder, the technical gap between us is not all that easy to bridge, for example, unlike us, they don't use soil, instead they use pine bark, which is left to decompose within a period of nine months and is later crushed and mixed with fertilizers before sowing the pine seeds: this particular nursery is specifically for pines. Machines do most of the work and close to three quarters of the 57 staff are women. Watering is by overhead sprinklers and all the chemicals and fertilizers pass through a pipeline direct from a central chemical room.



David: Compacting medium into the cups and sowing of seed is done by machine using a vacuum suction process with bigger seeding nozzles for Pine and finer ones for Eucalypts. For fast germination, the seed is suspended in water in germination chambers for four days at an optimum temperature before it is sown.

When germination starts, the seed trays are moved on trolleys to outdoor sheds where watering continues using automatic booms. The sheds are made of plastic sheeting and nets to prevent unwanted water and hailstones damaging the plants. Seedlings are maintained in the nursery for up to four months before they are taken out for planting.

Denis: Before planting, a 1:2 (root:shoot) ratio is considered. Watering in nursery is once a day for older plants (2-4 months old); twice per day for 0-2 month-old seedlings.

Kwambonambi Clonal nursery (SAPPI):

Denis: Clones of *Eucalyptus*, *E. urophylla*, *E. tereticornis* and *E. nitens* are raised. These are species which have proved disease resistant and with high fibre content (fibre yield/ha).

James: The clone bank covers an area of 5 ha. Clones are very sensitive to weed and in order to control weeds, the ground is covered with black sack. The cuttings survival rate at the nursery is 54%. This also depends on genetic material and the rooting medium.



The guiding factor in development of the clones in the bank was the amount of pulp per ha – tons/ha. The development of clones is an expensive venture and it takes

at least 13 years from pollination. The cost of establishment of a clone bank (see photo right) is 300,000 Rand (= Ushs90,000,000).



Trays are steamed and treated with chemicals. The medium used is vermiculite which is put into the trays. Two kinds of trays are utilized - 128s and 98s - depending on the time the cutting is to stay in the tray. The 98 type is preferred when cuttings are to take long.



Shoots taken from the field give 4-5 cuttings, which are dipped in a rooting medium and put in trays then taken to the green house to develop roots: watering is by overhead sprinklers. After root development, they are taken to transplant beds where they are ready for planting out or sale.

The most important aspect to be observed is the timing of the activities and the market.

David: The clones are picked twice a month for up to 6 years before they are replaced. Harvesting starts 6-9 months after replacement. 5-6 million cutting per year are produced at the nursery.

Brenda: No wonder, the uniformity in the field may tempt you to think the trees are manufactured in a factory and placed in the forest. The challenge for this nursery is to balance the labour costs and the

rooting percentage. The nursery manager amazed us when he said even if the nursery was given to him as a gift, he would not accept to have sleepless nights.



Jossy: This nursery concentrates on the production of *Eucalyptus* seedlings particularly *Eucalyptus grandis* x *E. urophylla* (GU) which is the main species planted for pulp and paper (see photo above of fresh cuttings and the one below of a rooted cutting ready for planting).

The nursery is highly technical and needs well trained personnel and modern facilities to propagate the clones. These involve a high level of hygiene, growth hormones, fertilizers and of course greenhouse like conditions to promote root development under controlled growing conditions.



From my point of view, we need the development of the *Eucalyptus* clones particularly *Eucalyptus grandis* x *tereticornis* (GT). The trees from clones are wonderful to look at in terms of uniformity of stems and height. This is a challenge to our Scientists in Uganda.

Field Operations

Global Forest Products, Mpumalanga

David: GFP, another private company has 92,000ha of land holding of which 63,700ha is plantable and having 54,000 of Pine and 6,100 ha Eucalypts.

Species grown include *Pinus patula* (60%), *Pinus elliottii* (20%), *Pinus taeda* (15%) and gums (5%). Of the non-plantable area, 28,000ha is dedicated to conservation sites (grasslands and indigenous forests) while 1,900ha is wetlands and heritage sites.



David (cont.): Activities include the following:

- Tree breeding and improvement (including selection and breeding and Seed Orchard management).
- Manage (7-9 million) tree seed nursery.
- Intensive stand management (including weed control, pruning and thinning).
- Pre-plant weed control is chemical and done aerially. Post-plant weeding is done by ground spray-teams.
- Thinning starts at 12 years when stand density is reduced from 1,100 to 500, with every 7th row of trees removed completely (and selectively thinned in between).
- 2nd thinning is done at 18 years from 500 to 350. All thinnings are used for pulp.
- Pruning is done to 1½m+ at 4 years, 2½m at 7 years and 5-10m at 12 years.
- Yield regulation and measurement is through sample plot management.
- The company has 5,300km of plantation road network.
- Harvesting operations are contracted out and range from ground-based to high-lead cable systems. All contractors are trained.
- Company has 3 sawmills and 1 peeler (plywood) plant with high-tech milling, sorting, seasoning and packaging facilities, including a high speed planer.
- Sabie Sawmill has an intake of 1,200m³ of logs per day for 365 days a year.



Jossy: Of interest here is that except for nursery work and forest processing of trees to timber, chip, pulp and paper, the rest of the silvicultural practices are contracted to other people. These include, ground preparation, planting, weeding, pruning and thinning and in some case harvesting. Even fire fighting is done by contractors. This has many advantages as it involves the communities around the forest plantation who in turn identify themselves with the industry. Also the company has few workers to worry about. The company builds the capacity within the community which in turn values the plantations and protect them.

Herbicides are widely used to control the growth of weeds within plantations, especially before planting. Since planting in South Africa covers thousands of hectares at given time, spraying of herbicides is important to control weeds when the seedlings are establishing themselves as there will be no

competition from weeds.

As a rule no planting is done without first spraying the area with herbicides.

This is a practice that we should adopt in Uganda.

However, the cost of these herbicides is still high in Uganda so all participants in SPGS could order in bulk and it may be cheaper than buying individually.

Brenda: The head of tree breeding and nursery manager briefed us about all the operations right from tree breeding to packaging and export with each of the operations having a guiding principle, which I concluded could be the secret behind their success. For example; with tree breeding, case selections are based on yield, fibre quality, adaptability to drought and cold, pest and disease resistance.

Tree species selection is based on site quality parameters and market demand. For harvesting they use small-scale contractors and the philosophy here is that the right log gets to the right mill. Quality control training adds value to the company. The importance of a good road network and excellent maintenance of the plantations was clearly evident to us.

Sappi Bulwer

Brenda: At SAPPI's Bulwer office we were briefed on the importance of planning and mapping in forestry and how it helps in planning weeding and protection. It was so interesting to learn that in forestry, fires and harvesting make a considerable base for road network.

Denis: Mainly trees are grown for pulp and paper industry and to a lesser extent for timber. Safety is ensured during harvesting in the field i.e. workers wear uniforms, identification jackets, shoes and sign posts are installed to alert passers by.



Denis (cont.): Power saws, loaders and skidders are used. At the sawmill, grading of logs is done according to size (diameter). Bark is removed using debarkers and decomposed to make media (recycle nutrients).



Log positioning, sawing, seasoning, packing, grading, labeling and testing strength is done.

Safety of workers is paramount (wear helmets, heavy clothing). The Major goal is: to produce timber or pulp of high quality hence profit return.

James: We visited harvesting site where *Pinus elliottii* was being harvested using power saws for felling and skidding tree lengths to the landing sites. Trees were cut into logs which were graded for different products i.e. sawmill, pulpwood. Here *P.elliottii* was chosen for the site because it utilises shallow, marginal sites and it is disease, fire and frost resistant. The trees' height ranged between 25-30 m.

David: We learnt the importance of good planning. They have not only a weeding plan (preplanting and post planting) but also a planting plan, a burning plan and a harvesting plan. All these are fitted into a plantation management plan. Before all these are planned, an Environment Impact Assessment is done. All harvested areas are replanted within 6-8 months. **Timing for all forest operations in critical to establishment and management of the crop.** Contractors are used for most of the operations in the field but supervisors are trained personnel.

Fire Protection

Jossy: This is a highly sophisticated business with cameras mounted in various parts of the plantation and central control room controlled by computers. Thus instant reporting on any fire is done and the precise position and how to get there is communicated to the ground crew.

Dennis: 'Only plant what you can protect' is their motto, which is good advice. They have cameras which detect fires (the points of ignition) and communication equipment (to allow quick suppression). The fighting crew is notified if the fire danger index is high and all personnel and equipment is on standby i.e. Rainfall is measured, atmospheric pressure, wind direction, rain humidity, wind direction and temperatures.

A stretch of grassland is burnt early enough to act as fire break. The preparation of firebreaks is done before the onset of dry season. Neighbouring individuals and communities deliver their livelihood from forestry and hence help in fire protection. Any case of deliberate burning, authorities and stakeholders are informed. The main reasons for successful fire protection are:

- Effective equipment i.e. vehicles, water tank, beaters, spray pumps, spare parts and aeroplanes.
- Trained personnel.
- Good timing i.e. communication network (fire identification).
- Legislation on fire is clear and Government policy on burning is implemented.
- Good public relations.

Fire Fighting Competition

Brenda: We were lucky to attend the annual SAPPI fire-fighting competition at Shafton, organised to determine the preparedness of fire fighting teams as the main fire season sets in. Here different fire-fighting crews assemble their equipment and a controlled fire is set to determine which crew will put it out the



fastest using the recommended operations and getting prepared in case of another fire outbreak.

David: This particular event had five participating teams. The things examined included:

- Equipment and materials and working order.
- Safety measures taken by the fire crew.
- Availability of check list for all necessary equipment and materials.
- Actual techniques employed in putting out the fire.
- Time takes to refill the bowser after putting out a fire.
- Type of communication equipment held by the crew.

There were also stand-by aircraft to give support in case of more serious fires. The Bulwer SAPPI crew won this year's competition. Fire fighting is a coordinated exercise combining cameras, weather stations, aircraft and ground crews and all operations are centrally organized and executed.

Brenda: Seeing the way it is done, the equipment used and the protective gear of the fighting crew, I thought of how back home barefooted fellows break tree branches to run after the fire and it was funny when one gentleman heard us talk about it and said "you guys are not serious".

Project Grow

Brenda: We visited Project Grow - a SAPPI outgrower's scheme where SAPPI enters into agreement with private tree farmers (who grow the trees), with SAPPI providing a guaranteed market for the product. The minimum area required under this



scheme is 1000 trees (or 0.5 ha) and about 80% of the farmers in this scheme happen to be women.



The project started in 1983 as a social responsibility but its success seems to be partly attributed to SAPPI policy of interest free loans and free seedlings to the farmers.

A rotation of only five years is also very encouraging as heard from a successful and exciting story told by one Mrs. Nsweli (posing in the photo, right), who was busy constructing her new



home from the proceeds of her four hectares' harvest.

David: Success factors are: a market for the timber, interest free loans given to the farmers by SAPPI and qualified people giving extension services to the community. The farmers use private or communal land and sell the timber (for pulp) to SAPPI. The project now has 10,000 farmers with 15,000ha planted.

The benefits of Project Grow are many for the community, for example:

- Besides timber sold to SAPPI the remains are used by farmers for fencing, building and firewood for free.
- Skills are transferred and entrepreneurship thinking is developed in tree management.
- 84 farmers have started their own business outside forestry using the forestry incomes e.g. shops, taxis.
- They have purchased trucks for transporting timber.
- They are able to build houses and educate their children.
- Only 15% of the loan is recovered after every harvest until the loan is repaid.

N.B: The average output is 527 tonnes per ha at US\$42.5 per tonne. Private growers supply SAPPI 120,000m³ of timber per annum (20% of SAPPI's wood requirements).



Denis: We should suggest to government to establish a pulp and paper industry – could be 5 years to come. This would facilitate individuals/population to plant trees and harvest in 5 years hence reduce profits unlike timber which takes 25 years or more.

James: The project started in 1983 with three growers having 80 ha of planted *Eucalyptus* trees. The species being grown by the farmers is *E. grandis* x *urophylla* (GU) clones which are good for pulp production.



Research

Brenda: The next day we attended a field day organized by the Institute for Commercial Forestry Research (ICFR) in Kwambonambi. ICFR is a joint research effort funded by the key institutional players in the South African forestry industry. They mainly focus on improved - yet sustainable - productivity. We visited a 10-year *Eucalyptus* plantation where we looked at the effect of spacing and later a one-year *Eucalyptus* plantation to see how machine harvesting, residue compacting and removal can affect subsequent tree growth

David: Field presentations made included the following:

- Results of *E. grandis* *E. tereticornis* (GT) hybrid spacing trials on the Zululand sands – first on a dry site then on a wet site.
- Assessing soil quality and tree growth following harvesting operations in Zululand.
- Fertiliser recommendation for *Eucalyptus* in Zululand and forest engineering programme at the Institute for Commercial Forestry Research.

Observations from the findings/presentations included the following:-

- The effect of stand density on growth of all the clonal hybrids is not substantial at the rotation age at which the stands are normally harvested.
- Lower altitude sites will need to be weeded sooner or more frequently than high altitude sites.
- Rapid weed growth was observed on burnt sites.

Bric Milligan also gave a presentation on commercial forestry in Uganda.

Pests & Disease Control

Jossy: We also had an opportunity to visit the University of Pretoria where

under the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), research on many aspects of trees and agricultural crops diseases is undertaken. It was encouraging to note that there exists a collaboration between Pretoria University and the forestry industries in South Africa. Of equal importance was the fact that there is also collaboration between this University and our own Makerere University whereby Makerere University sent a student to study for Masters and PHD programme in Forestry Pathology. This lady, we were told is soon completing her studies this year and when she returns to Uganda she will be a big asset to the forestry industries in this country.



Denis:

- Trial plots are established in plantations i.e. a case of a disease attacking a certain species, its prevalence on the other species can be assessed.
- Any growth imperfection is identified and notified to relevant authorities.
- Depending on the disease or pests, a sample is taken for analysis (by companies or research institutions) and feedback provided.
- Treatment and control measures are identified and taken to field for pre-testing.
- Results are shared, disseminated to all parties involved in forestry.

- There is proper legislation on importation and exportation of seeds and/or any control so far tested to control quality and importation of a forestry hazard.

Brenda: Exotic trees are the basis of plantation forestry in South Africa but pests and diseases are a menace: hence the need for protection. Prior to the visit to FABI, we had seen in the field how the *Sirex* wasp is giving South Africa foresters sleepless nights by heavily affecting *Pinus patula*.

What we saw in FABI tempted me to make a comparison with our Ugandan research and monitoring especially when we think of the importance of tree protection programmes in the forestry industry. I can leave the comment to the reader.



- Train contractors and workers on plantation establishment techniques, fire fighting and harvesting.
- Networking with research institutions and share information on disease and pest control, quality assurance and genetic hybridization.
- Provide support (financial, technical) to private companies engaged in forestry (tree planting).

- Promote exchange visits (outside Uganda for information sharing).
- Communities/ individuals neighbouring plantations be supplied with free seedlings to plant. Private planting near plantation (NFA) protects government forests especially fires and illegal activities like grazing.

And some closing thoughts:

Brenda: As we flew back to Entebbe I was thinking of what I have brought back with me - especially from what we saw of nurseries, planting, silviculture, research, protection, monitoring, harvesting, processing, packaging and export. I drew a conclusion that regular research seminars and discussions can surely create a healthy and development environment. Good business is like forests: it takes time to realize its full potential whilst in perfect balance with nature.

David: It is possible to operate a large scale nursery at reduced costs using local materials like we saw in South Africa. In view of the fact that my nursery in Mbarara is being upgraded from 300,000 to 1,000,000 seedlings per season This would save the hundreds of tonnes of soil required to fill the polythene pots annually.

Denis:

- We should encourage use of herbicides as a means of weed control. This seems expensive but is less costly in the long run.

James:

- Timing of all activities is part and parcel of success in tree growing but this has to be in tandem with the funding.
- **Research is an integral part of plantation forestry development** as it addresses various issues like disease control, treatment of the crop to attain desired products, species site matching, etc. There is therefore a need for NFA and other tree growing partners to have strong collaboration with research institutions within and outside the country.
- The SPGS is a very good initiative as it encourages participation of private sector in tree growing. It also addresses things like farmer capacity building and income generation at household level. All that is required is to streamline it in such a way that the farmers are facilitated to produce more.



➤ Though the development of tree clones is an expensive venture, if done it can go a long way to boost production by using disease resistant, good quality cuttings and this would enable us to raise for specific products at low cost.

Jossy: We were fortunate to have been accompanied by Bric. He organized everything for us to the last detail and importantly he was known in all places we visited that related to Forestry. It was very comforting. The travelling distance were sometimes long over 600 km per day and he handled the wheel very well. I think I speak for the six of us when I say that we are grateful for his unselfish and tolerant altitude. All the people we met were considerate and good natured.



Last but not least

The whole team (and the NFA and SPGS mangement) would like to especially thank the people who really went out of their way to make the trip so memorable. We hope one day that the South Africans might consider visiting us in Uganda to see what we are up to.

A special thanks to the following:

Noel Myburgh (GFP)

Martin O'Donovan (SAPPI)

Wynande Swart (SAPPI)

Duane Roothman (SAPPI)

Denis Oscroft (ICFR)

Carl van Loggerenburg (SAPPI)

Murray Wilson-Browne (SAPPI)

Leander Jarvel (SAPPI)

Jolanda le Roux (FABI)

Fox-Tailing in *Pinus caribaea*:

Fox-tailing is the habit of some trees of producing continuous leader growth without side branches. The phenonmeon is common with *P.caribaea* var. *hundurensis* (PCH), particularly when grown in environments conducive to continuous fast growth (deep, moist soils).



The causes of fox-tailing are only partly understood: it is known to be strongly inherited but also related to site and climatic conditions. Most foresters consider fox-tailing to be an undesirable trait, as it is associated with wind breakage, a reduction in stem diameter growth and poor quality wood.

Since the FRMCP started planting the highly visible demonstration plots of PCH in 2002, people have been asking us about the fox-tails. Our advice to date has been to not panic and to remove them when it comes to the first thinning (which should be no later than 5-6 years old and earlier when growth is faster).

But some people keep going on about it and casting doubt over the quality of the PCH seed we are importing. So like all good scientists, we wanted to arm ourselves with the facts, so we despatched George and Ancelet to three of the FRMCP's oldest (2003/03) PCH plantations

- namely Kasana - Kasambya (Mubende), Kasagala (Nakasongula) and Oruha (Kyenjojo).

Along with the Chief Technical Advisor in Kasagala, the team first of all agreed what constituted a foxtail and what didn't. This was not so easy as some trees seem to start fox-tailing from the word go and then suddenly decide to start putting out branches. Other trees grow perfectly normally for a year or two and then start fox-tailing: very strange!

Once agreement was reached (and photographic evidence recorded), a sample of lines were walked. The results were as follows:

Forest Reserve	% Foxtails
Kasagala	3.0
Oruha	3.4
Kasana-Kasambya	7.6

We leave the final comment to George (extracted from the field report): *"There is surely no cause for alarm. These results compare very well with similar research work carried out in Guatemala and Belize, where PCH foxtailed up to 7%" (Evans & Turnbull, 2004; Plantation Forestry in the Tropics).*

It has been encouraging to receive feedback from previous newsletters. Here are some of the comments we received which we thought would be of interest to readers:

Dear Allan,

Thanks very much for supporting us in our activities. I'm sincerely very grateful. We have gone a long way in keeping up to your standards and I think you will be glad to know that we have constructed some housing for our workers and also managed to control those troublesome weeds. We are planning to be more ambitious and go for 30 ha in the next season. So please help us and safeguard us from the invasion from the cattle keepers. When are we having the next clients' meeting? I do not want to miss it.

Dear Sir,

I am an investor in a private forest plantation in Mubende. Thus far, I have planted about 33 ha of *Pinus caribaea*. I am facing a challenge of weeds. I just received the SPGS May-June Newsletter. In it, reference is made about a presentation you gave in April about the use of Glyphosate. I would be happy to receive a copy of that presentation so that I can learn more about its use in weed control. If it was a Powerpoint presentation, please send it to this email

address. Also I would like to receive the NFA Plantation Guideline No. 22 about the safe use of Glyphosate.

Comment on Newsletter: These newsletter contains very useful information. In particular, the April newsletter contained a diagram showing how to do spot-weeding. I found it to be invaluable and have used it to do spot-weeding in my plantation. I translated that information into measurements on pieces of timber with colored marks of distances and gave one to each of my workers doing the spot-weeding. We never had any quarrel because the measurements were clear, avoiding subjective assessments with eyes. Thanks to the SPGS staff the put together that newsletter. Looking forward to receiving the information.



Following an article that Paul Jacovelli wrote for the International Forestry Review's News in March 2005 on the SPGS initiative underway in Uganda, we received this (via the CFR):

Hello Allan,

I am a member of the CFA.

I read the article in the Commonwealth Forestry News the good work the SPGS is doing in Uganda.

I am a Ghanaian living in Germany. I am a forester.

I have a fourteen acres of land in Ghana, which I have planted 5000 teaks.

I want to find out if there is SPGS in Ghana.

At the moment the job I am doing here is not paid so good for me to meet the maintains of plantation.

Please can SPGS help me or any organisation that can with the silvicultural maintenance?

I hope you will use your good to reply me.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

So if you can't get the SPGS team on the phone over next few weeks you know where we are - advising in West Africa!

TRAINING UPDATE

We apologise for having to postpone the planned Plantation Management course from July but with Allan & Bric away in South Africa we have some field visits (and fire training) to catch up on: we are sure you will understand. We will inform you of the rearranged date in the July 14th meeting.

Dinosaur-Age Tree Discovered

A Jurassic tree dating from the dinosaur age and thought to have been extinct for 2 million years was recently unveiled in Kew Gardens, London.

What makes this story particularly interesting to us is that the tree is a member of the *Araucariaceae* family - and you can see the similarities with the *Araucarias* species e plant here, from the photos.

The tree - *Wollemia nobilis* - was discovered 11 years ago by a National Parks officer, who stumbled across it as he travelled through a remote valley in the Blue Mountains in New South Wales, Australia.

From a foliage sample, scientists confirmed it was a new species of an ancient plant family. This immediately sparked a conservation project to protect the 100 or so trees still living in the wild. Their location remains a secret to this day and only conservation workers are allowed to enter.

Propagation of the *Wollemi Pine* is being carried out vegetatively from young seedlings grown from original seeds (and cuttings) from trees in the wild. Some should be available to the public later this year though it might be a while before we can purchase enough seed or plants for a plantation!



WHAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING DURING JULY & AUGUST



- Make diary note for Meeting 14th July.
- Check firebreaks and clear if necessary.
- Ensure fire fighting equipment is purchased and available.
- Ensure people on ground are trained to fight fires and on call during dangerous periods.
- Start land preparation for area to be planted Sept/Oct.
- Train team in herbicide use.

In the Next Issue.....

we will feature articles on the following topics.....

- **Eucalypts** can (if grown well) produce sawlogs in half the time it takes for pines, so why aren't we growing more of them?
- ***Pinus caribaea* var. *hundurensis***: We will provide answers to those who wonder why we are paying in excess of Ushs 1 Million (ca. US\$600) per kg to import seed all the way from Australia.



AGRISYSTEMS
Challenging the causes of poverty

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