

The Time for Biodiversity Business

Dear Readers,

Do you think biodiversity conservation could be good for business?

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has been promoting this concept for some time, recognising that the solution to the loss of biodiversity is to be found in a mix of measures that include public policies and market-based instruments, amongst others. In the realm of market-based approaches, the ultimate instrument is the creation of markets that are able to reward products and services that enhance biodiversity conservation

and allow the establishment of biodiversity businesses in the process.

These biodiversity businesses, as defined by a 2008 IUCN report

“ Biodiversity businesses are commercial enterprises that generate profits via activities which conserve biodiversity, use biological resources sustainably, and share the benefits arising from this use equitably. ”

entitled *Building Biodiversity Business*, are ‘commercial enterprises that generate profits via activities which conserve biodiversity, use biological resources sustainably, and share the benefits arising from this use equitably’. Biodiversity businesses include sustainable agriculture practices, sustainable forestry, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), payments for watershed services, biodiversity offsets, ecotourism and

others. In the report, the case was made for biodiversity conservation to be considered as a viable business proposition in its own right, and for

more private capital to be invested in enterprises that build their business model on conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of biological resources.

Thus, biodiversity businesses will not replace traditional conservation programmes, but rather complement them by tapping into a growing demand for responsible products and services. Furthermore,

biodiversity businesses could have potentially positive outcomes in poverty reduction and community empowerment in rural areas, as many of the products and services linked to biodiversity businesses originate from rural areas and are based on small-scale enterprises.

So, if it is true that conservation can be a good business, can we turn this around and claim that business can be good for biodiversity conservation?

Conservation organisations traditionally have played an active role in supporting the development of sustainable alternative livelihoods for communities when those communities were engaged in unsustainable use of natural resources. Thus, they have already experimented with the development

of biodiversity businesses. However, these ventures often have not been initiated with a sound business intent. A lack of business drive and business skills often results in activities that don’t generate enough profits to sustain themselves, and consequently fail on the conservation side.

Our assumption has been that if certain business sectors are to be promoted as part of a biodiversity conservation programme, the transfer of business skills becomes of paramount importance to ensure that these businesses are successful. If they fail as businesses, their conservation objectives will not be achieved. Thus, there is clearly a gap that needs to be explored in more detail in terms of identifying these capacity needs.

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Mkuru Camel Safari: Authentic African Adventures

Istituto Oikos (Italy)

Istituto Oikos, an Italian NGO operating in Europe and in developing countries, promotes the conservation and wise use of natural resources as a tool for sustainable development. In Tanzania, Oikos has been working with the Tanzania Tourism Board and the Mkuru Camel Group, a community-based organisation, to develop responsible tourism that upholds both cultural and natural heritage.

The Mkuru Camel Safari in Northern Tanzania is a community-based tourism initiative that enables tourists to experience the true and unspoiled African Savannah. Through a combination of camel and walking safaris, visitors are exposed to unparalleled scenery and are able to spot the rich wildlife of the African bush. Moreover, by facilitating the interaction between tourists and the local Maasai communities, these holidays enable visitors to learn about



the area’s rich culture and traditions.

The safaris are run by experienced English-speaking Maasai guides who are knowledgeable about the region’s natural and cultural heritage. The tours on offer range from half-day walks to seven-day camel-back rides and can also include a variety of cultural activities. The environmentally friendly and well-

located Mkuru Camel Camp is the starting point for all the available tours. With amazing views of Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru, the solar-powered camp offers rustic accommodation in safari tents, basic bathroom facilities, an outdoor fireplace and a dining area serving hearty Tanzanian meals.

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Recognising that a key role of the IUCN Secretariat is to support its members in implementing their conservation programmes, IUCN's Business and Biodiversity Programme has embarked on a survey of IUCN members' experiences in developing biodiversity businesses as part of their conservation programmes.

“The International Union for Conservation of Nature is a membership organisation that brings together more than 1,000 organisations which have in common a mission to conserve biodiversity, to ensure that ecosystems continue to deliver the goods and services upon which our life depends.”

The results of this study will help the Secretariat to more effectively support its members in this particular type of conservation approach. The study, which began at the end of 2008, has been funded by the French Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning (MEEDDAT).

Key objectives of the study have included the identification of IUCN members' experiences in developing businesses (in sectors such as agriculture, tourism and medicinal plants, for example) as part of their conservation programmes and the assessment of members' needs

(capacity building, marketing and financial) to enhance the success of their efforts.

Through a desk review of IUCN's members' activities and recommendations by IUCN's Secretariat Membership Focal Points, approximately 80 members were identified as having developed

biodiversity businesses. Of the 63 members contacted, 40 provided input in the research.

The 22 stories published here depict only a few of the many great businesses we learned about throughout the research. Unfortunately, we can't publish them all. However, all input received has been captured in a separate report entitled *Lessons learned from building biodiversity businesses for conservation*.

All the interviews conducted have contributed to building a better understanding of the opportunities and obstacles for creating biodiversity businesses as

part of biodiversity conservation strategies, and more importantly to demonstrate that in the conservation world the creation of profit-making businesses can be a viable tool in the conservation tool box.

This publication is not intended to provide an in-depth analysis of the approaches adopted by conservation organisations. Rather, it is simply meant to celebrate and promote further the successes of those conservation organisations, including IUCN members, who have successfully started biodiversity businesses as part of their conservation strategies.

The stories we collected focus on a diverse range of products and services, from the more traditional ecotourism operations to natural ingredients that support the growing wellness industry to knowledge products, such as wildlife field guides. When reading about them, you will be able to travel from Honduras and Botswana to Jordan and Lao PDR.

One of our key findings is that there are clearly complementary skills and aims between conservation organisations and businesses. Many of the services and products that are developed and promoted through enterprises created by conservation

organisations have been commercially successful thanks to the role played by a business partner. These partners have played different roles, from co-financers to providers of technical support in developing product specifications or marketing opportunities or by including the product or services in their supply chain.

Finally, we have also asked ten experts to provide their 'ViewPoints' on key, often recurrent, questions on issues strongly related to the development of biodiversity businesses. These include the role of governments, the effectiveness of ecolabels, the role that could be played by multinationals through their corporate social responsibility programmes, the importance of accessing start-up funds, the need for sharing benefits with communities and the need for technical support. These viewpoints offer a complementary voice to the stories that have been highlighted in this publication.

IUCN's Business and Biodiversity Programme is committed to act on the findings of this research, including integrating the results into The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study. In particular, we would like to develop specific programmes that would help create commercial linkages between the private sector and

IUCN members. Clearly this is not the solution for all conservation challenges. However, it could help not only by directly creating market incentives for conservation, but also by creating a greater awareness amongst consumers about our dependency on ecosystems and hence on biodiversity.

So the answer to the questions presented above is: Yes – biodiversity conservation can be good for business and business can be good for biodiversity conservation as well!

We trust you will find these examples of interest. Enjoy reading!

Juan Marco Alvarez - Director of the Economy and Environmental Governance Group and Head of the Business & Biodiversity Programme

For more information
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Building Biodiversity Business was published by IUCN and Shell in 2008. Its main author, Joshua Bishop, is IUCN's Chief Economist. See <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2008-002.pdf>

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About IUCN

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges.

IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,000 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world.

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Natural Products from the Land of Cedars

Al Shouf Cedar Society (Lebanon)

The Al Shouf Cedar Society (ACS) is the key organisation responsible for managing Lebanon's largest protected area, the Al Shouf Cedar Nature Reserve (SCNR). As part of their management strategy, ACS has been working with local communities around the SCNR to promote the sustainable use of the reserve's resources.



Product Highlights

Approximately 70 different natural products have been developed to support rural development and conservation under the Al Shouf brand. These include:

Honey

Honey has been produced in Lebanon for many centuries, with evidence of honey production dating back to Phoenician times. Honey production is still an important livelihood in the Al Shouf area, where cedar honey is the predominant variety due to the reserve's healthy population of cedar trees. Cedar honey is considered a premium product, because of its unique flavour and rarity outside SCNR. ACS has been working with local communities in the reserve to improve the quality of the honey (and derivative products) and market these under

the Al Shouf brand. Maintaining this industry is not only important for preserving the area's cultural heritage but also benefits conservation. Bees are an important vector for pollination and hence contribute to species diversity in the reserve.

Edible, aromatic and medicinal plants

A number of species of wild plants have been traditionally used by local communities in and around Al Shouf Biosphere Reserve for their special aromatic and medicinal properties. In an effort to conserve these species, preserve the communities' cultural heritage and at the same time improve their livelihoods, ACS has been supporting the local communities in developing and commercialising products from these plants. They have also raised community awareness for the need to harvest

these species in a sustainable way and helped set up nurseries to reduce the reliance on wild plants. Besides selling the plants as they are, they have diversified their product range to include syrups and flavoured waters, including sage, rose-scented geranium, mint, mulberry, grenadine, rose and orange blossom syrups, and laurel, sage, nettle, orange flower, rose and mint waters.

Other products

A variety of other products are produced and sold from the reserve, including several jams and compotes (apple, apricot, fig and eggplant jams, and cherry, mulberry and peach compotes), dairy products, vinegars, pastes (grenadine, capsicum, tomato), pickles and grape and carob molasses.

The Al Shouf Cedar Society (ACS) created its Rural Development Programme in 1999. The programme aims to improve local livelihoods around the Al Shouf Cedar Nature Reserve through the sustainable production and marketing of local products. Since its establishment, ACS has worked with local communities, particularly local women, beekeepers and shepherds, to develop a range of products that both reflect the area's traditions and showcase what the reserve has to offer. ACS set up three workshop locations with state-of-the-art

materials for ensuring high-quality products. Furthermore, by working together they have standardised the quality, minimised the costs of manufacturing and, under the Al Shouf umbrella brand, achieved premium rates for their goods. They are also currently working towards organic certification from LibanCert. All the natural products are sold in the reserve's outlets as well as in authentic shops, hotel stores, trade fairs, exhibitions, etc. The income from these products goes back to the local communities. (See box for product descriptions and highlights.)

This business approach to conservation first grew out of the need to get support from local stakeholders for the protected area. When ACS first assumed responsibility for the reserve, the local stakeholders wanted it to be developed in such a way that would ultimately lead to its destruction. Conservation was still an alien concept in Lebanon, and both local communities and the region's authorities believed that the best solution for improving local livelihoods was to develop the area for mass tourism. However,

through the Rural Development Programme and small-scale tourism development, ACS demonstrated that there was a more sustainable way to achieve the same goals.

One of the key outcomes of this work has been a change in local attitudes towards conservation and increased support for the protected area. This change has not only been observed in local communities but also through increased support from the local authorities. Additionally, in 2003, ACS's work was recognised internationally when UNESCO designated the wider area surrounding

the Al Shouf Cedar Nature Reserve, including the Ammiq Wetland (one of the only remaining wetland sites in the Middle East as well as a Ramsar Site) and 24 local villages, as the Al Shouf Biosphere Reserve. This important designation is given to areas where a balanced relationship between humans and nature is promoted and demonstrated.

For more information
Visit: www.shoufcedar.org
Contact: info@shoufcedar.org

Mkuru Camel Safari: Authentic African Adventures

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Mkuru Camel Safari was jointly developed by the Mkuru Camel Group and Istituto Oikos to counter local dependence on unsustainable practices, such as charcoal production, with the provision of sustainable livelihood options. With this initiative, Oikos also aimed to enhance local capacity and local support for conservation. So far, a number of conservation benefits have been achieved, including a marked decrease in illegal logging, a significant increase in wildlife observed in the area, and a positive change in attitudes towards biodiversity conservation. From a social perspective, Mkuru Camel Safari has generated employment for local people, improved their living conditions and enhanced their level of education, thus leading to increased local empowerment. The key to the success of this venture has been the two parties' ability to operate within their strengths, doing what they do best.

For more information
Visit: www.istituto-oikos.org and www.mkurucamelsafari.com
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What's on Offer

On Safari

Departing from the Mkuru Camel Camp, a trained Maasai guide accompanies all safari tours and gives a detailed account of the cultural and natural treasures of the region.

Camel Safaris

There are different overnight safaris that take tourists into the depths of the African wilderness. On these safaris, visitors experience the Maasai way of life by following the ancient routes that the once nomadic pastoralists opened in the savannah to graze their cattle and praise holy trees and mountains in which their traditional god resides. Tourists sleep in mobile camps under the

African stars. Within and among the different tours, the scenery is ever-changing and the opportunities to observe wildlife are plentiful.

Walking Safaris

The walking safaris are tailor-made to suit individual interest and level of fitness and can be combined with both camel safaris and cultural activities.

Cultural Activities

Mkuru offers a variety of activities that take place in the heart of the Maasai communities. These include a visit to a traditional Maasai house or "Boma," a Maasai dance and dinner evening, a traditional medicine lesson delivered by a local healer and a Maasai women's arts and crafts session.





Wild Jordan: In the Nature Business

Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (Jordan)

The Jordanian Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) has the important role of caring for the country's rich natural heritage. To help fulfill this mission, RSCN created Wild Jordan, an entrepreneurial division of RSCN that is devoted to developing and marketing nature-based businesses, particularly ecotourism, in and around the kingdom's protected areas.

Although Jordan is traditionally seen as a cultural tourism destination, it also offers outstanding natural landscapes and biologically diverse ecosystems. Wild Jordan, the business division of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), promotes and protects this rich natural heritage through nature-based business development. At present, RSCN manages six protected areas from the north to the south of the country in which Wild Jordan offers a wide range of tourism facilities, including campsites, guesthouses and lodges, as well as a selection of guided tours to suit every need (see box for what's on offer). Furthermore, by working with communities in and around these protected areas, they have created handicraft enterprises that produce innovative products reflecting the natural and cultural

features of the different regions (see box for community handicraft enterprises). The Wild Jordan Centre in central Amman is the melting pot for all these initiatives. In an effort to showcase the sustainable use of Jordan's natural resources, the centre has a nature shop selling community enterprise goods, a café serving organic and fair trade products (some coming from the reserves) and an information point where tourists can plan their visits to the protected areas.

Wild Jordan's key success factor has been its innovative marketing strategy. The creation of the Wild Jordan brand enabled RSCN to penetrate a market focused on cultural tourism and not only claim its market share but also take over the niche market for nature tourism. Moreover, through the Wild Jordan Centre, RSCN was able to bring nature to the city and package its products in a holistic and professional way. In doing all this, RSCN has not lost sight of its nature conservation mandate and ensures that Jordan's 'wild places' are protected through clear zoning strategies, user limits and regular monitoring.

RSCN has been working to integrate conservation with socio-economic development in Jordan's protected areas for 14 years. This approach began as part of a Global Environment Facility (GEF) project to link protected area management to the socio-economic development of local people in the Dana Biosphere Reserve. Today, RSCN works in six protected areas around the country, where they have successfully created a network of

tourist facilities and activities.

The key objectives that led RSCN to adopt this more entrepreneurial approach to conservation were: (i) the need to generate financial benefits for funding RSCN's conservation work; (ii) the need to link nature protection to local community livelihoods and job opportunities, and through this encourage more sympathetic attitudes towards nature conservation; and (iii) the need to raise the awareness of the Jordanian people for the plight of nature conservation.

So far, enterprise development has generated a number of benefits for nature conservation in Jordan. First, the creation of Wild Jordan has enabled RSCN to secure as much as 40 per cent of its conservation budget from the biodiversity enterprises. Second, in developing the handicraft enterprises by targeting community members with the greatest dependence (and therefore impact) on the protected areas, they are reducing one of the greatest threats to their work. Also, as almost half of their visitor base is Jordanian, support and willingness to pay for conservation has increased. Another interesting but unexpected outcome has been a change in attitudes towards conservation amongst decision-makers. Due to Wild Jordan's considerable contribution to Jordan's tourism industry, RSCN has gained more respect and support from the Jordanian government for its work.

For more information
Visit: www.rscn.org.jo
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Community Handicraft Enterprises

In addition to developing a network of ecotourism services, Wild Jordan has been working with Jordanian designers and local communities in handicraft creation and production. By using either symbols that relate to Jordan's culture and society or natural symbols from the different protected areas, designers with an understanding of the market create innovative handicrafts that are then managed by local communities, who manufacture the products, and sold in Wild Jordan outlets countrywide.

The revenue from Wild Jordan's handicraft enterprises goes exclusively to the local communities, as the primary purpose of this part of the business is to create employment for local people. They also aim to steer local people away from less-sustainable livelihoods and make them see the added value of living near a protected area. In order to really create benefits for conservation, Wild Jordan chooses their entrepreneurs and manufacturers from amongst the individuals in the community that have the biggest dependence, and thus impact, on the protected areas.

What's on Offer

RSCN manages six protected areas in Jordan, including Dana Biosphere Reserve, Ajloun Forest Reserve, Mujib Nature Reserve, Azraq Wetland and Shaumari Reserve. All the guided tours and accommodations in the protected areas have been developed and are run by Wild Jordan, the business arm of RSCN.

Dana Biosphere Reserve

With an area of around 320 square kilometres, Dana is Jordan's largest nature reserve, and possibly the most diverse. The reserve covers a variety of landscapes, from the sand dunes in the west to the mountain tops in the east, and is home to a multitude of species. As the first of RSCN's reserves to develop ecotourism, it also has the most options for tourists. The guided tours range from short strolls to adventurous all-day hikes. There are also a number of accommodation options, including the Rummana Campsite, which was traditionally a Bedouin camp, the Dana Guesthouse, with breathtaking views over the reserve, and the Feynan Ecolodge, the most environmentally friendly option, located off the beaten tourist track and candle-lit at night.

Ajloun Forest Reserve

Located in the north of Jordan, Ajloun is dominated by open woodlands of evergreen oak, pine, carob, wild pistachio and wild strawberry trees. This lush landscape supports a variety of wild plants and animals, and has a rich cultural heritage. Visitors can stay in the safari-style cabins and bungalows, hike through the forest and savour a local meal at the reserve's rooftop restaurant or in a local village orchard.

Mujib Nature Reserve

Mujib, the world's lowest nature reserve at 410 metres below sea level, is one of Jordan's most popular natural attractions, due to its rugged terrain and breathtaking scenery. Here, tourists can relax by the Dead Sea and go on adventurous hikes in the river-filled canyons. The Mujib Chalet, located on the shores of the Dead Sea, is the ideal base for exploring this reserve.

Azraq Wetland and Shaumari Reserve

Other than being very close to each other and sharing the main accommodation option in the area, the Azraq Lodge, these reserves have very little in common when it comes to landscape and biodiversity. While Azraq is a unique wetland site, renowned for its bird diversity, Shaumari, a desert landscape, was created as a sanctuary for breeding endangered species. The Azraq Lodge, a converted 1940s British military hospital, is a comfortable option for exploring the reserves as well as the eastern desert.

Ojon: A Well-Kept Secret

Moskitia Pawisa Apiska (MOPAWI) (Honduras)

MOPAWI, the Agency for the Development of the Mosquitia in Honduras, has as its mission integrating biodiversity conservation with the improvement of indigenous people's livelihoods in the country's Mosquitia region. In order to achieve this goal, MOPAWI has formed a partnership with the indigenous Miskito communities and the Ojon Corporation, a Canadian multinational company, to develop and market natural hair products from the region.

The Ojon Corporation has become internationally renowned for its exceptional hair care products, catering to different types of hair and varying hair care needs, and always achieving outstanding results. The key to Ojon's success is the knowledge of how to activate natural ingredients and still maintain them in their purest form. The signature ingredient in all of Ojon's products is 'ojon' or 'batana' oil.

The batana or ojon palm is an endemic species to the Mosquitia, a region in northeastern Honduras. The Miskito Indians, indigenous people from Mosquitia, have for centuries extracted oil from batana nuts and used it for cosmetic purposes and in particular to protect their skin and hair from the elements. In ancient times, the Miskito Indians were known locally as 'Tawira', which literally means 'the people of beautiful hair'. Still, the Miskito were able to keep batana's properties a secret for a very long time.

The development of the batana supply chain began in 1985 through MOPAWI, a local non-governmental organisation charged with protecting the Mosquitia's nature and people.

While the focus at first was on giving support to small producers for improving and enhancing their production, MOPAWI soon shifted its efforts to getting batana products into national markets. This proved to be a challenge due to the lack of knowledge about batana's properties outside Mosquitia and the work needed to be subsidised for quite some time. All this changed in 2003 when, through a combination of luck and persistence, batana oil reached the Simioni family, a Canadian family involved in the hair care business.

Since this time, the Ojon Corporation, MOPAWI and the Miskito Indians have worked together to bring batana in its purest and most unspoiled form into the international hair care arena. Furthermore, through this mutually beneficial relationship, local livelihoods have been improved and support for nature conservation has increased.

One of the main conservation challenges in Honduras is the encroachment of agricultural land on tropical forests, resulting from population growth and increased poverty in many areas of the country. However, the work that MOPAWI has done to develop the batana supply chain in a sustainable and profitable way has helped to prevent or at least to limit land-use conversion and deforestation in the Mosquitia region. Their work has not only helped to develop a sustainable economic activity for local people but also succeeded in enhancing local knowledge about the importance of maintaining the resource base for future generations.

The partnership with the Ojon Corporation played an important role in ensuring the long-term success of MOPAWI's work in the batana supply chain. Although it initially meant that an exponential growth of production was required, MOPAWI approached this need carefully, to ensure that increased production would not result in resource degradation. This was done by educating the communities in sustainable harvesting techniques and helping them to adopt agroforestry

methods. Additionally, the growth in demand has resulted in a considerable number of local people complementing less-sustainable livelihoods with batana harvesting and production. Another positive outcome of the MOPAWI-Ojon partnership has been increased support from Ojon for MOPAWI's conservation and development goals. Besides actively advocating for the conservation of Mosquitia's natural and cultural heritage, Ojon also donates a percentage of their sales towards projects headed by MOPAWI. Furthermore, Ojon has demonstrated interest in purchasing other products, such as cocoa, swa oil and achiote, from the Miskito communities, which would further contribute to the region's sustainable development.

MOPAWI's pioneering work has also become a source of inspiration for other Honduran NGOs and even the government. Both their advances in developing business as a conservation tool and their model for cooperation with the private sector are currently being used as benchmarks for similar initiatives.

For more information
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Destination: Conservation The IUCN NL Experience with the Tourism & Biodiversity Small Grants Programme

Marielies Schelhaas, Head, Ecology & Economy Unit, IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands



While biodiversity is an important and valuable resource for tourism development, it also works the other way around: Tourism can play an important role in supporting biodiversity conservation. In areas where biodiversity is under threat, tourism can be part of the solution by providing a means to add economic value to biodiversity and ecosystem services. Well-planned tourism generates direct income for conservation, for example through entrance fees and concessions, and can offer an important alternative income for local stakeholders, either through direct employment or indirectly by giving them the opportunity to sell products to tourists and tourist providers. Together, these benefits provide a strong incentive for conservation.

These considerations were behind the development of the IUCN NL Tourism & Biodiversity small grants fund, which offers conservation NGOs and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) a chance to apply for financial support needed to start a tourism project that contributes to conservation. The fund started in 2004 and has so far supported about 55 projects. As the maximum amount of support is Euro 25,000, the grants generally don't provide enough to cover the costs of

a whole new project, so the funding is aimed at supporting the extra activities necessary to make a project successful, including guide training, the purchase of bikes and other equipment, development of marketing materials, etc.

The programme experiences to date have highlighted two important lessons:

First, involvement of all stakeholders is vital for the success of a project. This includes ensuring that all involved have realistic expectations, as it takes time for any benefits to materialise. In most cases, tourism will generate additional income but, especially at first, the profits will be modest. In addition, distributing benefits for the whole community around the project is important, as is providing information and training to local inhabitants.

Second, project success also involves effective marketing and market access. Marketing is not always the strong point of tourism projects aimed at conservation, and many developments still start without any kind of marketing or business plan. Nevertheless, it is of vital importance that the first step in any tourism project should be to assess its tourism potential by evaluating the product on

offer, the accessibility of the project site, the kind of tourists that will be targeted (luxury international, backpackers or domestic visitors), and how they will find their way to the project.

It is interesting to note that cooperation between an NGO and a tourism business (in an early stage of project development) does add value: the NGO is the conservation specialist, the company contributes to marketing and ensuring a business approach to the development.

In general, tourism can generate additional income for the local people involved and create awareness about the importance of conserving local biodiversity. In a very limited number of projects, the development may become so successful that it is the main source of income of a substantial number of people in a community. In any case, however, the crucial point is that tourism has to be managed well, keeping both the conservation and the business perspective in mind.

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What's on Offer

Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (www.sierranevada-ecoturismo.com)
Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is located in the north of Colombia, on the buffer zone of Tayrona and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta National Parks. This area of natural beauty boasts unspoiled jungle-fringed beaches, species-rich forests and archeological wonders. Here, the park rangers and their families have formed a community organisation to run ecolodges with traditional thatched roof villas. They also offer a number of services to tourists, including traditional local meals, guided visits into the national parks and other outstanding natural areas in the buffer zone, and adventure sports such as mountain biking.

Playa Güío – Guaviare (www.guaviare-ecoturismo.com)
Despite generally being overlooked by tourists, the area around San José del Guaviare is well worth exploring due to its outstanding natural beauty, unusual geological formations and rich flora and fauna. An ideal base for exploring the region is the ecolodge run by the Ecotourism Cooperative of Playa Güío on the banks of the Guaviare river. The community organisation also runs a visitor centre with information about the area and organises guided visits to local wonders, hiking and canoeing tours, and cultural activities such as local dinners.

Tierradentro (www.tierradentro-ecoturismo.com)
Tierradentro is an area of rich natural and cultural heritage. It is located in the Colombian Massif, a convergence of three different mountain ranges with high biodiversity. Tierradentro is also a cultural World Heritage Site due to the rich archeological remains found here that bear testimony to the pre-Hispanic Andean societies. The communities of Tierradentro have formed a community organisation to manage and advertise eco- and ethno-tourism in this important area. On offer are a variety of products that include a rustic ecolodge, guided tours to the important cultural and natural sites, local restaurants, handicrafts and the opportunity to share the traditions of the Nasa people.

Tio Tigre (www.tiotigre-ecoturismo.com)
The Tio Tigre Association is an Afrocolombian community organisation that manages ecotourism in and around Ensenada de Utría National Park on Colombia's Pacific Coast. The park, a marine and coastal protected area, is incredibly diverse, boasting a range of ecosystems that include coral reefs, mangrove forests, coastal coves and tropical rainforests. A variety of accommodation options are offered by Tio Tigre to meet differing tourist needs. The community also runs a number of activities that showcase the natural and cultural heritage of the area, including excursions by boat and foot, and folklore music and dance evenings with local gastronomic delights.

Ecoturismo Comunitario: A Network of Ecotourism Providers

Fundación Natura (Colombia)

Fundación Natura was established to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of Colombia's biodiversity and natural resources. To help achieve this goal, Natura has been working with community organisations in high biodiversity areas to set up ecotourism enterprises as an alternative to illegal crop production.

Ecoturismo Comunitario is a community ecotourism network that offers ecotourism experiences in Colombia's high biodiversity areas. At present, this network is made up of four community enterprises: Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Playa Güío - Guaviare, Tierradentro and Tio Tigre. Taking a destination approach to ecotourism development, Ecoturismo Comunitario offers tourists the complete ecotourism package, including a selection of rustic ecolodges, guided tours focused on biodiversity and responsible adventure sports such as mountain biking and canoeing. Also on offer are a variety of cultural experiences, such as visits to culturally important sites, local meals, handicrafts, local dance and music. (See box for a

complete description of products and services available.)

Individually, each of the four community groups acts as a provider of a wide range of ecotourism services, including lodging, maritime transport, hiking, specialised guiding, etc. Different members of the communities are responsible for providing and ensuring the quality of each service, while the community group assembles the services in tourist packages and markets them commercially. The model also helps to support other economic activities within the ecotourism value chain, such as agriculture, fishing and handicrafts.

The primary role of the community ecotourism network is to provide marketing support to each of the four individual ecotourism ventures. The fact that the four enterprises offer rather similar products and have similar standards helps them to attract travelers visiting more than one of the destinations. In addition, the network approach enables the communities to exchange experiences and lessons learned and will, in the near future, allow for a common promotion/sales structure that will reduce costs and improve effectiveness.

Fundación Natura created Ecoturismo Comunitario to counter a recent increase in threats to Colombia's natural heritage caused by economic and social issues. Natura helped to design and set up the four enterprises

and the overarching network, and they also provided training and built technical and administrative capacities. Furthermore, the foundation continues to provide support to the four community enterprises by acting as an adviser to them, instead of assuming the role of a manager.

Natura chose to work with these four communities because they are in high biodiversity areas and were contributing to biodiversity degradation through engaging in unsustainable practices. One particular issue that Fundación Natura wanted to target with this project was illegal crop plantations around the project areas. Illegal crop plantations of coca and poppy pose a threat to biodiversity both because of forest clearing to plant these crops and because of the need to spray such crops with substances that harm biodiversity. Illegal crops also result in negative social impacts, including increased insecurity and violence. The Ecoturismo Comunitario project has resulted in the elimination of illegal crop production by the communities involved in the project and movement to a productive activity that can help them improve family income and enhance the sustainability of their livelihoods.

For more information
Visit: www.natura.org.co or
www.ecoturismocomunitario.org
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Himalayan BioTrade: Nature-Friendly Forest Products

Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB) (Nepal)

The Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB) is committed to biodiversity conservation and economic development through community-based enterprise-oriented solutions. ANSAB created Himalayan BioTrade to market the non-timber forest products produced by local community enterprises in Nepal to national and international markets.

Himalayan BioTrade Private Limited (HBTL) is a consortium of eight community-based enterprises from the Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan regions of Nepal that promotes and markets community products at national and international levels. HBTL specialises in natural and sustainably sourced non-timber forest products (NTFPs) that hold organic and/or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. The key NTFPs that HBTL markets are essential oils, handmade paper and medicinal and aromatic plants from Nepal. Such products cater to different markets, from local to global. In the international arena, essential oils and handmade paper have the greatest demand, due to their high quality and unique properties. These products are particularly sought after by the cosmetics industry, both as a base ingredient in their beauty products and for making distinctive gifts (see box for more information on product highlights).

In order to access international markets, Himalayan BioTrade has been targeting the supply chains of multinational companies that are committed to sustainability and are willing to pay more for sustainably sourced natural products. So far, HBTL has engaged with Aveda, S & D Aroma and Altromercato, companies that uphold the principles of environmental and social responsibility. These three companies have worked with HBTL to develop products that are competitive in the market but still maintain the unique properties of their natural ingredients intact. At the same time, these multinationals have provided local community enterprises with business expertise.

Himalayan BioTrade was created by the Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB) to facilitate the sustainable development of local communities in the forested areas of Nepal. HBTL is one of the components of ANSAB's work on the NTFP value chain and was designed to be a link between local community enterprises and the national and international markets. ANSAB also worked at the local level to develop the local community enterprises that feed into HBTL. By adopting a holistic approach to developing the NTFP sector, ANSAB has succeeded in both empowering local communities and enhancing forest conservation in Nepal.

ANSAB has been working with local communities in the forest landscapes of Nepal since 1994. The network's goal of developing integrated NTFP enterprises and forest conservation groups was a completely novel approach, deriving from the need to

both prevent local communities from pursuing livelihoods that depleted the resource base and encourage community support for forest conservation and ultimately local ownership of the forests. Through this approach, local communities are given the responsibility of protecting and monitoring the resources that they in turn harvest and sell. Further to creating integrated community conservation and enterprise groups, and as an additional incentive for local communities to practice the sustainable harvesting of NTFPs, ANSAB then moved up the value chain and linked the community enterprises to each other, so that they could compete in the international market and obtain higher returns. This linkage was achieved through the creation of HBTL.

ANSAB's integrated model of forest conservation and enterprise development has proven to be a remarkable way to conserve the highly diverse forests of the Himalayas while contributing to the improvement of local livelihoods. Since this work began, more than 80,000 hectares of forest and pasture have come under improved management through community forestry, while enterprise creation has benefited more than 15,000 households.

Through this work, ANSAB has also introduced forest certification as a tool to promote sustainable forest management and responsible business practices. So far, they have achieved Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification on 14,000 hectares of community forests as well as FSC certification on Nepali handmade paper and FSC and



Product Highlights

Handmade Paper

The inner bark of two species of the Lokta shrub (*Daphne bholua* and *Daphne papyracea*) has been traditionally used in Nepal to produce high-quality paper. This exceptionally durable and attractive paper is still in high demand today, both within Nepal and internationally. Lokta bark paper is used to make books, letter sheets, cards, note pads and wrapping paper. A partnership between HBTL and Aveda to create Aveda gift sets using Lokta handmade paper has focused attention on this traditional Nepalese industry as well as on the need for sustainable harvesting of the shrubs, which until recently were over-harvested. This partnership has also generated employment for approximately 30,000 people in rural Nepal, greatly improving local livelihoods.

Essential Oils

A number of essential oils that are harvested sustainably by local communities in Nepal's forests enter the international market through HBTL. These essential oils are in high demand in the cosmetics industry due to their unique properties. Furthermore, the fact that the oils are sustainably harvested and most of the forests these oils are extracted from are FSC- and/or organic-certified allows HBTL to tap into a niche market of companies looking for high-quality and truly natural ingredients. At present, HBTL supplies essential oils to Aveda, S & D Aromas and Altromercato.

organic certification on nine essential oils. ANSAB's coordination and facilitation work in the NTFP sector has also contributed to making FSC certification a national goal in Nepal

and has supported the development of enabling NTFP policy.

For more information
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Involving Professional Businesses through Supply Chains: the Tourism Experience

Harold Goodwin,
Co-Director, International
Centre for Responsible
Tourism, Leeds
Metropolitan University



Although tourism can be a good source of revenue, there is often still an unwillingness within the conservation community to engage with an industry perceived as having significant negative social and environmental impacts, particularly in protected areas, where many still see tourism, and the tourists it brings, as a problem. Neverthe-

less, tourism industry professionals can be a valuable resource for conservation-minded businesses enterprises.

Although many write and think about a tourism industry, it is best thought of as a series of sectors providing services to people who are travelling to spend at least

one night away from home. A tourist will require transport to and within the destination, accommodation, food and beverage, and experiences that are provided by attractions, guides, craft and souvenir outlets, and the protected areas, cultural sites and public spaces of the destination. Tour operators and agents in originating markets and destinations package and sell these elements of the trip. Each of these elements, each of these sectors, provides opportunities for sales that generate revenues, employment for conservation, and communication with tourists in order to attract them to a protected area or encourage them to behave in ways which benefit conservation.

From the perspective of a protected area manager, the impacts of visitors in protected areas or in the adjacent communities are a function of their behaviour, how much they spend and where, and the nature of their environmental and social impacts, both positive and negative. Whether they are day visitors or tourists, their impacts need to be managed to enhance the positive and reduce the

negative. While many have professed a preference for 'ecotourists', the alternative and superior kind of tourist, in and around protected areas they are actually quite elusive and, in any case, they use the same aircraft, ground transportation and accommodation as the majority of tourists in a protected area, where it can be difficult to tell them apart.

Industry professionals can provide invaluable assistance to those endeavouring to develop businesses with conservation objectives, through advice, mentoring and partnering and by providing market access and a distribution channel. They can also assist conservation-orientated businesses to develop products that will attract tourists and facilitate their sales and growth. For this process to work well, engagement needs to come early and be sustained, and the products offered and developed need to be complementary, rather than competitive. For example:

- accommodation providers can offer information and purchase local crafts, food and beverages, and should be engaged in the development processes to ensure that

the goods are of an acceptable quality and price and that there is adequate volume and consistency of supply;

- tour operators and guides can provide invaluable advice on market, product design and compliance with minimum health and safety standards, as well as provide distribution channels;
- tourism attractions can cross-market, offering an opportunity for communicating with visitors on a reciprocal basis; and
- craft shops and souvenir stores can provide a retail outlet and an opportunity to educate consumers about what they should not purchase under CITES and, where appropriate, provide certificates to facilitate the trade of sustainable products.

Conservationists need to engage and partner with the industry if they are to benefit from tourism. The industry professionals have the expertise – use it.

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Editorial SalvaNATURA: Publishing for Nature

SalvaNATURA (El Salvador)



SalvaNATURA was created to contribute to nature conservation and drive sustainable development in El Salvador. To support its conservation work as well as to raise awareness about the country's rich flora and fauna, SalvaNATURA has established an in-house publishing department, Editorial SalvaNATURA, that focuses on the publication of nature-based printed materials.

Editorial SalvaNATURA is a publishing house that produces and publishes visually rich, interesting and insightful educational products focusing on the biodiversity and ecosystems of Central America. Designed to encourage local pride and interest in the natural world, the Editorial's products also respond to the demand for scientifically backed information about biodiversity in the region. Furthermore, Editorial SalvaNATURA promotes information sharing among organisations, contributes to the awareness and understanding of Central American biodiversity, and aims to inspire passion for discovery, appreciation and stewardship of the region's

natural resources. A variety of means of communication are used by the Editorial in achieving these goals, including print, audio, video and multi-media.

Editorial SalvaNATURA was created by the Salvadoran environmental NGO SalvaNATURA. Since its establishment in 1990, SalvaNATURA had produced technical and scientific material, environmental education products and promotional calendars that were highly regarded by both the conservation community and the general public. Based on the popularity of these products and the growing interest in biodiversity, SalvaNATURA decided to pursue their publishing work as a business. The key objectives for creating Editorial SalvaNATURA were to secure funds for conservation while at the same time contributing to the growth in knowledge and awareness about biodiversity in El Salvador.

The publishing house operates by taking bulk orders from both the government and the private sector for specific publications on biodiversity-related topics, as well as less scientific products such as illustrations and calendars. SalvaNATURA is also developing an online catalogue to market their products to individuals. They have produced a number of scientific and environmental publications, including biodiversity conservation calendars and a CD-MP4 of the Vocalisations of the Birds of El Salvador. In 2009 they are producing a number of scientific publications including The Red List of the Birds of El Salvador, Plight of the Plover, A Children's Collection of the Birds of El Salvador and new calendars for 2010 featuring coastal, shade-grown coffee and avian diversity.

Editorial SalvaNATURA has been instrumental in raising awareness and increasing knowledge about El Salvador's biodiversity and natural resources. By creating a wide range of products that cater to different audiences, the business has made scientific knowledge more accessible to all. One of the principle goals of the Editorial is to help fund some of SalvaNATURA's work and, even though the initiative is relatively new, it has had some success in generating funds for other projects. Finally, the Editorial is also bringing benefits to communities living in the rural areas of El Salvador by employing artists for illustrating the publications and children's products.

For more information
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Benefiting Local Communities through Biodiversity-Based Micro-Enterprise Development

Stefanie Koch, CSR Manager, Holcim Ltd.

Founded in Switzerland in 1912, Holcim is one of the world's leading suppliers of cement and aggregates (crushed stone, sand and gravel) as well as ready-mix concrete and asphalt, and related services. Sustainable development is a key element of our vision and mission, and with our commitment, we aspire to create value for ourselves and our stakeholders.

Therefore, for many years, the concept of the 'triple bottom line' – value creation, sustainable environmental performance and social responsibility – has been an integral part of our business strategy and management systems.

The resource-intensive nature of our business contributed to our conviction that biodiversity conservation plays an important role in our long-term resource and reserve strategy. This has led us to engage with IUCN, a respected organisation, to get advice on assessing and mitigating our biodiversity footprint. Furthermore, our experience operating in more than 70 countries worldwide, oftentimes in remote and poor areas, has contributed to the development and implementation of a community engagement strategy that is based on continuous

and effective stakeholder dialogue, thorough socio-economic and needs assessments and the development and implementation of projects in close and active collaboration with community stakeholders in the areas of education, community development and infrastructure. With these projects we aim to effectively improve the quality of life of different stakeholder groups.

Assessments in our host communities and the work of community advisory panels revealed that opportunities for income generation as well as biodiversity conservation are among the top priorities for stakeholders. Based on these experiences and lessons learned in many countries, we attempted to bring together the biodiversity and community engagement agendas, resulting in the development of a strategy of creating biodiversity-based micro-enterprises as part of the strategic alliance with IUCN.

Biodiversity-based micro-enterprises have the potential to lift individuals and communities out of poverty while conserving biodiversity. The main characteristic of these enterprises is that they depend on biodiversity for their core business or contribute

to biodiversity conservation through their activity, while at the same time providing income. The main actors and owners of the business are the local entrepreneurs themselves who are engaged in a process of situation analysis, strategy and business plan development, integration into value chains and monitoring and evaluation. The process itself is facilitated and supported by Holcim and IUCN. The main opportunities of biodiversity-based micro-enterprise development projects are the implementation of sound projects that deliver clear and measurable benefits to community as well as company stakeholders, a knowledge exchange and transfer relating to business as well as biodiversity and natural resource management expertise, and the achievements of significant livelihood and quality of life improvements in the local communities.

In the case of Vietnam, people of the Khmer minority in Kien Giang province received skills training in making and selling woven Lepironia products in an area that is the last remnant of the Lepironia grasslands ecosystem of the Mekong River delta. The sales of these products led to significant livelihood improvements for the

entrepreneurs as well as sustainable use of Lepironia and the promotion of community-based management of natural resources.

The benefits for us, or other multinational companies engaging in these types of community projects, are the definition of innovative businesses along the value and supply chains, the identification of new business ideas and benefit streams and ultimately the adding of value across the triple bottom line. In our case, potential businesses might also relate to sustainable construction and waste management, such as the use of rice husk or other waste products that can be used as alternative fuels in cement kilns.

We believe that biodiversity-based micro-enterprise development, in particular during a time of global economic turmoil, presents many challenges, but even more so, provides an opportunity to leverage the competitive advantage that comes from our commitment to environmental and social responsibility.

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Towards 'Sourcing with Respect': Engaging Private Industry to Promote Ethical Sourcing Practices

Rik Kutsch Lojenga, Executive Director, Union for Ethical BioTrade



Consumers today are increasingly demanding 'green' products. And as research, marketing reports and buyer surveys show, this call for ethical and sustainable goods is not a temporary market whim; it is an undoubtedly

growing trend that is here to stay.

To gauge this mounting interest, and the awareness of biodiversity issues in the cosmetics sector in particular, in 2009 the Union for Ethical BioTrade commissioned a survey of 4,000 respondents – with telling results (Ethical BioTrade Barometer, 2009). Of those questioned, 85 percent wanted to know more about sourcing practices in this industry, while 79 percent said they would stop buying a cosmetics and personal care brand if they knew that brand did not practice environmental sourcing or ethical trade.

The same study also revealed that 79 percent of respondents would have more faith in a cosmetics and personal care company whose commitment to ethical sourcing of biodiversity was verified by independent organisations. It is here that the Union for Ethical BioTrade is positioned. A non-profit, membership-based association, the Union promotes the 'Sourcing with Respect' of flora and fauna from native biodiversity; its mission is to encourage the sustainable use of ingredients that naturally occur in sourcing areas. By bringing in relevant private industry players, the Union for Ethical BioTrade seeks to advance the conservation of biodiversity, while ensuring that all contributors along the supply chain, including small-scale producers, are paid fair prices and receive an equitable share of the benefits from the sale of the final products. The ethical sourcing of biodiversity recognises countries' sovereign rights over biodiversity and respects the rights of local and indigenous communities over their traditional knowledge.

Yet the Union for Ethical BioTrade acknowledges that implementing sound biodiversity practices along the supply chain can be challenging for smaller

players. In addition, obtaining access to markets and receiving recognition for ethical practices may be difficult. This is why the Union was created: over time the grouping of like-minded companies will create a pool of supply and demand of ethical practices, while the verification system allows for effective differentiation of ethically sourced products in the market, and support measures help to facilitate implementation.

One such form of support measures that complements the Union's mission is the Ethical BioTrade Community Programme. Recently launched, this programme aims to promote the deeper engagement of local and indigenous communities in the ethical sourcing of biodiversity. The effective implementation of Ethical BioTrade principles will help to generate local income and ensure the sustainable use of biodiversity ingredients sourced from these communities. Through engaging institutions on the ground, the programme will work to address problems commonly faced by biodiversity enterprises at the community level, such as limited infrastructure or lack of information on sustainable management of ingredients.

The programme works through the provision of Ethical BioTrade Community Grants, which are intended for small and medium-sized enterprises and cover costs related to the design and implementation of Ethical BioTrade practices. This includes, among other activities, scientific research focused on sustainability aspects of used species and their ecosystems; community consultation processes; knowledge development at the community level; and the establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems.

Through this and other initiatives, the Union for Ethical BioTrade is working to encourage enterprises to promote the 'Sourcing with Respect' of ingredients that come from native biodiversity. Markets are clearly poised to embrace this trend and consumer awareness is rising. But for industry to truly thrive in this market and capitalise on growing demand, such practices need support and independent recognition. It is here that the Union for Ethical BioTrade seeks to contribute.

For more information
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Building a Sustainable Rattan Industry

WWF Greater Mekong Region (Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam)

The rattan industry has the potential to become an important driver for rural development and forest conservation in the Greater Mekong region. WWF and IKEA have partnered to work towards this goal by developing a model for sustainable rattan production and commercialisation that also improves community welfare.

Rattan, a climber from the palm family with more than 600 species and 13 genera identified worldwide, is a valuable non-timber forest product (NTFP) found in forests throughout the Greater Mekong region. Its stems are used for a variety of purposes, including food, shelter and making furniture. Village communities in Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam rely heavily on the rattan trade, with sales accounting for up to 50 percent of cash income in rural areas. The rattan trade is also an important source of foreign exchange earnings for the countries in the region. However, more than 90 percent of rattan processed in the Greater Mekong originates from natural forests and is being depleted at an unsustainable rate.

The WWF-IKEA Sustainable Rattan Harvesting and Production Programme began in 2006 with the aim of creating a sustainable rattan industry in the

Greater Mekong Region that would give communities, governments and industry an economic reason to conserve forests. The decision to work on this supply chain stemmed from a joint WWF and government assessment of the rattan industry in the region as well as from a request by IKEA, the Swedish furniture and home products retailer, which sources a lot of its rattan from the area and wanted to ensure the continuation of the resource-base. This programme is structured in such a way that it operates at different stages of the supply chain, from village producing groups, to traders and processors, and finally to buyers. The programme takes an entrepreneurial approach to conservation by looking for economically beneficial solutions to sustainability issues and trying to generate better returns for all parties involved.

At the village level, WWF began by setting up pilot projects in six villages in Cambodia and Laos, the region's key rattan producers. They worked with the local communities to create 'village producing groups' or 'village enterprises' for harvesting, producing and marketing rattan in a sustainable and more commercially viable way. WWF's work at the village level has entailed solving both sustainability and commercial challenges.

On the sustainability side, they have built the capacities of local people to manage the forest and their resources as well as to adopt techniques for sustainable wild rattan harvesting. In the Bolikhanxay province of Lao PDR, the programme has successfully

set up the first rattan forest managed by local communities and is now in the process of replicating this management structure in a further 100 communities in Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam. WWF has also helped to set up rattan nurseries to reduce the dependence on wild rattan. In Lao PDR, these plantations generate US\$500 per year per hectare through the production of rattan shoots for food. Trials have also begun for rattan plantations for handicraft purposes.

From a commercial standpoint, WWF created a business structure for organising community members in enterprises for harvesting, producing and marketing rattan. They have also built capacity among community members to improve the quality of production, to obtain higher returns. In terms of benefit sharing, these enterprises have been organised in such a way that 70 percent of rattan sales go to the village fund for development work (schools and health). The remaining 30 percent goes to the individual members of the group.

WWF then works with national, regional and international buyers to influence the demand for cleaner and more sustainable rattan at fairer prices. In doing this, they work with the middle-man or rattan processor and trader, who are the people that buy the raw material, add value to it by processing it and then link up with regional and international buyers such as IKEA. In particular, WWF has been engaging with IKEA's rattan suppliers and linking them to the



WWF 2008 © Delphine Joseph

community enterprises. They are also working with these players on efficiency issues to improve resource usage and reduce raw material wastage along the supply chain.

Through this approach, WWF is confident that incentives will be in place for local communities to conserve forest ecosystems where rattan is available. WWF will continue to replicate this work in villages throughout the Greater Mekong Region. The medium-term goal is that by 2010, 100 communities

in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam will be engaged in sustainable rattan production. In the long run, through this holistic supply chain approach to conservation, WWF, IKEA and the European Commission want to build a sustainable rattan industry that provides a financial incentive to maintain 50,000 hectares of forest in the region.

For more information
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Biyotematur: Specialists in Nature Tours

TEMA Foundation (Turkey)

The key goals of Turkey's TEMA Foundation are contributing to the protection of natural habitats and biodiversity, raising public awareness for conservation and enhancing the profile of forest ecosystems in society. To achieve these goals, TEMA created Biyotematur, an ecotour operator specialising in nature-friendly excursions.

Biyotematur is an ecotour operator based in Turkey that specialises in creating unique excursions for nature enthusiasts. While tours can be tailored to the individual needs of clients, the company also runs a variety of group excursions each year. Their focus is on the Turkish fauna and flora as well as on the variety of existing ecosystems in the country. The tours, which include oak tours, botanical tours, native tree tours, birdwatching tours and bee safaris, tend to last for two weeks, and include all transport, accommodation and meal arrangements. There are also opportunities to adapt standard excursions to meet a specific group's needs and include more or less cultural items in the itinerary. Biyotematur's key area of operation is the Macahel region close to the Georgian border, where they have been working with local communities to develop sustainable tourist infrastructure.

Biyotematur was created in 2000 by the TEMA Foundation, Turkey's fastest growing environmental NGO, to help in their mission

of promoting conservation and sustainable development in Turkey. Biyotematur contributed to this mission by funding a considerable amount of TEMA's conservation work. Biyotematur has also been instrumental in raising public awareness about Turkey's natural heritage. Furthermore, by bringing tourists to rural and remote areas of the country, Biyotematur has contributed to the sustainable economic development of these areas. For instance, in the Macahel region, tourism development has enabled the creation of a number of tourism-related small enterprises that are run by villagers. TEMA has also trained village youth to work in these tourism-related enterprises, meaning that they no longer need to migrate to bigger cities in search of employment. Biyotematur has also helped revive traditional industries in some remote areas of Turkey.

By offering nature-based excursions, Biyotematur has become the leading ecotourism operator in Turkey. The company created a unique and innovative product, tapped into a niche market and has grown considerably since its establishment. Based on this continuous growth, and recognising the need to uphold high standards in running the excursions, TEMA recently passed the management of Biyotematur over to SognoTour, a professional tourism company operating in Turkey. However, as a condition of the transfer, TEMA and SognoTour agreed that Biyotematur will continue to operate in such a way that brings benefits for both biodiversity and local communities in Turkey.

For more information
Visit: www.biyotematur.com
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Wild Flowers from the Cape Floral Kingdom

Flower Valley Conservation Trust (South Africa)

The Flower Valley Conservation Trust works to ensure that flowers from the unique and mega-biodiverse Cape Floral Kingdom are well-managed and harvested sustainably for sale to the retail flower industry.

The Flower Valley Conservation Trust was established in 1999, through a project with Fauna and Flora International (FFI), to investigate and promote the sustainable use of fynbos flower products destined for the retail flower market. Following years of unsustainable management, the aim of Flower Valley was to improve the harvesting and management practices in place in the industry while identifying a means for the sustainable marketing of these products.

Wild flower harvesting has been a major part of traditional livelihoods and a source of employment in South Africa's Western Cape region for decades. During this time, however, fynbos sustainability has been negatively affected by the systematic removal of commercially valuable target species by harvesters and the conversion of land to agriculture. The Cape Floral Kingdom is the

smallest and richest of the world's six floral kingdoms, boasting one of the highest levels of biodiversity per unit area internationally. As such, many flowers in the global flower industry have originated in the Cape Floral Kingdom, which remains an important source for both wild and cultivated varieties of flowers in trade at the global level, including the well-known King Protea.

The role of Flower Valley in transforming the industry began with the development of a better understanding of the ecological requirements of the fynbos system and species. Through the engagement of expert scientists, sustainable off-take levels and harvesting methods were defined for commercial varieties, to reduce risk to businesses while maximising gains from the available natural capital in the region. These standards were then discussed and tested with landowners and harvesters to ensure their appropriateness for widespread application in the industry. The uptake of this work was further bolstered through the formulation of a Code of Practice by Flower Valley and permitting system by the regional regulatory authority (Cape Nature) based on these terms.

The King Protea and other fynbos flowers are robust flowers, very unique in appearance, and make for long-lasting flower arrangements. As

such, these flowers make for excellent export products where they are sold to retailers in Europe, such as Marks & Spencer. By working with Flower Valley, Marks & Spencer is also helping to supply the growing demand for indigenous bouquets in the United Kingdom. Flower Valley's accredited suppliers also supply South African retailers, such as Pick 'n Pay, a nationwide retailer that, like Marks & Spencer, is interested in securing a sustainable supply as well as assisting with the development of the industry.

Related to this work is the investment made by Flower Valley into building the business case for sustainably harvested fynbos flowers in a market where such considerations remain relatively unknown. This has involved further work with the supply chain on an auditing system, as well as the development of a unique brand and sustainable fynbos marketing strategy. As part of this approach, Flower Valley has conducted research on the suitability of different certification schemes for sustainable fynbos. They are now in the process of engaging different schemes to assess their ability to build on existing work while offering improved market access and returns to sustainable producers.

For more information
Visit: www.flowervalley.org.za
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Becoming a Local in Isla Costa Rica

Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris (Ecuador)

Since the year 2000, Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris has been leading the effort to conserve mangrove ecosystems in southern Ecuador. As part of their work, they have been working with local communities to develop and promote ecotourism on Isla Costa Rica, as well as teaching them to manage the mangrove forests sustainably.

The charming Isla Costa Rica is located in the Jambelí Archipelago in southern Ecuador. This area holds a considerable amount of Ecuador's remaining mangrove forests, which

are habitat to important native species, particularly a wide variety of marine avifauna. The area's attractions include the streams and canals that are characteristic of

mangrove forests, extremely diverse fauna and flora and rich local cultures that boast ancestral knowledge about the mangrove ecosystems and their services. Isla Costa Rica is also dotted with peaceful white sandy beaches. All these characteristics, plus the friendly and welcoming local people, make Isla Costa Rica the ideal ecotourism destination.

Isla Costa Rica has been developed as an ecotourism destination by Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris, a local NGO, in partnership with the local community. Together, these two players set up a community enterprise that is responsible for providing different tourist products and services, including transport, accommodation, catering, guiding and maintenance. The community enterprise is organised in such a way that it involves about 90 percent of the community members who run the different facilities and activities on a rotational basis. The business is managed by a Tourism Committee that includes a Coordination Body, a Commissions Group, a Marketing and Sales Department and the Mangrove Fund. The Coordination Body, which is responsible for overseeing operations, has three members, including one representative from each of the fishing associations and one from the local government. The Commissions Group, which is composed of five community members, is responsible

for liaising with the five commissions for tourism services (transport, accommodation, catering, guiding and maintenance).

Fundación Arcoiris is responsible for the Marketing and Sales Department of the business at the local, regional and national levels, through partnerships with tourism players as well as through the development of promotional materials and participation in tourism events. Finally, a percentage of the income from the tourism services goes into the Mangrove Fund, which is dedicated to funding social and environmental improvements in the area.

The community enterprise of Isla Costa Rica makes visiting this area a unique and authentic experience in every way. The local communities invite tourists to become a part of the community and live the local way for one (or several) days. The tourists stay in local houses, eat local food and even learn the local trade by working as fishermen, and collecting shells and crabs. Tourists also have the opportunity to engage in more leisurely activities, such as enjoying a siesta on the beach or going on guided tours by foot or by fishing boat.

The Isla Costa Rica ecotourism enterprise was not established solely for profit-making purposes. In fact, the key objective of this enterprise is to strengthen community bonds and contribute to the empowerment

of local people. The profit-sharing mechanism and structure of the business supports this goal in several ways: First, profits are shared equally amongst service providers and correspond to at least the value generated in a day of fishing. Second, a percentage of the revenues from the business go into the Mangrove Fund, to support development work in the community. Third, the enterprise has a policy to source most of its products locally, which means additional benefits for community members who are not even involved in tourism. The enterprise has also enabled women take a more productive role in society.

By supporting ecotourism development in this area, Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris also aimed to halt or prevent some of the conservation problems associated with unsustainable use of resources by the communities. These problems included the fragmentation of mangrove ecosystems from shrimp fishing, the overexploitation of hydrobiological resources by local fishermen and runoff of residual water from the community into the streams. Through this project and by working with Fundación Arcoiris, the local community has become aware of the local conservation issues and is increasingly involved in solving them.

For more information
Visit: www.arcoiris.org.ec
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The Honey Pot of Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park

Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDDT) (Jamaica)

The Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust states that its mission in Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park is to manage the park 'for its natural and recreational values by striking the right balance between biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development for the ultimate well-being of the people of Jamaica'.

The Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park (BJCMNP) in eastern Jamaica, which occupies about five percent of the country's land area, is a nature lover's paradise, with vast expanses of unspoiled rainforest and rich biological diversity. The park provides an important refuge for most of Jamaica's wildlife and is home to numerous endemic species, including

the endangered giant swallowtail butterfly. It is also an area of scenic beauty and cultural importance. Spread over three mountain ranges and ranging in altitude from 150m to 2,256m, the scenery in the park is ever-changing. In terms of culture, the area reflects Jamaica's rich history both in the living traditions of its local communities and in its variety of historical sites. The Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDDT), a local NGO, manages the BJCMNP under agreements with the Government of Jamaica.

JCDDT developed the Holywell Recreational Area, a multi-use recreational area situated at the gateway to the park, to generate income and support for the BJCMNP. Conveniently located only one hour's drive from the capital city Kingston but nestled within the lush rainforest, Holywell is a perfect escape from the stress of urban life. The area is equipped with picnic areas with gazebo-style shelters as well as three log cabins and five campsites

for overnight stays. More active recreational opportunities such as hiking are supported by four trails that go deeper into the park. Guides from the local communities have been trained to take tourists on the different trails and explain more about the natural and cultural assets of the park. JCDDT also offers educational tours to local schools. Once a year, Holywell transforms itself into a hub of activity for the Misty Bliss festival, an event that showcases the cultural heritage of the area (see box).

In recent years, with the park facing the threat of increasing encroachment from the expansion of agricultural land, JCDDT saw the need to raise awareness among local people and visitors alike. By creating employment and business opportunities for local people, JCDDT discourages them from carrying out illegal activities within the park. Moreover, by catering to a majority of Jamaicans, they have been able to showcase the rich but threatened

biodiversity of the country and raise support for it. Furthermore, Holywell's location ensures that recreational use occurs chiefly around the recreational area, which then limits excessive visitor impact on the park's natural resources.

In an effort to complement the activities and facilities on offer in Holywell, JCDDT is now embarking on a sustainable tourism project with different stakeholders from the park's surroundings, including local communities, hotels and guesthouses, as well as small tour operators. Through this initiative, local stakeholders will take a destination approach to tourism and develop products and services that both enhance the tourist experience and further raise awareness of the need to conserve the national park.

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The Misty Bliss Festival

Misty Bliss is a unique event that takes place in Holywell to celebrate the cultural and natural heritage of the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park. JCDDT organises this event every year to celebrate the park's anniversary. During Misty Bliss, communities living around the national park showcase the area and their culture by selling local products, such as food and crafts, and by providing entertainment with local music and dances. Misty Bliss also helps draw attention to the importance of conserving Jamaica's natural resources and brings important income to the park and the local communities.



JCDDT © Jeremy Francis

Creating Markets for Biodiversity Offsets: The Case of CDC Biodiversité in France

Joshua Bishop, Chief Economist, IUCN and Elodie Chêne, Professional Associate, IUCN

Although nearly all economic activity results in some residual impact on ecosystems and biodiversity, responsible companies are working hard to identify, avoid, minimise and mitigate their adverse environmental impacts. Ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation must become a positive business proposition, rather than simply a cost or a drag on economic development. Useful lessons (and a potential model) can be found in the emerging global market for carbon offsets, as well as similar schemes at regional and national levels.

Offset approaches have been developed for biodiversity and other ecosystem services, but are not as widely known or universally adopted as the growing carbon offset market. The biodiversity offset approach is based on the polluter-pays-principle, which holds project developers responsible for any residual loss of habitat or water quality that results from their activities (after following best practice avoidance and mitigation procedures). Project developers are expected to provide compensation for this residual damage through support for conservation or restoration activities that can deliver environmental benefits equal to or greater than the magnitude of the damage caused by the project. While there are similarities between carbon and biodiversity offsets, there are also important differences. Perhaps the most important difference is that biodiversity, unlike carbon, is not fungible, which severely limits the geographic scope of biodiversity offsets.

An interesting extension of the concept of biodiversity offsets is to provide compensation in advance of impacts, by establishing a 'biodiversity bank' from which compensation credits can be deducted as needed. This approach turns biodiversity offsets into assets that can be traded, effectively creating a market for ecological compensation. Biodiversity banking is a relatively new concept, although examples can be found in the United States, Australia and some other countries.

The first pilot biodiversity bank in France was inaugurated on 11 May 2009, near the Mediterranean coast. The project involves the restoration and reintegration of a 357-hectare abandoned orchard into the adjacent Crau Nature Reserve. This reserve is the last remaining semi-arid steppe in Western Europe, containing several rare and threatened species of birds, insects and plants. An unusual feature of this project is the role of agriculture in ecological restoration. Extensive livestock production and seasonal grazing played an essential role in creating the original habitat, but such practices have been replaced in recent decades by intensive irrigated horticulture. As part of the biodiversity banking project, traditional grazing methods will be reintroduced as a key element of the site management plan. Because industrial horticulture is in decline (due to competition from other countries in southern Europe and North Africa), a return to traditional sheep farming on this site

and in the nature reserve may provide a viable alternative for the local agricultural sector.

The experiment builds on existing French legislation, in particular the Law for the Protection of Nature (1976), which introduced a legal obligation for developers to avoid, minimise and, if possible, compensate for the major negative effects of their projects, in this hierarchical order. The pilot project in Crau aims to create a 'biodiversity bank' that can assist local developers whose activities have an impact on this type of ecosystem and who are legally obliged to offset the residual impacts of their projects. In addition, the project aims to aggregate offsets from several developers and thus allow a more coherent approach to compensation and better conservation outcomes.

CDC Biodiversité is a subsidiary of the French financial institution Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations. It acts as an operator dedicated to providing the necessary intelligence for biodiversity-related project design and monitoring, including the implementation of offset measures. It is also testing the biodiversity banking approach by financing and managing the pilot project in Crau. It is supported by several national and local agencies, notably the Ministry of Ecology, the Regional Environment Agency, the management of the Crau Nature Reserve and the local chamber of agriculture, with additional technical support from scientists at the universi-

ties of Marseille and Avignon. CDC Biodiversité receives the authorisation from the administration to sell credits and will develop 30-year contracts with developers who are buying the credits. To keep track of credit owners and any biodiversity credit trades that might develop, CDC Biodiversité is exploring the possibility of creating a registry, to ensure that biodiversity credits can be tracked from issuance to withdrawal and guarantee against double selling.

An additional justification for biodiversity offset banks is that they are more cost-effective than ad-hoc offsets. Nevertheless, competitiveness has not yet been demonstrated in France, mostly because of the absence of national standards for offset implementation. Today, the price for credits through the experiment in the Plaine de Crau is estimated at €35,000/ha. This price includes land purchase, restoration and management over 30 years. However, developers may find it cheaper to offset their impacts on their own, through shorter-term projects (usually 0-5 years) validated by the administration.

Many questions remain, including the long-term use and governance of the site, how rapidly the native vegetation and other species will recover, how many 'biodiversity credits' will be generated by the experiment, and how much damage to other sites may be offset as a result. Nevertheless, the example of CDC Biodiversité and its pilot biodiversity bank in Crau shows



what can be achieved with the right enabling framework – in this case, the legal obligation to compensate for residual impacts on habitat. More generally, there is a need for much wider awareness of the potential (and limitations) of biodiversity offsets and biodiversity banking amongst business, governments and civil society. Key priorities include:

1. Implement the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, reduce, mitigate, compensate);
2. Measure your impacts and mitigation actions, and disclose them;
3. Test new approaches to compensate for residual impacts; and
4. Aim for 'no net loss' or 'net positive impact' on biodiversity.

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ACICAFOC is a membership organisation of community groups whose goal is to disseminate sustainable forestry practices to indigenous and rural people throughout Central America. One component of their work is supply chain management. In recent years, ACICAFOC has been working on the cocoa supply chain with the objective of creating a sustainable cocoa brand for Mesoamerica.

The Mesoamerican Network for Cocoa Production is the brand name under which the small producers of Central America collectively market their cocoa products. This network was created in 2006 with the objectives of (i) improving and standardising cocoa production methods; (ii) influencing policy in the cocoa sector; (iii) enhancing the aggregate value of Mesoamerican cocoa exports; (iv) bringing together cocoa producers to share best

practices in production, marketing, technological development and sustainability; and (v) converting the network into a formal institution for negotiating and marketing sustainable cocoa by developing a work plan, financial model and marketing strategy. At present, the network is composed of over 9,000 small producers in 15 organisations from Belize to Panamá and is continually growing. In fact, the network's total production equals more than 6,000 tonnes of cocoa per year, marketed in Europe and the United States.

The Mesoamerican Network for Cocoa Production was developed and is coordinated by ACICAFOC, the Coordinating Association of Indigenous and Community Agroforestry in Central America. ACICAFOC, which is a membership organisation, created the network based on demand from its members, who felt that they had a better chance of succeeding in the market if they pooled their products together under the same brand. ACICAFOC then added a strong sustainability component to this initiative by arguing that it is vital to ensure the continuity of the resource base, but also by demonstrating that sustainably sourced cocoa could achieve premium revenues in the international market

place. The focus on sustainability derived from the fact that many cocoa producers in the region live in or near high biodiversity forest areas.

Although the Mesoamerican Network for Cocoa Production is still in its early days, it has already brought about both social and environmental benefits. On the social side, the main benefit has been the creation of a united front for negotiating and trading in the international arena. Additionally, the participating producers have received training on business-related issues as well as technical assistance. From an environmental perspective, affiliated producers have been working towards organic and Fair Trade certification and in doing so are switching to less intensive production methods as well as agroforestry practices. Through this project, ACICAFOC has also been raising local producers' awareness of biodiversity conservation issues. The next step of the project will be to consolidate this network as a brand through the development, in late 2009, of a website where the cocoa products can be showcased and marketed.

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Towards a Sustainable Cocoa Brand in Mesoamerica

Asociación Coordinadora Indígena y Campesina de Agroforestería Comunitaria de Centroamérica (ACICAFOC) (Costa Rica)

Promoting Ecotourism in Lebanon

Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) (Lebanon)

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon is the national partner for BirdLife International. Its core programme focuses on Important Bird Areas (IBAs), which are amongst the world's key sites for the conservation of biodiversity. In order to raise awareness for these sites and to bring additional income to local communities, SPNL, in partnership with Lebanese Adventure, a national eco-tour operator, supports the development of bird-watching tourism facilities and excursions.

Hima Kfar Zabad Wetland is a marshland site surrounded by agricultural land and steep dry mountain slopes in the Bekaa Valley in northeastern Lebanon. This area, one of the 15 Important Bird Areas of Lebanon, lies on the main migration route for African-Eurasian water birds, and is therefore an ideal location for bird watching. Over 69 bird species have been observed

in the area, as well as an incredible diversity of fauna and flora. The rich biodiversity, coupled with a landscape that is ideally suited for active holidays, make *Hima* Kfar Zabad a perfect destination for ecotourists. Furthermore, the site is located only one-and-a-half hour's drive from Beirut and close to Baalback and Anjar, two archaeological World Heritage Sites that are also key tourist destinations. Thus, the development of ecotourism has been identified as the best solution for conservation of the local natural resources and for boosting community income.

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon has supported the development of tourist infrastructure and recreational activities in *Hima* Kfar Zabad and its surrounding area. To bring tourists to the site, SPNL has developed several facilities, including a visitor centre, a picnic area, a birding hide, and a camping ground, and they have newly installed team-building facilities including medium ropes, and a climbing and rappelling wall. SPNL has also created a series of recreational packages that focus on bird watching and identification, and often include a cultural component such as visiting local villages and participating in community life. These packages involve activities such as hiking, climbing, canoeing and biking, during which the tourists are generally accompanied by a



local guide trained by SPNL. Bed and breakfast accommodation in local community houses has also been developed in the local village. Finally, to attract more visitors to the eco-destination and to promote environmental awareness, SPNL celebrates the annual Bird Migration festival during each October and the AEW festival in May. The last festival was held between Kfar Zabad and Anjar villages, under a project supported by USAID-OTI Lebanon designed to create common environmental awareness between the two villages, particularly since they share the same wetland and IBA internationally declared site.

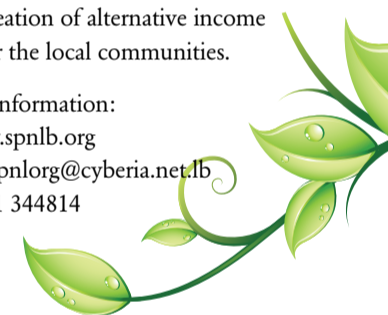
The local communities surrounding the site are involved in both site management and running the eco-destination. In addition, in the implementation of this initiative, SPNL has greatly benefited from

the contribution of its private sector partner, Lebanese Adventure, a professional eco-tour operator that was an integral part of the planning phase of the infrastructure, identification of suitable recreational activities and implementation of the tours. Lebanese Adventure has also provided technical capacity building to the community on guiding techniques in nature and support in marketing the eco-packages.

The development of ecotourism businesses is a central element in SPNL's strategy for the conservation of IBAs and fits well with their focus on reviving the *Hima* system. A *Hima* is a traditional system of natural resource tenure that has been practiced for more than 1,500 years in the Arabian Peninsula, to ensure protection of land and the sustainable use of natural resources by and for the surrounding communities. SPNL

ensures that conservation principles are upheld in these *Himas* through the creation of Site Support Groups (SSG), a group of volunteers from the local communities who assist in managing each site. In the five *Himas* so far declared in Lebanon (Kfar Zabad and Anjar wetlands in the Bekaa valley, Oolielieh and Mansouri marine *Hima* on the southern coast, and Ebel El-saqi Forest in the south of Lebanon), SPNL has developed projects focusing on awareness raising, capacity building, and activities linking conservation of biodiversity and the creation of alternative income streams for the local communities.

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The Role of Government in Building Sustainability Businesses

Alexander Kasterine, Senior Market Development Adviser (Trade and Environment), International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO)



Governments exist to provide public services and set the right conditions for economic development. Although the private sector can be a dynamic force for creating wealth, it is still required to operate according to the 'rules of the game' set by governments. These rules can be either good for sustainability or bad. With respect to developing biodiversity businesses, the rules are, on balance, bad. Biodiversity is in decline due to strong economic incentives to destroy the environment.

Furthermore, lack of government commitments on mitigating climate change threatens to destroy a substantial portion of biodiversity, leaving

little for business to 'market'. Nature reports that temperature rises will wipe out up to 40 percent of plant and animal species by 2050 under current emission paths. Agreement from governments to limit carbon emissions is a prerequisite for biodiversity businesses to survive and prosper. The onus is on governments, not businesses, to set the rules of the game for emissions reductions. This means principally pricing carbon through either cap-and-trade schemes or carbon taxes.

Aside from putting their countries on low carbon emission paths, governments have a central role to play in designing and enforcing national environmental policies. These include, for example, quotas for fishing, sustainable management regimes for forests, securing land tenure, agro-ecological research and extension, and protecting national parks. Government commitments have to be multiple, complex and long-term. Bad governance (i.e. corruption) undermines all these measures.

The natural products sector is particularly reliant on effective government to ensure sustainability. The World Health Organization estimates that the wild collection of plants and animals is worth around US\$65 billion per year. This trade provides cash income for millions of rural people often living in poverty in marginal areas.

Consumer demand has increased for natural ingredients for cosmetics, medicines and food, placing natural resources under stress. When these resources are in season, people desperate for an income rush to the forests and mountains to collect valuable leaves, roots and berries. As permit systems for collection rarely exist in developing countries, this leads to over-collection and depletion of the resource. For example, when diet preparation companies became interested in hoodia, a succulent plant from southern Africa, over-collection led to local devastation of the plant's populations. This resulted in CITES placing the plant

on their Appendix 2 list, meaning the trade must be 'controlled'.

Controlling the trade means setting up transparent and sustainable supply chains – a key role for government, as illustrated in Namibia. In Namibia, a strong export trade in natural products including marula oil, Kalahari melon seed oil and other endemic species has emerged employing many thousands of indigenous peoples. In 1994, there were no exports.

The government initially commissioned studies of plant resources and assessed their commercial potential. It subsequently provided the establishment and ongoing funding of the Indigenous Plants Task Team. This coordinating body is made up of a diverse group of government ministries, companies and NGOs. Their role is to identify priority areas of action for the sector and then commit and leverage new resources. Having this type of 'planning platform' and ability to deploy budgets more strategically has

increased the impact of scarce government resources and minimises the risk of failure of a product's development.

The Government of Namibia has thereby made the rules of the game clear for industry and communities to develop national biodiversity businesses. However, correcting the bigger market failure, namely climate change, is largely beyond their control and that of other developing countries. It is governments in developed and emerging economies whose actions on mitigation will determine the future 'supply' of biodiversity resources.

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The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the ITC. Any error is the sole responsibility of the author, who thanks Cyril Lombard of Phytotrade Africa and Pierre Plassis of CRIAA/SA-DC for their valuable insights.

Handicrafts that Support a River Basin

Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) (Botswana)

The Every River has its People Project (ERP), is a transboundary community-based natural resources management (CBNRM) programme that has been running in the Okavango River Basin for more than six years. The ERP is an integrated partnership between non-governmental organisations (NGOs), stakeholders and ministries in Angola, Botswana and Namibia. ERP focuses on capacity building among the Okavango riparian population (approximately 600,000 people in Angola, Botswana and Namibia), towards taking responsibility and decision making for the sustainable management and utilisation of the natural resources of the Okavango River Basin. The project operates under the auspices of the Okavango River Commission (OKACOM) and was sponsored by Swedish Sida from 1999 until 2007.

The Every River has its People Project (ERP) is being jointly implemented in the Okavango River Basin by the Association for Environmental Conservation and Rural Development (ACADIR) in Angola, the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and the Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) in Botswana, with KCS undertaking overall project management. Through their work on ERP, these three organisations have provided capacity building for communities, to help them manage their resources sustainably and enable them to participate in decision-making related to the development of the basin. Another important element of ERP has been to foster the development of sustainable enterprises that bring economic alternatives to local communities and improve their livelihoods.

To empower local communities for natural resource management, ERP created a natural resource management enterprise, aiming at compensating the communities for limiting their access to the resources, while at the same time providing sustainable alternatives to community members engaging in unsustainable practices, such as ploughing the riverbed or overfishing. Working with local communities around the river basin, ERP partners set up community enterprises for the production and commercialisation of local products made of sustainably sourced materials. The main products developed by these enterprises are handicrafts, in particular wood carvings, ornaments for decoration, baskets, fishing nets and pottery. Most crafts are made from indigenous natural resources and initiatives are



linked to optimising the collective management and sustainable utilisation of natural indigenous resources. Despite the benefits of cross-pollination of skills and knowledge across the basin, care is taken to retain authenticity to the region and country of origin. Botswana, the pioneer of craft development, has much to offer in terms of knowledge and experience. Namibia is centrally located for transboundary transference of knowledge and skills between the three countries, and, as such is the logical conduit to merge the three nations' craft efforts into one synergistic entity.

Craft can offer a meaningful source of income for remote and marginalised communities that have limited options for revenue. If the income earned is above the value of a loaf of bread and earned mainly by women, then it has a benefit. Craft can enhance traditional knowledge and skills and provide money for processed food (bread, sugar, soup, tinned fish) and basic household items (soap, washing powder, candles, matches and skin lotions) and larger items such as livestock.

ERP has created a market for these handicraft products by negotiating partnerships with safari companies, which agree to bring their tourists to the local villages that have formed an enterprise so the villagers can sell them their products. Producers of crafts in the Okavango Basin market their products directly to visitors, through individually owned road stalls, through contracts with wholesalers, through retailers and lodges, and with the support of community-based organisations and NGOs. ERP also organises regular basin-wide exhibitions to promote and market the crafts of the community enterprises (see box).

Working with the Forestry Department of Botswana and Etsha basket weavers, the ERP project has helped to revive agroforestry initiatives that were began in the early 1980s. Specifically, two agroforestry plots were funded: one, with 479

planted palm nuts, supports 44 individuals, while a second, with 1,386 palm seeds, supports 124 individuals. A third plot is being established with funds from Barclays Bank Botswana as a nursery and centre for education on propagating natural resources for both the local schools and the community, thus enhancing the sustainable utilisation of the natural resources.

ERP is also investing in shelters where the basket weavers can work during the day and storage areas to keep their products after completion. These structures will have a reception area, meeting room and rest room. It is anticipated that the shelter will be made out of indigenous materials, except for the storage and meeting rooms, which will require the use of modern materials to safeguard their products.

The benefits from handicrafts to marginalised communities are many, including increased self reliance and empowerment, poverty reduction, enhanced creativity and strengthening of traditional cultural practices, increased social and cultural identity, greater environmental management and concern for natural resources, and improved nutrition. Furthermore, as a good relationship is fostered between ERP and communities built on trust, crafts offer an ideal entry point for tackling development issues such as gender, poverty reduction, social advancement, natural resource management and improved health status, particularly relating to HIV/AIDS and other health programmes.

For more information
Visit: www.kcs.org.bw
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and cb@nnf.org.na



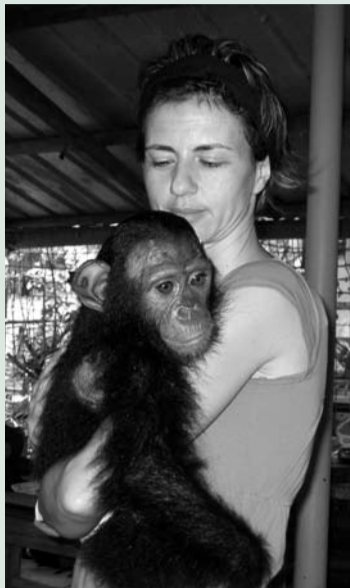
Benefits Derived from the Okavango Craft Exhibitions

Regular exhibitions have been held in different locations across the basin to promote the crafts created by the local communities. These exhibitions have had the following benefits for the programme:

- **Promotion of craft across the basin:** Through the exhibitions being undertaken across the basin, potential and existing ERP craft customers were afforded the opportunity to review the ERP product range, creating awareness of what was on offer. Taking feedback from the exhibition back to producers also helps improve their understanding of the craft marketing process. This promotion process is continuing with a craft display at the Windhoek Country Club.
- **Development of an ERP brand name:** The exhibition proved that there is space within the industry for an ERP brand. Creating their own niche in the craft industry will ultimately benefit the producers by providing them with regular and sustainable income. Promotion of ERP products is ongoing.
- **Confirmation of ERP quality control of products:** ERP constantly works to improve the quality of its products through on-the-spot training during the buying process and feedback from buyers to producers, and by using master craft people to train at the village level. A grading system is used, whereby more money for better quality products of the same size is paid.
- **Improved marketing potential:** The six new customers who came on board after the exhibition, added to the existing eight regular clients, brought the ERP customer base to a total of 14 regular buyers. The products have also been taken to international forums, including World Water Week.

Conservation: Small Grants Generate Sustainable Incomes

Silvia Ritossa, Head of the International Programme, Small Initiatives Programme (PPI) of the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM), IUCN French National Committee



In 2006, the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) created the Small Initiatives Programme (PPI) to support NGOs from Francophone Africa active in biodiversity protection and the struggle against climate change.

With a budget of 2 million Euros, the PPI financed 56 projects in 20 countries between 2006 and 2008. Following a largely positive verdict on its performance, the programme has just been renewed and allocated a new budget of 2.5 million Euros for the next two years. The programme is managed by the IUCN French National Committee.

One of the conditions of the programme is that any environmental actions undertaken must also contribute towards improving the livelihoods of the local populations, so that they are sustainable in the long term.

The results of the first phase of the programme have demonstrated

that the primary economic impact of the actions comes from better management of the available natural resources, restricting access by local populations to avoid the 'tragedy of the commons', whereby unfettered access leads to overexploitation.

But the experiences of the PPI also show that several NGOs have developed effective economic strategies for the sale of products in local and international markets, as a means to guarantee the sustainability of their actions. The PPI-supported activities have included:

Ecotourism: As ecotourism is generally considered to be the 'cream' of nature protection strategies, virtually all projects propose ecotourism development as a way to recover their long-term costs. In reality, however, the results are often disappointing, and there are several well-documented obstacles to the development of this type of tourism in Francophone Africa. However, several NGOs supported by the FFEM-PPI have succeeded in establishing quality products that yield significant returns for local populations.

- The Association des Peuples des Montagnes du Monde in Madagascar has succeeded in transforming the Anza site, a lemur reserve managed by the local community, into one of the country's foremost tourist sites, attracting 10,000 visitors a year. The NGO has also developed very successful hiking circuits in Ambohimahasina, using local guides and having tourists stay with local people in their homes.

- The Association de Protection des Hippopotames du Niger (APHN)

has set up a camp on the shores of the Niger River. The income from the camp is used to fund the costs of protecting one of the country's last remaining herds of hippopotamus. Activities have included the use of electric fences to protect the rice fields and the setting aside of pastures reserved exclusively for hippos.

- EcoBénin has developed a dozen or so specialised circuits around Lake Ahémé with camp-style accommodation, managed by specially trained local guides.

- Megaptera, on the island of Sainte Marie in Madagascar, has implemented strict rules for whale watching, which has become one of the island's flagship tourist attractions.

Local product marketing: Several PPI-supported NGOs have begun to specialise in the sale of products in the local market.

- The Association des Femmes de la Lagune (AFEL) in Benin produces salt using solar evaporation, thereby reducing dependence on traditional mangrove wood sources. At the same time, it protects village mangroves with the support of the local voodoo cult.

- Faced with the growing scarcity of medicinal plants used in traditional medicine, the NGOs Santorun in Senegal, CIED in Benin, and the Association des Tradithérapeutes de la Province du Houet in Burkina Faso, have begun to develop medicinal gardens that produce dozen of species of plants for the local market.

- In Benin, Ferme Apicole de Tobé has helped the traditional organisation

of hunters and the king of Banté to protect 14,000 hectares of forests by developing honey production in exchange for an end to hunting.

Export products: Other NGOs have chosen to focus on export products, by promoting the biological, equitable and biodiversity-friendly characteristics of their products.

- Fanamby in Madagascar sells biological vanilla.

- An interesting experiment has been carried out by the Association Velondriaka, an association of 23 fishing villages in the commune of Befandefa in West Madagascar. With the support of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the English diving organisation, Blue Ventures, the association has successfully created temporary reserves where fishing is prohibited. As a result, the squid caught by the fishermen tend to be larger, and the exporter, Copefrito, has agreed to pay more for their products to encourage them to maintain these sustainable management practices.

- RICAGIRN, a village association from the centre of the Central African Republic has succeeded in conserving a so-called 'sporting' large game hunting zone. It has granted the area on a concession basis to an international hunting guide that provides local employment and pays a significant sum in rent.

Carbon trading: Several NGOs have entered the international carbon market.

- Tananamadio transforms a significant part of the household waste from Mahajanga in Madagascar

into compost, thereby reducing the volume of methane gas generated by its disposal. With the support of the French NGO, Gevalor, it sells the corresponding carbon credits on the international market, thereby enabling it to recover a significant part of its costs.

- The Madagascar NGO L'Homme et L'Environnement focuses on a wide range of products in its area of operation, including ecotourism and the production of essential oils in the forest that are already sold by several international cosmetics companies including Chanel and Yves Rocher. The NGO also sells carbon credits to the World Bank and other companies from industrialised nations by establishing new plantations of indigenous trees. The income from these products will provide livelihoods for the local population, and health and education services throughout the zone, while at the same time ensuring the long-term protection of its exceptionally rich biodiversity.

Although these projects have shown that it is possible to conserve biodiversity through business approaches, it is important to remember that the success of these projects relies on an exceptional level of commitment and professionalism on the part of these NGOs, and, crucially, on the availability of products and markets. It would be utopian to believe that such cases can be applied across the board to save the world's biodiversity.

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Ensuring a Fair Share of Benefits to Communities

Gonzalo Oviedo, IUCN Senior Adviser on Social Policy



It's already two decades since the term ecotourism was coined, defined as 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people' (TIES, 1990). What at first seems to be a simple and brief definition actually represents a complex and challenging concept, where the three pillars of social responsibility, conservation, and local benefits meet. The concept has gained universal acceptance, and its application has expanded enormously all over the world.

These three interconnected elements are supposed to be intimately linked to the economic sustainability of the enterprises. The assumption is that achieving results in the three fields combined is fundamental to ensuring the economic sustainability of

the business. There is awareness that complex trade-offs exist, and that the temptation of short-term gains should not conspire against the three key elements of the approach. In practice, however, evaluations of ecotourism project often find that community benefits are sacrificed.

Beyond ecotourism, there is universal acceptance of social responsibility and ethical trade, nature conservation, and benefit sharing as the three cornerstones of biodiversity businesses. The Convention on Biological Diversity definitively established that conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing were critical and indivisible dimensions and objectives of biodiversity management. Many policies and tools in practically all branches of biodiversity businesses include benefit sharing, as do certification systems. But convincing demonstrations of achievements on local benefits continue to be elusive in many cases.

The issue is no longer *if* benefit sharing should be included; rather it is about *how* it should be accomplished. The many guidelines that exist generally offer good tips for benefit sharing in enterprise planning and management. But often the instruments, and

especially the practices, lack sufficient consideration of socio-cultural and political factors that influence the benefit sharing outcomes of biodiversity businesses, as they generally operate in rural areas where local dynamics escape the rules of formal systems, and where communities face huge obstacles in overcoming situations of poverty, insecurity and marginalisation.

Benefit sharing in that context is not only about how to increase household income; it is also about how the economic benefits can support endogenous development, self-reliance, and self-development – that is, the capacity of people to make informed choices and to use the resources to grow as individuals and communities, with identity and pride, on the basis of their own cultures, rather than throwing them away to quickly become standard consumers.

Some months ago, I went to visit a rural area in my homeland in the Andes, now a popular ecotourism destination; I hadn't seen it for 20 years. Although I was told of the booming economy of the place, it was surprising for me to see it firsthand. Clearly there was a lot of money circulating, as the main town was full of shops, hostels

and restaurants, and tourists filled the streets. But beyond the surface, I also saw that the communities surrounding the town had become more economically vulnerable, as their dependence on income from services they offer had increased: for example, a number of families had replaced their working animals with horses they rent to the tourists, the fields were abandoned, and family members had become street vendors. Their households may have more cash, but I would hesitate to call those changes sustainable development of the communities.

Building benefit sharing as an integral part of the philosophy of biodiversity businesses is a great step; but it is not sufficient if it only means more income for individuals and families. Biodiversity businesses can be key drivers of true community development if they frame benefit sharing in concepts of equity (where gender equity is a critical dimension), cultural strengthening and development with identity. This is absolutely essential to sustainability.

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Sustainable Trade in Natural Products

PhytoTrade Africa (Zimbabwe)

PhytoTrade Africa is a non-profit trade association dedicated to supporting poor rural communities across southern Africa by providing wide-ranging support to small enterprises and developing ethical and sustainable trade in natural products.

PhytoTrade Africa's aim is to develop an enduring natural products industry in southern Africa for the benefit of rural people and biodiversity conservation. It was launched by a number of non-governmental organisations in late 2001, following a call to consolidate efforts and enhance the economies of scale of natural products enterprises after individual projects in the region failed to bring about the expected results. The main constraints were that the organisations were typically working with small, unorganised enterprise groups that were producing nominal quantities of product and finding that the volumes and quality didn't meet the levels required to create and sustain an export market.

In an effort to address these shortfalls, PhytoTrade Africa chose to focus its efforts on a selected number of species and indigenous products sourced from the region. The focal products were chosen based on a variety of factors aimed at maximising the services to regional membership as well as opportunities within the growing market. Among others, these included aspects of expected market interest, ecological resilience and geographic distribution or abundance. Members of the trade association are involved in the natural products industry – mainly small-to-medium-sized enterprises, but also NGOs, cooperatives, government agencies, research institutions and individuals – and are drawn from across the region in Botswana, Mozambique, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa.

PhytoTrade Africa has been working to provide these services to its members since it became operational in early 2002. Its approach is to develop high-value and sustainably produced commodities for which there will be long-term market interest. The natural products are wild harvested and sold into regional and international cosmetic, personal care and food and beverage markets, with a specific focus on consumers interested in lifestyle, health and sustainability products. As a trade association, PhytoTrade Africa provides many of the expected services typical of such associations, but also devotes itself to the developmental aspects of the natural products industry and its beneficiaries. That is, they work as much to develop the demand as they do the supply.

On the supply side, this involves a significant amount of work

in attracting investment in the industry, providing on-call enterprise development support to members, undertaking research and development for new products and building capacity and efficiencies along the supply chain. The organisation also works with intermediaries and other partners, such as IUCN and the BioTrade Initiative, to identify and implement the necessary support to promote sustainability across the industry and show that enterprises have the skills and resources necessary to trade in the export market. Through this work, PhytoTrade Africa and partners are also working to ensure that natural product supply chain operations are aligned with the principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity and thus are used sustainably, promote equitable benefit sharing and contribute to conservation. To this end, PhytoTrade Africa, like IUCN and others, is also one of the founding members of the Union for Ethical BioTrade, which promotes sustainably and ethically sourced products from the wild.

On the demand side, PhytoTrade Africa spends a great deal of time and resources on understanding the market, its trends and standards, in order to provide information services to its members. It also works to engage and inform market actors about the natural products industry and opportunities within the industry for collaboration. Through the identification of and negotiation with commercial partners, such as the French cosmetic company Aldivia and South African plant extract manufacturer Afriplex, advanced technologies and marketing systems assist in bringing PhytoTrade products to the market. Many of these undertakings are assisted by PhytoTrade's office in Europe, where the staff provides active and visible representation of the industry in its main export market. PhytoTrade works with regulatory bodies, market experts and certification agencies to ensure that products from southern Africa are compliant, innovative and responsive to markets.

The key to PhytoTrade's success can be said to lie in its unique ability to offer competitive and innovative products to an increasingly demanding market for wild harvested natural products. PhytoTrade Africa has placed itself ahead of the low-cost, high-output offerings of large firms (i.e. through intensive and standardised production schemes)



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by turning these barriers into opportunities, beginning with the selection of high-value, low-volume products that are both widely available and accessible to rural producers throughout the region (see box). Through these measures and a hub of support to small enterprises, PhytoTrade Africa has found a way to add value to consumer needs, producer products and environmental sustainability.

For more information
Visit: www.phytotradafrica.com
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PhytoTrade Africa's Marketing Strategy: One Step Ahead

Facing an increasingly sophisticated market for natural products and a significant and growing consumer interest in indigenous, sustainable and socially conscious products, PhytoTrade Africa has developed an innovative and assertive marketing strategy aimed at attracting the discerning tastes of European consumers. Some highlights of this strategy include:

The Ubuntu Charter: The Ubuntu Charter, developed by PhytoTrade Africa and commercial partner Aldivia, sets out conditions of production by rural producers, the trade association and buyers of natural cosmetic ingredients, to ensure that ingredients are being produced and supplied sustainably and fairly. The charter allows products to be differentiated in the market in the short term while paving the way for third party guarantees through certification and similar schemes in the longer term. The Ubuntu Charter enshrines the partners' commitment to Fair Trade, environmental sustainability, good governance and best practice.

Ubuntu oils: After extensive research and development, the partners have developed the Ubuntu Natural Range of African natural lipid oils. Ubuntu marula oil is unique because Aldivia's green lipid chemistry maintains the oxidative stability and antioxidant properties of virgin oil, while obtaining stringent microbiological and toxicological quality specifications required for skin care formulations.

Baobab superfruit: The baobab fruit has been harvested in southern Africa for generations and is well-known for its nutritional benefits. Following efforts by PhytoTrade to obtain regulatory approval for baobab as a new or 'novel' food ingredient into the European Union, PhytoTrade has now brought this product to consumers in Europe and more recently the United States and is marketing it as the latest 'superfruit'.

The Buhoma Village Walk for Conservation

Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust (BMCT) (Uganda)



The Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust (BMCT) has as its mission ensuring the long-term protection and viability of Mgahinga Gorilla National Park (MGNP) and Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (BINP) in southwestern Uganda, through initiatives that raise local conservation awareness. In working towards this goal, BMCT has created a community enterprise that offers tourists the Buhoma Village Walk.

Buhoma is a small village located at the north entrance of the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, a World Heritage Site. Here, tourists can enjoy the Buhoma Village Walk, a guided visit that enables them to

gain an understanding of rural life in Uganda and an insight into the cultural traditions and activities of the area. In the space of three hours, this village walk takes visitors to nine sites that showcase different aspects

of life in Buhoma. The walk is run by the village walk enterprise group, which is composed of eight guides from the local community and the owners of the sites that are visited; the group also employs a number of community members.

Beginning at the Buhoma Community Rest Camp, a small camp providing basic tourist accommodation in tents and local *bandas*, thatched roof houses, the tour then goes on to: (i) a local women's handicraft centre, where a 15-minute craft making demonstration takes place; (ii) a refreshing waterfall where visitors can take a dip or just observe the rich surrounding flora and fauna; (iii) a local tea plantation; (iv) a banana brewing demonstration site; (v) a traditional medicine healer; (vi) a local school; (vii) a community woodlot for birdwatching; (viii) a brewing site for local gin; and (ix) a Batwa music and performance site.

This innovative tourism experience in Bwindi was created through close cooperation amongst the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust (BMCT), the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the Buhoma community. It originated as a Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and United Nations Foundation (UNF) funded project to pilot test FAO's Market Analysis and

Development methodology in a World Heritage Site. BMCT was the implementing organisation for the project and their role was to set up the enterprise group, design the Buhoma Village Walk in cooperation with the other two stakeholder groups and support the running of the enterprise. BMCT also ensures that this enterprise benefits conservation in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

The main determinant of success for the Buhoma Village Walk has been the combination of experiences brought to the table by the three stakeholder groups involved. This pooling of experiences not only enabled the design of a well-rounded and novel product that complements other tourist experiences in the area, but also ensured market access by tapping into each stakeholder's network of tourism contacts.

The conservation objective for the creation of the Buhoma Village Walk was to improve local attitudes to conservation and minimise conflict between community members and the protected areas. This initiative also aimed to compensate local villagers for crop raiding by wild animals from the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park by finding them additional sources of income. Since its inception in 2002, the village walk has achieved positive outcomes both from an environmental

and a socio-economic perspective.

On the environmental side, now that the community members associate an improvement of their living conditions with conservation of the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, their willingness to conserve park resources has increased significantly. BMCT has also invested their time in raising the conservation awareness of local villagers through different capacity-building exercises. From a socio-economic perspective, this initiative has generated significant additional income for enterprise members. With an average of 1,000 visitors per year (half of the number visiting the national park), the walk generates approximately US\$10,000 in revenue. Furthermore, 20 percent of the revenue from the walk goes towards the Buhoma council for funding development projects in the whole parish.

The Buhoma Village Walk has also had important repercussions at the national level. As the first community-based initiative to develop tourism in Uganda, it is a model for other communities who have begun to replicate the enterprise development initiative elsewhere.

For more information
Visit: www.bwinditrust.org
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Operating Ecotourism in 'Salto del Limón'

Centro para la Conservación y el Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE) (Dominican Republic)

Centro para la Conservación y el Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE) in the Dominican Republic aims to improve the use of natural resources in the region by promoting business development that minimises cultural and environmental impacts and enhances local livelihoods. At El Limón Waterfall, an important natural site, CEBSE supported the creation of ACESAL to coordinate tourism development and operations.

Salto del Limón, a 40-metre waterfall of crystal-clear waters located in the heart of Samaná, is considered one of the Dominican Republic's national gems due to its outstanding natural beauty and unique ecology. As such, tourism has always been considered an important vehicle for local development. At present, tourism to El Limón occurs in

an organised fashion through a system of micro-enterprises or *paradas* (literally meaning "stops") that offer excursions to El Limón along with a combination of cultural activities to make up half-day or full-day trips. Each of the 13 *paradas* operating in the area offers a similar itinerary, generally consisting of a guided visit to El Limón either on foot or on horseback, a swim in the refreshing natural pools of the waterfall, lunch with local delicacies and the possibility to purchase local art and handicrafts. All *paradas* are associated with ACESAL, the Community Ecotourism Association for El Limón Waterfall.

ACESAL's role at El Limón is to oversee and coordinate the ecotourism micro-enterprises operating in the area, helping to manage tourism flow to the area to ensure that El Limón's natural and cultural heritage remain intact. ACESAL also coordinates tourism operations so that all tourism to the area has consistent quality and monitors the services offered by the micro-enterprises. Each enterprise wanting to operate in the area must be a member of ACESAL. Together, ACESAL and its members ensure that the wider area around the waterfall is conserved.

CEBSE, the Dominican NGO

charged with the protection of Samaná's natural heritage, facilitated the creation of ACESAL in the late 1990s, to address threats to the ecological integrity of the area resulting from increased and disorganised tourism development. At the time, a combination of factors contributed to the deterioration of the area, including lack of tourism planning and too many tourism enterprises (from micro to macro) exploiting the area. With ACESAL's establishment, CEBSE managed to put a stop to this unsustainable trend and has turned El Limón into an eco-destination.

The coordination of tourism operations in El Limón has resulted in positive social and environmental outcomes. From a social perspective, local communities have better living conditions, due to a prospering and fair tourism industry. The improvement of quality standards has also meant that tourists are willing to pay more for their visits and are more likely to purchase local art and handicrafts. In terms of environmental benefits, the more organised approach to tourism prevents the improper use of El Limón and its surrounding area. Communities have become more aware of the importance of protecting the area's resources and participate

in conservation monitoring. Finally, due to the successful coordination of tourism in the area, the Dominican government has given ACESAL responsibility for conserving the area.

For more information
Visit: www.samana.org.do and
<http://associatives.org/saltolimon.de/ACESAL/index.html>
Contact: cebse@codetel.net.do



Empowering Paper

Sewalanka Foundation (Sri Lanka)

The Sewalanka Foundation works to empower rural communities in Sri Lanka to achieve higher standards of living by creating viable income-generating opportunities that are socially just and environmentally sustainable. An important component of this work involves supporting the creation of community enterprises, such as the Savyia Sri Lankan Natural Product enterprise.

The Savyia Sri Lankan Natural Product is a community enterprise made up of 50 members of the Puwakpitiya community in the Knuckles Range, located in the heart of Sri Lanka. This enterprise specialises in making high-quality handmade paper (30-by-20-inch sheets), some of which is finished by adding natural dyes, while others are made with different textures. This paper can be then used for a variety of purposes, including stationery, decorative wrapping paper and cards. The paper is made using widely available plants, particularly invasive plant species.

This community enterprise is the result of an initiative known as the Home Employment and Lighting Package (HELP), which has as its main focus the development of poor and remote villages through the creation of sustainable income-generating activities and the enhancement of local infrastructure. This initiative is a result of a partnership between the Himalayan Light Foundation

(HLF) from Nepal and the Sewalanka Foundation, a Sri Lankan conservation and development NGO. The HELP programme was created to improve the quality of life of remote populations through renewable energy technologies. HELP's goal is to create an additional sustainable source of income for rural communities that would enable them to pay back the installation of renewable energy in their villages and that will later serve to enhance the community's earnings and self-reliance.

With assistance from the Himalayan Light Foundation, Sewalanka has supported the development of a community handmade paper enterprise that would also contribute to biodiversity conservation. Both these organisations have supported the community in product design and development, as well as in facilitating technology transfer and capacity building on invasive species and harvesting. Sewalanka has also played a key role in the development of a

marketing strategy for the products and has helped promote them outside the area, in particular by helping to bring the products to the national and international markets. The enterprise is run by the community members who are also responsible for collecting the raw material and producing the goods. The enterprise is mainly made up of local women (75 percent) and the profits are shared equally between the enterprise members.

The Knuckles Range forests are amongst the most important tropical rainforest landscapes in Sri Lanka and boast high biodiversity as well as a number of threatened species. Sewalanka's aim was to ensure that the papermaking was not only not having a negative impact on the biodiversity of the area, but also contributing to conservation. Thus, the majority of the fibre used for paper production comes from invasive species that have a negative impact on native plant species by encroaching on their habitat. The two main species that are used are guinea grass (*Panicum maximum*) and banana leaves (*Musa acuminata*). These will be available for another ten to 12 years (as more rapid eradication is not possible). Sewalanka is already researching alternatives to ensure that the business will continue when this resource is no longer available.

To highlight the importance of eradicating invasive species from high biodiversity areas, the bulk packages of paper have a label informing the buyers that this paper is made of invasive species. The information is also included in the bar code.



Furthermore, by raising awareness amongst local communities about the importance of using the forest resources sustainably and by using a majority of invasive species for making the paper, they hope to contribute to the conservation of this important area.

For more information
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Certification: Scaling Up the Business in Biodiversity

Dr. Sasha Courville, Executive Director, ISEAL Alliance



It is not always easy to spot biodiversity friendly businesses: Is that eco-hotel really delivering on reducing environmental impacts and benefiting the local community? Is that forest actually managed with respect for the biodiversity in it? And are the products in that shop truly from sustainable wild collection as the label claims?

Wherever we know and trust the producer or service provider, we can just

ask and form our own opinions. In other cases – and especially when the product is traded – we need someone else to provide the assurance. Certification can do just that.

Standards systems follow principles and criteria that need to be met for a business operation to receive certification. These criteria are often set following a careful negotiation between all those concerned: producers and traders, campaigners and scientists, consumers and governments. Providing the space for the resolution of differences, multi-stakeholder processes result in concrete, actionable and broadly accepted definitions of sustainability and how to deliver it.

A consensus on criteria for biodiversity in a specific sector of business allows the market to do its work: Companies interested in greening their operations have specific guidelines to follow and targets to meet. Independent organisations certify their compliance with these criteria and regularly check for changes. An official label and a trace-

ability system allow retailers to credibly market their products. The successes in one area are suddenly replicable in other places. We can measure what has been achieved.

A number of standards systems already provide established criteria for sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries. New standards systems are emerging in a wide range of sectors, from wild collection to carbon capture, from tourism to mining.

However, not all standards systems are equally credible. Credible standards are developed through balanced multi-stakeholder processes to define their purpose and content. They establish thorough independent verification systems and set up processes to measure the impacts of certification. ISEAL's Codes of Good Practice are international reference documents for such credible social and environmental standards systems. Compliance is a membership condition of the ISEAL Alliance.

Multi-stakeholder standards systems need participation to increase their impact. To find out how you can participate in creating solid certification systems for biodiversity business, visit www.isealalliance.org or contact us at info@isealalliance.org.

For more information
Contact: info@isealalliance.org
Visit: www.isealalliance.org

Certified forestry

When governments failed to agree on a global forest compact at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, a coalition of loggers, foresters, environmentalists and sociologists took matters into their own hands and agreed on a standard for certified sustainable forests. Thus the Forest Stewardship Council was born. Today, the area of certified forests even serves as one measure towards the 2010 biodiversity target. About 10 percent of the world's productive forests are FSC-certified.

ISEAL member standards focusing on biodiversity businesses

Agriculture	IFOAM Basic Organic Standards, Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, UTZ Certified*, Better Sugarcane Initiative*
Forestry (incl. NTFPs)	Forest Stewardship Council
Fisheries and aquaculture	Marine Stewardship Council, Marine Aquarium Council, Aquaculture Dialogues*
Climate change	Roundtable for Sustainable Biofuels*, Green-E energy and Green-E climate*

* Standard in development (data as of 01 June 2009)

African Natural Foods

Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources (SAFIRE) (Zimbabwe)



The Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources (SAFIRE) is a regional NGO operating in southern Africa that promotes rural development through the sustainable management, use, and commercialisation of natural resources. In order to achieve this goal, SAFIRE has partnered with local communities and Tulimara Speciality Foods of Africa to develop and market indigenous food products.

Tulimara Specialty Foods of Africa (Pvt) Ltd. is a Zimbabwean company

that produces a unique range of indigenous and natural food products. Their products are locally sourced from the wild and derive from a selection of native Zimbabwean species, including baobab, guava, marula, masau, and mazhanje. Their products include plant oil and pulp, herbal teas, and jams and preserves (see box for product highlights). Tulimara prides itself on manufacturing truly natural products that are grown without the use of pesticides, chemicals or fertilizers and are processed without the use of artificial flavours or preservatives. In addition, Tulimara sources all its products from local communities and in doing so ensures that the communities obtain fair prices.

The Southern Alliance for Indigenous

Resources (SAFIRE), a local NGO, is Tulimara's partner and the intermediary between Tulimara and the rural communities that harvest and produce the natural products. SAFIRE is also responsible for developing small businesses at the community level that are then run by the local people. SAFIRE began to work with natural products in 1996 when they realised that local communities could make profits from the resources that they harvested, but that they needed an enterprise and management structure to support them. At first, SAFIRE concentrated on product research and development, looking into resource abundance and tapping into indigenous knowledge to identify the type of products that they could produce. This research was followed by a product development phase, where they worked with the communities to develop sustainable harvesting techniques, and supported them in extracting high quality raw materials and in manufacturing certain raw materials to add value to the product. At the same time, they conducted market testing to ensure that the products would succeed in the market. Finally, SAFIRE partnered with Tulimara to market and, in some cases, further manufacture the community products.

Zimbabwe's natural food products are also reaching international markets through PhytoTrade Africa, the Southern African Natural Products Trade Association. Both SAFIRE and Tulimara are members of this association, which seeks to develop a long-term supplementary income source for poor rural people in the

region. Through PhytoTrade, these two partners are taking community products to a new level and ensuring that the demand for the products is kept steady even if local and national demand fluctuates.

SAFIRE's entrepreneurial approach to conservation originated in the work they undertook to involve communities in natural resource management. In this work they realised that if local communities were to endorse conservation, they would have to draw economic benefits from it. They also noticed that many of the resources that had an economic value were being overexploited and that there was a need to develop sustainable

harvesting techniques. This approach has brought about a noticeable change in attitudes to conservation in rural Zimbabwe. Communities now have an improved sense of ownership of the resource base and actively participate in natural resource management. Community members involved in these enterprises have also achieved better living conditions both from direct economic gains and because they are now less reliant on the success of a single crop and have improved access to food.

For more information
Visit: www.safireweb.org and
www.tulimara.co.zw
Contact: info@safire.co.zw

Product Highlights

Food and Cosmetic Ingredients

Zimbabweans have traditionally gotten much of their nutrition from indigenous trees and plants, by creating a variety of food products deriving from leaves, roots, bark and fruit. The oil and pulp extracted from these species are increasingly well known both nationally and internationally for their unique properties as ingredients in food and cosmetic products. The key species that Tulimara sells as oils and pulp are baobab (*Adansonia digitata*), marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*), and masau (*Ziziphus mauritiana*).

Herbal Teas

Tulimara specialises in producing two kinds of herbal teas: Makoni Tea and Resurrection Tea. The Makoni Herbal Tea derives from a wild bush (*Fadogia ancylantha*) that grows mostly in the Eastern Highlands area of Zimbabwe and has immune system boosting properties. The Resurrection Herbal Tea is produced from a shrubby plant with red-brown stems that grows on flat rock surfaces throughout the country and is commonly known as the resurrection bush. It is used to treat colds and coughs as well as for high blood pressure.

Jams and Jellies

Zimbabwe is home to a considerable variety of wild fruits, many of which are rich in vitamins A and C and other essential minerals. These fruits are very important to rural communities due to their nutritional value, income-generating potential and traditional medicinal uses. Tulimara purchases the fruits from rural communities and turns them into jams and jellies, such as masau (*Ziziphus mauritiana*) jam, marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*) jelly, mazhanje (*Uapaca kirkiana*) jam and guava jelly.

The Essence of the Amazon

Associação Vida Verde da Amazônia (AVIVE) (Brazil)

Associação Vida Verde da Amazônia (AVIVE) works to promote the riches of the Amazonian region through the production of natural and beauty products from the rainforest, while enhancing sustainable livelihoods for local women. AVIVE works with communities and a wide range of non-governmental, governmental and private sector partners to provide a sustainable and high-quality supply of products for which they have a competitive advantage.

AVIVE was founded in 1999 by 20 women from the Silves region, following their participation in a course on aromatic and medicinal plants. The course, which was presented by a professor at the Federal University of Amazonas, was held and organised by ASPAC – the Silves Association for Environmental and Cultural Preservation. The women set out to produce homemade medicines and natural cosmetics, including soaps and perfumes, using their strong background of traditional knowledge and use of rainforest plants by the local community. Their aim was to use the rich plant life of the Amazon to create an economic opportunity while ensuring the security and sustainability of natural product supply from the rainforest.

Central to the AVIVE business model is the notion of the use and quality production of plant species that are well-known and understood by the women. While these plants

were generally used for medicinal and other local purposes in the past, industry standards and government regulations dictate that they cannot be marketed as pharmaceutical products by AVIVE. Instead, the association's emphasis is on products with valuable properties for aromatherapy, personal care or cosmetic products. Following the harvesting of raw materials, the women of AVIVE add value by processing and selling these products as ingredients (e.g. essential oils) or finished products (e.g. glycerine soap), both in national and international markets and to local tourists from its shop in Silves. Sales of the soap alone make up approximately 20 percent of their profits, which then go back into community, enterprise and supply chain development activities. Since AVIVE itself is a not-for-profit organisation, production and marketing of the products is done by COPRONAT, a cooperative through which the women get paid for their work.

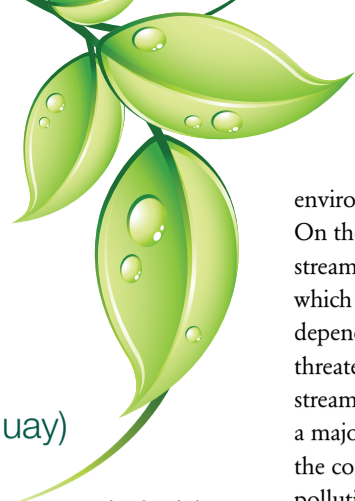
From its establishment, AVIVE has worked to develop and apply reliable techniques for sustainable extraction and regeneration of native plants within supply chains. This has been a major factor in their success, as has their direct approach to consumer issues relating to sustainability. The organisation also leads an important environmental education programme and produces seeds for all of the species that they work with. These seedlings are then grown in local nurseries and replanted for the recovery and sustainability of supply, as well as restoration of the local ecosystem.

AVIVE has recently taken its commitment to sustainability one

step further through implementation of the FairWild Standard for the production of medicinal and aromatic plants across its supply chain and production landscape. Through the application of this standard, AVIVE is provided with third party assurance and guidance regarding sustainable management practices, while offering a visible marketing advantage through the FairWild label. In turn, this certification can be expected to contribute to improved market access and returns for the association.

For more information
Visit: www.avive.org.br
Contact: barbara@avive.org.br





Conservation in the Blood

Fundación Moisés Bertoni (Paraguay)

Fundación Moisés Bertoni (FMB) promotes stakeholder collaboration as a means to achieve sustainable development in Paraguay. Since 1998, FMB has collaborated with the public and private sectors to set up and run LICÁN, a company that specialises in manufacturing and marketing high-quality functional animal blood proteins. Through this work, FMB has solved an important environmental and social problem.

Until 1999, 20,000 litres of bovine blood were being deposited daily by local slaughterhouses into the streams of Mburicaó and Itay in Paraguay's Bay of Asunción. This practice was

resulting in the contamination of water in the urban area, where the streams are an important source of clean and fresh water for the local community, leading to both

environmental and social problems. On the environmental side, the streams were increasingly polluted, which meant the species that depended on them were becoming threatened. Furthermore, both streams flow into the Paraguay River, a major river in South America, and the contamination contributed to the pollution of the river downstream from Asunción. From a social perspective, the blood deposited daily in these streams contributed to a number of serious health issues for the population of Asunción.

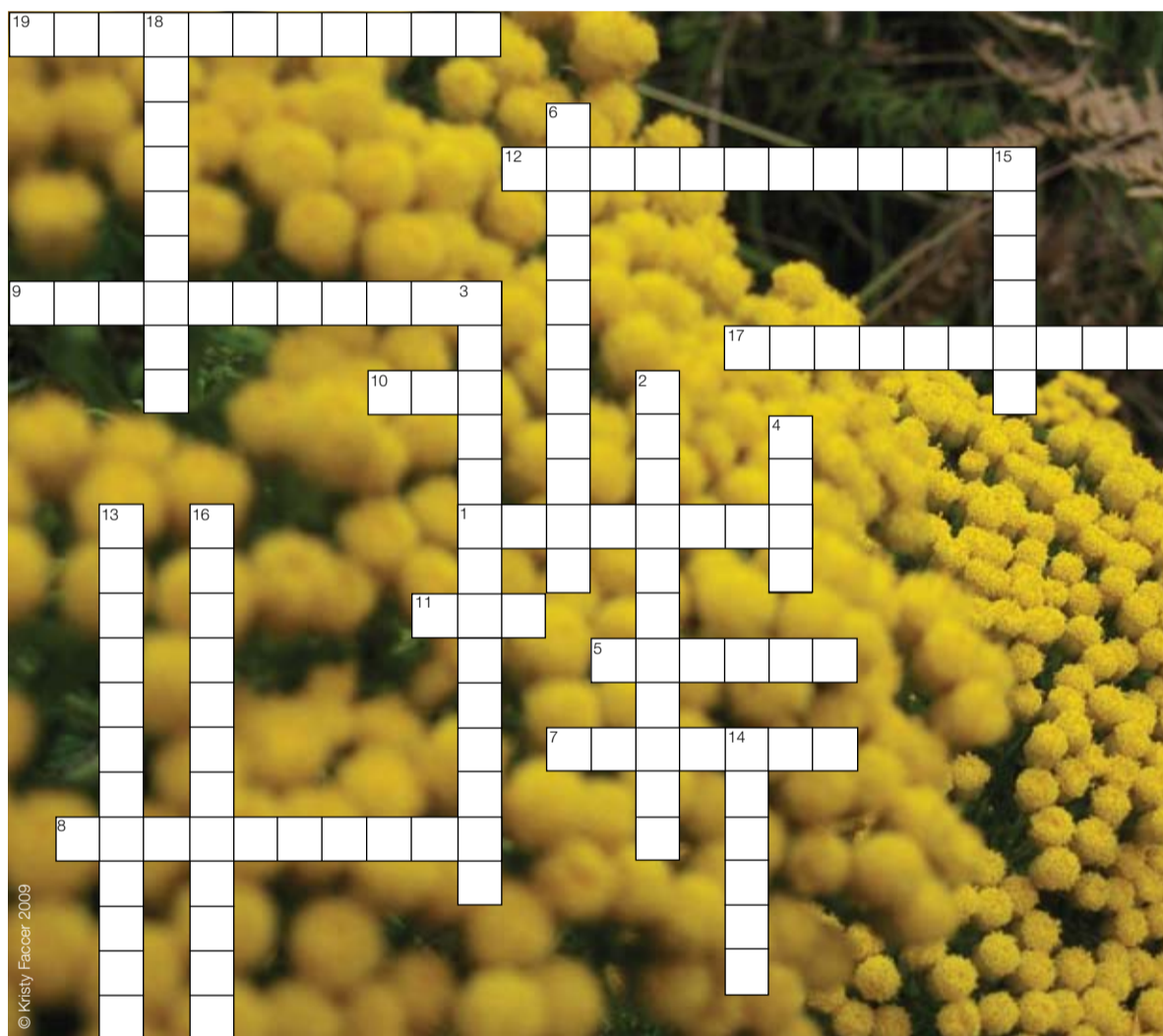
It was therefore necessary to find a solution to this environmental and social problem. Working together on this subject, Fundación Moisés Bertoni (FMB), the local government and the local community set up a panel of experts to analyse viable solutions. As a result of the investigation, several products derived from blood were identified, and

international companies dedicated to this type of business were contacted. This effort resulted in a partnership between FMB, the local government, and LICÁN Foods, an international company dedicated to blood processing, for the creation of a Paraguayan Franchise of LICÁN. LICÁN Paraguay was set up by these three partners in Asunción with the objective of processing the bovine blood from the five slaughterhouses. The company collects the raw material and transforms it into animal plasma, a high-protein powder that has multiple uses including enrichment of animal fodder, acting as an agricultural fertilizer and a variety of purposes in the food industry.

LICÁN Paraguay has been operating since 1999 and has brought about several environmental, economic and social benefits. First, the demand for blood by-products in national and

international markets has meant that this enterprise is financially healthy and competitive, providing a source of funds for FMB's conservation and development work as well as an additional source of foreign exchange earnings for Paraguay. Second, the creation of this enterprise has generated employment for 13 local people and given them a stable source of income. The consultative process in which LICÁN was established has also meant that local people were empowered and involved in decision-making. Finally, LICÁN prevents 400,000 litres of blood from going into the two streams each month, making the water cleaner, reducing threats to human health and avoiding biodiversity loss.

For more information
Visit: www.mbertoni.org.py and
www.licanfood.com
Contact: mbertoni@mbertoni.org.py



Note: All two word answers are separated by a blank square.

Across:

1. Many stories illustrated efforts to conserve both natural and _____ heritage.
5. Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources
7. Belonging exclusively or confined to a particular place.
8. This advocates the payment of a fair price as well as social and environmental standards in areas related to the production of a wide variety of goods (two words).
9. A relationship between individuals or groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility.
10. Non-governmental organization
11. Global Environment Facility
12. The system of organizations, people, technology, activities, information and resources involved in moving a product or service from supplier to customer (two words).
17. Environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature, that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact, and provide for beneficially active socio-economic impacts.
19. MOPAWI and the Miskito Indians worked together to use batana to improve local _____.

Down:

2. The increase in worth of a product or service as a result of a particular activity (two words).
3. An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means (two words).
4. _____ Jordan is devoted to developing and marketing nature-based businesses.
6. This way of living meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
13. The careful utilization of a natural resource in order to prevent depletion.
14. Moskitia Pawisa Apiska
15. TEMA Foundation's Biyotematur specializes in this kind of tour.
16. The variety of life: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes and the ecosystems of which they are a part.
18. A geographical area of a variable size where plants, animals, the landscape and the climate all interact together.

Credits

The designation of geographical entities in this book, and the presentation of the material, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IUCN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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Down: 2. Value Added; 3. Protected Area; 4. Wild; 6. Sustainability; 13. Conservation; 14. MOPAWI; 15. Nature; 16. Biodiversity; 18. Ecosystem
Across: 1. Cultural; 5. SAPIRE; 7. Endemic; 8. Fair Trade; 9. Partnership; 10. NGO; 11. GEF; 12. Supply Chain; 17. Ecotourism; 19. Livelihoods

Crossword Solution