

PNRA – where are you going to?

by Britta Hackenberg, Katima Mulilo

12 members of CFNEN and guests met for a workshop end of April to decide on the trend-setting of PNRA.

PNRA stands for “Participatory Natural Resource Assessment” and is a systematic community-based but CFNEN/DoF-supported system to get an overview on the vegetation, the resources and the potential of the forest. By involving local people in the preparation, collection, processing, evaluation and monitoring of forest data the knowledge of the communities about their resources as well as the idea of ownership shall be improved.

The participants of the workshop understood that, compared to other inventory systems, PNRA has got an ace up its sleeves: it can be used by groups with very different levels of education and equipment. It can both help the community to learn about their resources, and, on the other hand, can be backed up by research and then be used by the DoF for its inventories.

In all three regions of operation, Kavango, Tsumkwe-West and Caprivi, different approaches of PNRA were carried out on a trial basis. All of these approaches were

similar but differed in the matter of detail, e.g. the indicators behind the criteria – when is a forest cover to be considered as ‘dense’? Last but not least, the mode of transport also ranged from walking, horse-riding to quad bike driving. After the trial-phase it was now time to wrap up and evaluate the lessons learnt, harmonise all differences and develop a sound common system, which is standardized though still giving chance to adapt to local conditions. The most important output of the workshop was the decision about the main beneficiary of the system: the DoF or

the communities? PNRA was established to mainly serve the communities and their needs. Therefore, the communities should continue being the main actor of PNRA. However, PNRA is flexible enough to be also used by non-local “professionals”, and therefore can act as a simple but efficient tool of the DoF for future inventories. It was decided that the PNRA shall be finalised as a modular system for different levels of profession and equipment. The revised version of PNRA including a manual will soon be compiled and completed with training modules.

Film shooting in Kavango

by Jana Arnold, Windhoek

April was very much an exciting month not only for our colleagues in the Rundu forestry office but also for the villagers in some of the Kavango communities.

Filmmakers Michael Proepper and Martin Gruber, both German anthropologists, spent time with the people, taking shots for a documentary that

deals with illegal logging and its impact on nature and life in North-Eastern Namibia. It is part of a broad research project known as BIOTA project.

This project is carried out all over Africa, with Namibia and South Africa as the focal countries of the southern region. Scientists, spread all over the country, collect data on biodiversity, aiming to find a way on how to preserve nature, stop the irreversible exploitation of resources and instead

Wood confiscated by the Directorate of Forestry later becomes auctioned, the resources however are inevitably gone.



Martin Gruber and Michael Proepper with their Namibian colleague Roberth Mukuya shooting scenes of the film in Windhoek

develop strategies of sustainable landuse. Since illegal logging is seen as one of the major causes of degradation in the region, the film focuses on this subject. It will inform about the consequences of the illegal business and create awareness among the people of the region to value whatever of their resources has been left. As they track down illegally harvested timber almost every week, our forestry staff naturally knows a lot about illegal logging. They answered the filmmakers questions on how

the business is run, who makes profit out of it and what impact it has on the highly fragile environment of Namibia and especially the Kavango region. Beyond that, forestry officers went out with the team to show them what has been left by the illegal business - stumps of valuable trees, deserted areas and communities that have lost their resource of income.

The draft version of the film will be previewed in late June in one of the Kavango communities before it will be spread for educational use.



NEWS & Views

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COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN NORTH-EASTERN NAMIBIA

Quarterly News Bulletin

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26 German Foresters visited Bukalo Community Forest

by Andreas Mench, Katima Mulilo

In May a delegation of 26 Foresters of the German Forestry Society visited the CFNEN project in Katima Mulilo. For one day the group had been guests to the Bukalo Forest Management Committee (FMC) where they were welcomed by the Chairperson of the Forest Management Committee, Mr. Samuel Mugwala and the Induna Silalo of Bukalo, Mr. Mukanwa in their recently inaugurated office.

After a short introduction to the project as a whole the methodology of the Participatory Natural Resource Assessment (PNRA) was presented by CFNEN staff. Following a longer discussion about the differences of the Caprivan forests compared to German forests the best practices of participatory resource assessment could be explained. Later the FMC Bukalo demonstrated to their guests the production of high quality Mopane fire wood and the fire management they carry out. Then the group proceeded into



For the group it was interesting to see how much a Namibian forest differs from a German.

the forest to experience how heavy logs of African hard wood (Rosewood, [Guibourtia coelosperma]) are skidded out of the bush by oxen. At the skidding place the visitors could observe how logs of another African native tree species Yellow Wood [Terminalia sericea] were cut into planks with hand tools by pit sawing. There was an active discussion on the most appropriate technique which can be handled by the community but at the same time produces good

quality planks for the market with a minimum of wasting the scarce resources. A coppicing and pruning trial, where the production of good quality poles for construction purposes should be investigated, were shown to the visitors, too. Unfortunately the trials were heavily influenced by illegal harvesting from refugees of the great Zambezi floods this year and by destruction by elephants. On longer dis-

to be continued on page 2



Peter Ries, CFNEN Programme Coordinator

What I wanted to say after I took over

First of all I want to express my gratitude to my predecessor Mr. Rolf Sprung for all his efforts to make CFNEN a success story. With his guidance, we could establish the first eight community forests in Namibia, establish relationships with 29 emerging community forests and I am now able to benefit a lot from the foundations he laid.

I am very glad, that he did not leave the country but only changed his workplace, supporting now the Namibian Nature Foundation (NNF) on behalf of the German Development Service (DED). He now works to liaise the two branches of community-based natural resource management: communal conservancies

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The Project Community Forestry in North Eastern Namibia (CFNEN) is a cooperation of the Directorate of Forestry (DoF) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the German Development Service (DED) and the German Development Bank (KfW).

Masida and Mbeyo to receive Community Forestry Buildings

by Ivonn Kramm, Rundu

Since March 2007, community members and the CFNEN building team under the guidance of Mr. Johannes Strauss have been establishing Community Forestry Buildings in Masida and Mbeyo.

In Mbeyo, Kavango Region, the CFNEN project on behalf of the community bought an uncompleted structure in order to renovate and finish-off the building.

The high involvement of the FMC, committed trainees and skilful carpenters led to the final success of this project. Since May, the Forest Management Committee is hosted in a spacious office with further facilities such as store, meeting room and a small kitchen. Besides, a separate office for the Village Development Committee and Water Com-

mittee was accommodated in the building. In June, a craft shop and a firewood store will be finally completed using local poles and thatching grass. Masida Community Forest as it is close to the Trans Caprivi Highway has got good marketing potential. Therefore, it was decided to build up a storage shed for firewood and other timber products and a small office block in front of the structure. A very committed FMC and local trainees under the strong support of the local authorities helped a lot to find solutions to several problems arisen throughout the construction period. The project is expected to be completed by mid June.



Whereas the Mbeyo Community Forestry Office could already be completed during the last month, the Masida site is still under construction. A couple of unforeseen problems delay the construction period here.

What I wanted to say ...

and community forests. We still work closely together and I am looking forward to a fruitful collaboration.

Secondly I want to thank my fellow colleagues and all the many partners with whom I had the pleasure of working together during the previous three years as part of the Caprivi Team of CFNEN. I enjoyed very much to live on the banks of the mighty Zambezi in Katima Mulilo and work in Caprivi Region. But after

having been in the field for some years it was time for a change, and up to now, it seems that moving to Windhoek and getting more involved in programme management was a good choice.

At the age of 16 I started my forestry career as a trainee in a big private forestry administration. From then onwards I had the chance to get involved in different types of forestry administrations: state, county, private and communal properties. I was exposed to many aspects of forest management, starting from eco tourism

over production forestry, environmental education to game management. Having had the chance to have a look at many different angles of forestry, my main focus was always on the social aspects of forestry. Particularly throughout those last years I was working for the DED and in cooperation with the Namibian Directorate of Forestry (DoF) I got the opportunity to deepen my knowledge and understanding of the importance of trees for the livelihood and well being of rural and urban populations. Regarding forestry as a

nearly non-competitive land-use option, I developed the understanding that forestry can never be a stand-alone option of using land and soil, but always has to be seen as an integral part of a bigger picture. Coming to the end of my little introduction I would like to mention that I am looking forward to collaborate with our motivated regional teams in the north of Namibia and with other partners having their stakes in the field of community based natural resource management.

26 German Foresters visited ...



The foresters observed the traditional way of transportation of heavy logs.

cussions at the spot the German foresters realized that the natural, economic and social conditions in Namibian forests differ considerably from those in Germany. The visitors were not only very

impressed by the technical demonstrations but also by the great hospitality of their Namibian colleagues. Numerous group members bought some clay pots or other hand crafts as souvenirs.

The visit of the German group was rounded off by a stop at Mafuta Orphanage where the

group attended some traditional dancing and inspected the fruit orchard and vegetable garden which is also supported by CFNEN. After the very impressing presentation of the orphans the visitor group selected spontaneously a greater amount of money and donated it to the orphanage.

Tsumkwe West communities try to access new markets for firewood

by Jericho Mulofa and Athanasius Mukonda, Kanovlei

Firewood is the main source of income for the San communities which number 1600 within and contiguous to the four community forests supported by the CFNEN project. Therefore low prices and delays in paying the firewood harvesters discredit the two main firewood operators in the region. CFNEN staff spends a great deal of time mediating between the two parties.

It is against this background that we started an initiative to market our firewood in the wood-deficit areas of Oshakati. Hereby we hoped to establish a real market value for firewood and find new potential dealers in order to promote a business competition.

For the experiment we hired GRN lorry from Kanovlei Forestry Station with all costs calculated. One FMC member from Omatako South and one from Okongo Community Forest were involved in the marketing trail. 6.2 tons of firewood were transported to Oshakati and a place was found at the Ongwediva Open market. The following observations were made:

- The 30cm pieces were not favored by the Ovambo people. Their open fire cooking method requests pieces of at least 75cm.

- The Camelthorn, though it is an excellent firewood, is not commonly used in Ovamboland and it took a lot of time to spread the word and tell others that it is as good as Mopane (*Cholophospermum mopane*) and Onghete (*Dichrostachys cinera*) both of which are the preferred species in Oshakati area.

- Although the use of Mopane for fire wood is strictly controlled by the Directorate of Forestry, there is illegal

transportation and marketing of it. At Ongwediva Open Market we witnessed the off-loading of Mopane firewood at around 21:00 hours and by 08:00 hours the following day the firewood was already sold. Therefore it is difficult to detect.

- Looking at the expected expenditure of about N\$19,600 for the lorry and the driver, you need to transport a minimum of 16.4 tons to make a break even point with one ton of firewood selling at N\$1200. Any

tonnage exceeding that would create a profit.

- Four Service stations were willing to order big quantities of our firewood but requested it to be already packed in plastic bags which could also raise the price due to value adding.

- Two partners (it is too early to mention their names) are busy negotiating with the Trans Namib Railway Authority for a possibility of transporting the firewood from Grootfontein to Ondangwa by railway.

Although our endeavours are not yet completed, we expect the following benefits from this action:

- A real market value for firewood can be established. The FMCs can negotiate better prices.

- The FMCs will have a wider choice to market their firewood, as they can choose to hire a truck and sell their firewood in urban areas if the local market is not satisfactory.

- The FMCs will gain marketing experience which they can also use to market other products.

- The harvesters will improve their income and increase confidence in the CFNEN project.

Apart from the benefits on FMCs side, others can also make use of the results of this experiment.

- The Directorate of Forestry can use this information as a case study in defining the value of firewood for law makers and the International Community.

- The CFNEN project participants can use this information as a case study in the promotion of Public/Private Partnerships.

- The exercise could serve as a resource assessment for Omatako-South Community Forest which is closer to where the firewood was harvested.

After all, the preliminary results show that the marketing trial was a resounding success as it has already created a basis for future negotiations with the operators and shall now open a business competition by accessing new markets. Please look out in the next issue for our final conclusions and recommendations on this exciting undertaking.



UN member states agreed on guidelines for sustainable forest management

End of April, the Seventh Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) took place in New York. Namibia was represented by Joseph Hailwa, Director of Forestry in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, who is the focal person for this international policy forum in the country.

According to Mr. Hailwa, the UN member states finally agreed on a "Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forest" which provides a framework for national actions for sustainable forest management.

This comes after 15 years of negotiations on a global approach to protect the world's forests in which some developing countries, where people are depend-

ing on the exploitation of forest resources, could not agree on a legally binding instrument.

Although Namibia's strategy on natural resource management can be seen as exemplary worldwide, the final document is considered as a milestone even for this country.

"It offers orientation for the future policy process and ensures harmonized and corresponding forest management policies across the borders. Following the same international principles of forestry, we can intensify our cooperation with the neighboring countries and better fight against such urgent matters like illegal timber trade or forest fires.", says Mr. Hailwa, when summarizing the conference results.