

German Ambassador visits Masida Community Forest

By Britta Hackenberg, CFNEN, Katima

On 5th February the CFNEN team in Katima Mulilo warmly welcomed the German Ambassador to Namibia, His Excellency Freiherr Arne von Kittlitz, together with the coordinator of Caprivi Parks Consultants, Ed Humphrey. After a project presentation held in the office, a field trip to the Community Forest in Masida was on the agenda. The visitors were introduced to the different activities of the Forest Management Committee

(FMC), including the recently completed PNRA (Participatory Natural Resource Assessment), fruit calendar and pitsawing. The FMC gave a demonstration on fire management and showed how strategic burning like early burning, patch burning and buffer burning can be carried out. Facing the “danger”, the visitors felt in good hands, though, as the FMC really knows how to control a fire.

The visit in Masida ended with a tasting of Devil’s Claw

tea, which His Excellency learnt is used for treating all kinds of health problems like headache, arthritis and is even applied for family planning.

At the end of the day the Ambassador was impressed by the high commitment and the enthusiasm of the people in Masida towards community forestry.



The German Ambassador His Excellency Freiherr Arne von Kittlitz (centre) and Ed Humphrey, Project Manager of Caprivi Parks Consultants (right) listening to the information on Masida Community Forest given by Harry Sauzuo secretary of the Forest Management Committee.

With Law no Compromise by Jonas Mwiikinghi, DFO, Rundu

The Directorate of Forestry in Kavango Region was obliged to take serious measures in order to enforce the law to combat deforestation as prescribed in the Directorate’s Mission Statement. It is of grave concern to the Directorate of Forestry that just from December 2006 to February 2007 already about 300 live Kiaat (*Pterocarpus angolensis*) trees were illegally harvested in only three different areas. Two culprits were identified. They were in possession of harvesting permits but only for a total of 10 dead/dry trees. It was particularly disturbing to find out that



Staff of DoF Rundu confiscating planks sawn from illegal harvested Kiaat trees in Katope Community Forest.

one of the offenders is a well known Senior Headwoman, a member of the Chief’s Council and also a member of the Gazetted Mbeyo community forest. However, in order to enforce the law there can be no exceptions. Due to the seriousness of these cases all offenders were arrested and formally briefed on the legal proceedings. The cases will be prosecuted in the court of law. In addition, some of the involved harvesters were fined N\$ 300-00 each. The Directorate will not leave a stone unturned against those who will be found at the wrong side of the law.



Directorate of Forestry



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).

Community Forests go customer friendly

Community Forests gain a foothold on the firewood market with customer orientated marketing

By Wolfgang Adamek, CFNEN
 Firewood is a well-established product on the Namibian market with good potentials for further growth and increasing profit margins due to the high demand as well as the limited and remote availability of the resources. No wonder that there are a number of competing traders targeting for the same group of customers on this attractive market.

Among the suppliers fetching a constant growing share in this business are villagers in community forest areas in northeastern Namibia with their customer-orientated production and marketing of firewood. Being one of the few forest products providing a reliable source of income in rural areas in Kavango and Western-Tsumkwe regions, where community forests have been established in

recent years, people only have the chance to consolidate their share on the firewood market by making the product even more customer-friendly. Apart from the environmentally sound utilization of only lying deadwood in line with sustainable forest management plans, special focus is put on packing, labeling and handling of the product. The latest clue to make customers favoring quality braaiwood from community forests is the innovative packing in 8 kg plastic bags with a sewn-in handle. The new packing makes it very easy to carry, load and store the firewood bags, even for women. Buyers of firewood produced in community forests therefore not only enjoy the comfort of a valuable product easy to handle, but at the same time support local people's livelihoods and community development in remote and rural areas. After



Customer enjoying the easy to handle firewood bags from community forests

the deduction of the production costs like payment of the firewood harvesters, costs of plastic bags, etc., 70% of the profit goes into Community Development Funds for future community investments.



A firewood harvester of Ncumcara Community Forest trimming firewood pieces

CFNEN awareness campaign on illegal logging



TV-News Interview



Radio Panel Discussion



Illegal logging is considered being a major threat to forest resources in Northeast Namibia. It is theft on national and community property and causes irreversible environmental problems. It contributes to increasing deforestation, bush encroachment and desertification and if not stopped or controlled, will lead to the total extinction of valuable trees over the long run. Not the forest products taken out for domestic use in local villages, but the illegal timber business on a larger scale with logs and planks traded to markets outside the region in Windhoek and RSA are causing the devastating damage. Lack of awareness and weakness of institutions facilitate this illegal business. Illegal logging however is not a minor offence it is a serious crime and goes to the debit of all of us.

With TV and Radio interviews and panel discussions as well as newspaper articles, CFNEN tries to raise awareness and to draw the attention of the public and concerned stakeholders to this unacceptable situation.



Illegal felled logs



Illegal truck load



piles of confiscated planks

Fruits for Farmers

By Hirut Terefe, CFNEN, Rundu

“The kids are eating my guavas” or “they are stolen” and “I sold my mangos and papayas to neighbours” – such and similar problems are common issues when we (DEES/CFNEN extension staff) are visiting fruit farmers in Kavango region.

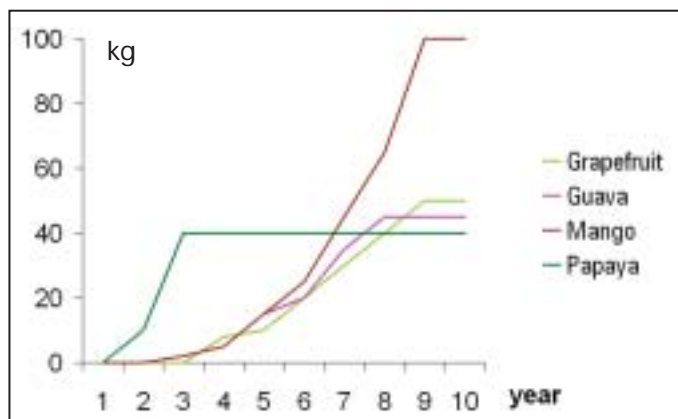
But while it may not always be easy to enjoy the fruits of your work yourself, the final consumer – whether child, grandfather or thief – will surely benefit from their sweet taste and rich vitamin content. With 15 different species of exotic and indigenous fruits currently promoted in 87 established fruit gardens in Kavango region, the DEES/CFNEN fruit garden project has gained widespread recognition and is in high demand by local farmers.

While it remains difficult for a local small-scale farmer to fully engage in commercial fruit production and to compete with the comparatively low prizes of mass produced fruits imported from South Africa, even a small fruit garden can very well provide significant income if managed and maintained properly.

The chart illustrates the yields that can be expected from different species. As the chart shows estimated kg yields per tree, corresponding income potentials can easily be calculated for different garden sizes.

For example a Mango tree produces 50 kg of fruits in the sixth year that can be sold for 60 kg x N\$ 12.00 = N\$ 720.00. A garden with 10 Mango trees would therefore provide a total annual income of N\$ 720 x 10 = N\$ 7200.00.

The chart also shows that some patience is required as trees need time to grow and most species reach their peak of production not before 5-10 years after planting. In the meantime, vegetables can provide food and income.



Another important aspect in the DEES/CFNEN approach is to reduce risks by diversifying fruit production. If only Mango trees are grown, for example, frost damage or pest infections may reduce or destroy the entire production. It is therefore recommend-

ed to mix different species. This prevents pests from spreading and ensures that even if some trees are affected others will still produce. Different types of fruits also provide flexibility to better respond to individual demands. Likewise, indigenous fruits are usually better adapted to local soils and climates and can be combined with exotic species.

The growing demand of local farmers for fruit gardening support shows that people are appreciating the benefits of fruit gardening. While DEES/CFNEN will continue to provide assistance, experienced garden owners may also encourage and support their neighbours.

Communities Review Experiences Learnt In Managing Community Based Natural Resources

from Wycliffe Nabaasa, Rundu

A one-day workshop to review community experiences in managing and utilizing community based natural resources in Kavango was held at the Rundu Government Hall in February. The workshop became the first of its kind in the region, where gazetted communities came together and reviewed their common experiences and challenges in managing and utilizing natural resources in their areas. It was facilitated by the “SEED” grant of the CBNRM unit of the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and attracted representatives from four gazetted community forests and one gazetted community forest conservancy in Kavango. Members of the Kahenge Community Forest Management Committee had initiated the meeting.

The workshop was joined by representatives from stakeholders in



Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in the region, namely, the Community Forestry programme in North Eastern Namibia (CFNEN), the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)'s ERHP project and the CBNRM unit of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

Issues discussed included Forest Management Committees' experience with illegal harvesting of community forest products before and after gazettement; issues surrounding distribution of income generated from community forest products; boundary conflicts in community forest areas; experience with community constitutions and by-laws; integrating community forests and conservancies; and communities' experience with the inventory system. Communities also had time to discuss general issues as encountered in their respective areas.

Quarterly Planning Workshop of all Caprivian Forest Management Committees

by **Andreas Mench, Katima**

On the 17th of January a Planning Workshop of all Caprivian Forest Management Committees (FMC's) took place in the recently inaugurated community forest office building in Bukalo. The participating committees were coming from the Community Forests of Kwandu, Masida, Lubuta, Zilitene, Sikanjabuka and the host Community Bukalo as well as from the emerging Community Forests of Sifuha and Sachona.

The committees reported back to their colleagues on activities carried out and goals

achieved during the last quarterly period. Afterwards new targets for the next period were presented to their counterparts.

This joint planning workshop enables the FMC's to coordinate certain activities, like a common fire management strategy for the next fire season. Another important aspect of the workshop was the exchange of ideas and experiences and the development of cooperation in fields of mutual interest, e.g. common marketing of forest products to achieve better prices or to attract bigger customers.

The next planning work-



Leonard Sanzila vice chairman of the Bukalo FMC presenting the quarterly report to his fellow FMC colleagues.

shop is scheduled for the 15th of March in Kwandu Community Forest. The rotating location of the workshop aims to provide the respective

guest committees a direct look on the progress, the achievements and the challenges "on the ground" of the hosting community forest.

Participatory Natural Resource Assessment in Gcwatjinga Community Forest

by **Stefan Rechberger, CFNEN, Hamoye**

Resource assessments are done to estimate the availability of forest products and to determine sustainable yields. For one week two trainers from Cuma Community Forest trained 9 community members of Gcwatjinga in the methodology of the participatory natural resource assessment.

The training included the basic use of a GPS, measuring of trunk heights, measuring diameters and the use of a cali-

per. Stand description and the proper recording of data in a form sheet were given special attention. The training done by peer groups proved to be very successful. After some days of additional training by CFNEN staff the community members passed the test and are now ready to start the fieldwork. In the coming weeks the successful trainees will measure 328 plots in Gcwatjinga C.F. and provide important data for the sustainable management of Gcwatjinga C.F.



Mbeyo Community Forest wins Fire Prevention Competition 2006

by **Faustinus Mutangara, Rundu**

Community Forests in Kavango region introduced mechanisms for fire prevention in their respective areas. In 2006, CFNEN mobilized the community forests again to participate in a fire prevention competition. The main objective: To encourage and mobilize the community members to participate and contribute to fire management, control and prevention in their areas

in order to protect natural resources and environment.

The winners of the competition were assessed based on activities carried out by the communities and their effectiveness. All community forests have done numerous activities to combat fire in their area and DoF through its project, CFNEN awarded them some prizes based on their performance.

Prizes and winners:

1. One ox and N\$ 500.00 go to Mbeyo Community Forest
2. Three goats and N\$ 500.00 go to Ncumcara Community Forest
3. Two goats and N\$ 500.00 go to Ncamagoro Community Forest
4. One goat and N\$ 500.00 go to Likwaterera Community Forest

CFNEN congratulates the winning communities and wishes a nice braai.