

### Opinion

#### Can We Prevent The “Tragedy Of The Commons”?

By Rolf Sprung, CFNEN Programme Coordinator, Rundu

Two factors are crucial for project success and therefore guide the introduction of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) and related donor support: the willingness of local people to contribute to improved management and protection of natural resources and their capacity to do so.

Also in the community forestry legislation these two conditions are decisive for the official transfer of use rights and the empowerment of local communities by the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry.

While capacities and skills can be developed through education, training and experience, the willingness to act is much harder to achieve, especially with regard to natural resource management.

Whether or not somebody is willing to do something usually depends on his or her perception of the need to do it and the benefits to be expected. Nobody will dispute that if you are sick you need medicine and from buying and taking it you expect the benefit of a speedy recovery.

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## Community Forests in North Eastern Namibia Officially Gazetted

### *a milestone for local communities*

By Kristina Schmidt, ded, Windhoek

On Tuesday, February 14, thirteen community forests, located in the communal lands of North Eastern Namibia, were gazetted by the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF).

Eight of them (Ncaute, Ncumcara, Ncamagoro, Mbeyo in the Kavango region, Masida, Lubuta, Bukalo in the Caprivi Region and M’kata in West Tsumkwe) are supported by the German-Namibian project “Community Forestry in North-Eastern Namibia” (CFNEN). The project is a cooperation of the Directorate of Forestry (DoF), the German Development Service (Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst, DED) and the German Development Bank (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, KfW). CFNEN is implemented by Namibian and German forestry specialists assigned by the Directorate of Forestry and the German Development Service. The project provides technical assistance for the



*On the occasion of the CFNEN project staff meeting held in March in Rundu, the project team celebrates the official “Gazetting” of the community forests.*

establishment of community forests and forest management planning. It also supports training and capacity building of community members for resource management, product processing and marketing activities and the construction of communal office and storage facilities.

An additional program element is the promotion of private orchards and vegetable gardens in cooperation with the

Directorate of Extension and Engineering Services (DEES) and Regional Agricultural Development Centers (ADC) of the MAWF.

Four other community forests were established with the support of the Namibian-Finland Forestry Program (NFFP, now terminated), one area with the assistance of the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

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# Ncaute Community Forest Appreciates The New Permit System

By Romanus Karupu and Stefan Rechberg in Hamuoye

In Ncaute community forest harvesting operations based on the new permit system for community forests have started on a successful note. A week after a training workshop on the system in February 2006, the Forest Management Committee was approached by a contractor wishing to buy as much Kiaat trees as possible.

According to the system, the Management Plan allows cutting of up to 90 kiaat

(*Pterocarpus angolensis*) trees only in six months, as stipulated in the block permit.

So the FMC decided to quickly mark and number the 90 trees but only sell 40 to the first contractor for a negotiated



Left: logs dragged to the nearest processing point; right: logs sawn in planks with a mobile saw mill.

[www.cfnen.org.na](http://www.cfnen.org.na)



price of N\$ 150 each. Only the marked trees were to be felled. Work began as agreed.

The whole harvesting operation generated up to 6,030N\$ which went to FMC's bank account. In addition to the product payment, the contractor also provided temporary employment to members of the Ncaute Community Forest and engine oil for the community pump, lunch and wages for the labourers. The money generated will be partly reinvested in

forest management activities (especially boundary clearing) and the benefit will be shared according to the benefit sharing agreement involving traditional authorities, FMC and village development committee.

Also with the help of CFNEN staff, the Ncaute FMC was able to negotiate a contract with a second contractor at a price of 210N\$ (180N\$ + 30N\$ for labour) per tree for another 40 kiaat trees that will ensure more income for the near future.

[www.cfnen.org.na](http://www.cfnen.org.na) is now online. The official website of the Community Forestry Programme of the Directorate of Forestry and the German Development Service / German Development Bank provides plenty of information and gives an overview about the projects objectives, activities, achievements and developments.

## ...tragedy of the commons (continued from page 1)

To apply this principle to CBNRM, however, requires awareness and understanding of the problem, for example the destructive nature of frequent bush fires, but also clear incentives to do something about it. One may ask: Why should I fight fires, report illegal logging activities, control my cattle to prevent over-grazing and so on, if others caused the problems and others are not willing to do it the same way.

Here it is where we find the biggest challenge of community-based management approaches, not only to be aware of, but also to be willing to act on obvious problems that may

not affect you in an immediate, direct and personal way as is the case with a disease mentioned earlier on. This is not only a problem specific to Namibia or even African countries, this is known to be a problem of common property worldwide and has been labelled by social scientists as the "Tragedy of the Commons".

The only solution to this dilemma is usually seen in rewarding individuals for their contribution to the common cause. Financial support of management activities through projects can provide such incentives and is usually in high demand. But the level of such incentives has to be

sustainable. If money is needed to mobilize a communal labour force, then eventually this money has to be generated through management. Where resources and marketing options are limited, so will be the money that can be generated. Accordingly projects have to balance the need for financial support of local people against the income potential of the current resource basis. While higher initial investments are needed to establish effective management systems, such investments have to be gradually adjusted to sustainable levels at later stages.

When discussing money issues,

other CBNRM benefits are often overlooked.

What about the power to control resource use, the power to sustain the availability of important natural resources for a particular community? With community forests communities cannot only generate money, they can protect grazing areas from over-utilization, allow or restrict resource access to 'outsiders', enhance availability and productivity of wood and non-wood resources, protect habitats for valuable game and wildlife species and can obtain skills and capacities that are valuable far beyond forest management practises.

## Vegetable Fresh, Healthy And Tasty!

By Christina Bohm, Katima

During the last rainy months new gardens could be provided with fruit trees and vegetable seeds. Life for hard working gardeners was easier because they could save the work of watering.

There is a huge variety of **vegetable** that can be harvested **all around the year**. Very tasty, healthy and successful also during rainy

season are the indigenous vegetables like sindambi, sishungwa, delele, tepe , and all kinds of pumpkins.

A new step in food production in Caprivi has been made by the Holy Mission Group (20 members) in Katima, who began their **Oyster Mushroom** production in January this year after a training workshop with Agriculture Technician

Linus Kwenani in September 2005. The first harvest out of the "dark house" that was erected near the Zambezi River was made on 24.02.06 and good results in taste and colour could be seen. Demand and value (40-50 N\$ per kg) for these fine mushrooms in the region is high.

The group has also started a garden with fruit trees and vegetable production. We are



waiting for the next season to come and fill our pots with a huge variety of fresh, healthy and tasty vegetable!



*A Fruit and vegetable garden in Ncumcara, supported by Community Forestry and the Directorate of Engineering and Extension Services in Rundu.*

## Home Gardens And HIV/AIDS

By Hirut Terefe (ded) and Patricia Mwazi (DEES)

In rural areas HIV/AIDS is deepening the existing poverty. People living with AIDS (PLWA) are likely to provide less labour, have less capital and they struggle to pay medical and other bills, which lead them losing their production ability. Due to its high labour requirements cash crop production is often the first to be neglected.

The pandemic has also generated a greater need for medicine, and most plant-based medicines are sourced from the forest. Also firewood, fodder and other means of income are generated from the existing forest. Wild fruits are free, nutritious and require little labour input which attracts more gatherers.

The primary necessities for communities with PLWA are food, better nutrition, more medicine and more income combined with lower labour.

### Gazetting... (continued from page 1)

The long awaited 'gazetting' (publication in the Government Gazette) by the MAWF is a crucial milestone for community forestry in Namibia: it constitutes the official empowerment of local communities with management rights over natural resources previously under control of the Namibian Government. It also reflects the strong commitment of the Namibian Government to support community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) for the benefit of local people and confirms its confidence in local people's capacities and skills.

Within the declared community forests local people are able to control the sustainable use and protection of valuable wood and non-wood forest resources against over-utilization, illegal

harvesting and wild fires. The communities now have the right to issue permits for the use of trees, firewood and other forest products and to use these resources on the basis of forest management plans and related use regulations (by-laws). Generated benefits can help to support both community development and natural resource management.

The Forest Act, No.12, 2001 provides the legal framework for the establishment of community forests in Namibia which are to be managed and protected by local communities and are expected to improve local livelihoods. The gazetting process was delayed due to necessary amendments of the Forest Act after the integration of the Directorate of Forestry into the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF).

## Community Forestry Promotes Tree Planting

Since August 2005 the Community Forestry programme in North Eastern Namibia (CFNEN) has intensified tree-planting campaigns, especially by radio in Kavango and Caprivi regions. The radio campaigns are carried live on the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) every Friday between 10h00 and 11h00. They are in Rukwangali and Silozi and feature promotion of Fruit and vegetable gardens, permit system in community forests, marketing of community forest products and tree-planting.

The campaigns are an attempt to respond to the ecological, socio-economic and human impact of deforestation, land and river degradation which are slowly on the increase in the region. In most



*A live phone-in radio tree planting programme on NBC Rukavango service. The campaigns are generating a big impact in the surrounding communities.*

cases, participants are assisted by technical staff from the Directorate of Forestry.

The campaigns are regarded a success because they have raised public awareness on tree planting and issues like deforestation, river degradation, desertification, forest fires and food security.

# Potentials Of Local Forest Products: Kashipembe From Katope/Kahenge

By Wycliffe Nabaasa, Rundu

Plans are underway to help the Kashipembe producing communities of Katope and Kahenge, to add value to the beverage. This is aimed at uplifting the living standards of the communities involved, using their natural resources. Reports have it that similar communities in Uganda have benefited from such experiences which could benefit the communities in Namibia, too.

Kashipembe production and consumption are a traditional practice in some areas in the region, passed on from generation to generation. But given the process through which it is produced, sometimes considered "crude" and unhygienic, Government was forced to ban its production and consumption. Nevertheless, production and consumption have continued which brings questions as to whether the drink should be legalised.

According to the experience gathered from Uganda, local banana growing communities had similar problems before independence. They fermented banana juices and distilled



*Kashipembe is considered unhygienic for human consumption because of the equipment and environment in which it is produced*

them to get **Enguli**, which they consumed in its "crude" form. As is the case with Kashipembe, the production process of Enguli at the time was considered unhygienic, which prompted the Government of Uganda to ban production and consumption. But still, the beverage was produced behind doors, which forced the local producers to form themselves into interest groups and force parliament to lift the ban.

In 1964 the Ugandan parliament enacted the **Enguli Production Prohibition Ordinance** which defined

terms under which **Enguli** could be produced as a raw material for other high value industrial products. The products included the popular **Uganda Waragi** and other liquors which Uganda originally imported at exorbitant prices.

Under the 1964 ordinance, Uganda Breweries Ltd was established and was the only permitted buyer of all the "crude" **Enguli**. It was also tasked with producing refined spirits from the **Enguli** beverage.

The ordinance also introduced the **Licence system** which

required every Enguli producer to be subjected to minimum hygiene and safety standards before one could be permitted to produce the Enguli. Premises and equipment to be used had to be inspected. As a result, the hygiene and quality of the drink were greatly improved, attracting more descent consumers. Also the different kind of packaging used in bottling ensured that every income level was catered for, right from the highest to the smallest.

Establishment of Uganda Breweries provided steady market and steady income for the producers. The Government also generated revenue through issuance of license. Members from producer communities were allowed to own shares as well as getting full time employment in the distilleries.

Adding value to the local products has generally improved living standards in most communities, which have equally taken care of the environment where bananas are produced. Communities in Kahenge can also improve their livelihoods and at the same time take care of the environment.

## Our *degraded* Environment

### What Is Your Ecological Footprint?

By Wycliffe Nabaasa, Rundu

Each human being has exactly two hectares to live in on earth. How much effect does your food, your perfume, the insecticide you use on cocroaches, the fuel of your car, the water you use, refuse from your house have on the

environment? Do you carry a shopping bag each time you go shopping, or you ask for more polythene bags, and where do they go? The plastic stuff, the old tyres, the bottles, the linen and T-shirts, the hard paper, the old leather stuff. They never decompose

-they remain as garbage.

What about the broken and useless computers, cellphone sets, sheets of metal frames? How far are we from an electronic-pollution from dead TVs, calculators, typewriters, phones and their accessories, photocopier cartridges?

The transparent piece that wraps your meat from the butchery has the worst impact on the environment. No organism will feed on it.

How much does your lifestyle contribute to a healthy environment?