

SAWLOG PRODUCTION GRANT SCHEME

News of Uganda's commercial tree planting fund for the private sector

May - June 2005



IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1,000 ha of planting exceeded.
- SPGS clients' Questionnaire - shock revelations!
- *Pinus caribaea* seed shortage update.
- Contract awarded for consultants to review incentives.
- Fire Protection Training courses.
- Some facts about Glyphosate.



The cover photo shows Fidel Begumisa standing proudly next to his 2-year old *Pinus patula* planting in Mafuga CFR. Fidel has established 80ha successfully under the SPGS to date.

1,052 HA AND COUNTING....

We have just achieved a major target and rewarded SPGS clients for over 1,000 ha of planting that has reached the required standards (that is 2,470 acres for the metrically-challenged readers amongst you). This is a tremendous achievement given the lowly state of tree planting in this country only 2-3 years ago. Many people are actually talking about the trees they are seeing popping up all over the country as both a result of both the private sector and the

FRMCP/NFA. Until the end of April 2005, 19 SPGS clients had received their 1st payment (Ushs300,000/ha) for a grand total of 1,052 ha. The successful planters are listed on Page 7.



SPGS CLIENTS' MEETING

What a great turnout there was for the April 5th 2005 SPGS clients' meeting in Kampala too. More importantly than just turning up (and note that no allowances were forthcoming either) there was excellent participation from those present. Many points were raised and debated. Most of this Newsletter is addressing such issues - including the excellent feedback from the questionnaire many people filled in at the meeting. We would also like to know just how the Hon. Sheila Mishambi managed to pull her own name from the hat to become the proud owner of the *Plantation Forestry in the Tropics* book!

“Where are the skills we need?” This cry was heard from a number of participants at April’s SPGS clients’ meeting. The following article should be of interest to those people.

THE AFRICAN FORESTER: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

Forestry education in Africa is going through hard times. National governments never invested much in it and now donors have practically abandoned it. Political instability and budget problems force many institutions to close for long periods. Students that manage to graduate are poorly equipped to meet the needs of governments, communities, or the private sector. Many end up unemployed.

These disturbing conclusions come from a recent survey of twenty African universities, colleges, and institutes that train people in forestry. The survey, by August Temu of ICRAF and several of his colleagues, covered institutions in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, and included many of the region’s best universities. Of these, only two have significant funding from donors.

Over the decade from 1993 to 2002, the number of forestry bachelor’s handed out by the twenty institutions surveyed rose. However, the number of graduate degrees declined significantly. Meanwhile, it has become much harder for students to get visas and scholarships to go to graduate school abroad. Certificate-level forestry training has practically disappeared.

A second report by FAO and IUCN shows the situation is even worse in Central Africa, which has the richest forests. The DRC has only one hundred professional foresters to manage forests covering an area three times the size of France. Congo-Brazzaville’s faculty of forestry was ransacked in 1997/98 and only re-opened three years ago. The Central African Republic’s faculty was also pillaged.

Within Central Africa, the University of Dchang in Cameroon has probably fared the best. However, of 144 recent graduates, less than half found jobs in forestry or went to graduate school. Dchang doesn’t really prepare students to work in logging companies, and only four ended up there. Companies now face pressure to manage their forests sustainably, but they couldn’t find the skilled people they’d need to improve their

management even if they wanted to. Nor are the students well prepared to serve small farmers.

The continent is not training the foresters it needs. Unless it begins to do so, the downward spiral of declining funding and results will accelerate. The international community should not leave African governments to wrestle with this problem alone. Donors need to provide greater support to African institutions and bring more students to study in their own countries.

Thanks to Margaret Kasekende (EC Delegation) for forwarded this interesting piece to us.

“MORE TIMELY PAYMENTS PLEASE” a number of you cried in the questionnaire. The Team were a bit embarrassed by the criticism at the meeting over delayed payments so decided to do something about it quickly. Now before you read the following piece we felt you should know that there was heated debate amongst the SPGS Team whether we should tell you the following story but we decided to!

Immediately after the SPGS clients’ meeting, the SPGS Team all assigned roles – Paul was to follow up on the action points from the meeting and to prepare the next budget for 05/06; Allan had to work on reconciling expenditure before for the EC would release the next tranche of money. Bric, meanwhile headed off on safari to visit four SPGS planters in Mafuga Central Forest Reserve in Kabale.

Bric’s field reports were prepared and emailed to Allan and Paul the day following the inspections. Three out of the four planters Bric visited were due to receive their first payments of Ushs300,000 per hectare – the fourth had to undertake better weeding before receiving any money. Paul and Allan checked the details, queried a few issues and once satisfied, prepared the cheques for signing the same day. No doubt the clients involved were surprised to receive a call from Allan informing them that their cheques were ready within two days of the infield inspection. Now you can maybe see why we agonised over telling you this tale – as we thought all SPGS clients might expect the same service! Of course you must realise that it will not always be possible to have such a rapid turn-around but at least we wanted to show that we have listened to you and will endeavour to pay out faster to encourage more trees to be planted (and weeded).

SPGS CLIENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire filled in during April's meeting proved extremely useful for us and will undoubtedly lead to an improved service to you. Below is a brief summary of your thoughts – starting with the positives:

- 👍 Our plantation training courses.
- 👍 Advisory visits to your plantations.
- 👍 Plantation Guidelines & SPGS Newsletters.
- 👍 Quarterly clients' meetings in Kampala.
- 👍 The idea of clients' safaris to plantation areas.

But before we get carried away....you had a few gripes too:

- 👎 Weeding problems.
- 👎 Lack of capital.
- 👎 Delays in payments following inspections.
- 👎 NFA's seedling prices.
- 👎 Not enough technical information.

You were strongly in favour of more frequent advisory visits and encouragingly almost all of you (95%) said that you would continue planting beyond the current contracts if SPGS funding was extended beyond its current period (Dec. 2006). 72% of respondents said that they use mostly local labour, whilst a similar percentage use contract labour rather than directly employed. Only 11% are currently using Glyphosate and 70% said that you would seriously consider hiring a bulldozer for land clearance if available.

78% said that they would reach their planting targets whilst 95% said that they were confident of

reaching the SPGS's standards to receive the grant payments.

Well! You certainly gave us encouragement that the SPGS is on the right track but there are a number of areas we clearly have to focus on to keep everybody happy.

GLYPHOSATE

It was clear from the questionnaire that many of you did not know about Glyphosate. Hopefully those you who listened to Bric's presentation in April's meeting will have changed your understanding of this extremely useful herbicide. His message was that the proper application of Glyphosate (i.e. the right dose at the right time) can not only save money compared with a manual only operation, but reduces the labour requirement at a critical time.

The other key aspect is that your trees benefit much more in terms of high stocking and good early survival, which sets the plantation on the path to high yields. *Ensure you have (and read) NFA Plantation Guideline No 22 all about the safe use of Glyphosate.*

SEED UPDATE

We promised you in the last Newsletter that we would work closely with the NFA's National Tree Seed Centre (NTSC) to try and resolve the shortage of improved PCH¹ seed. We are reliably informed that the NTSC are expecting a 50kg batch from Queensland seed, which should arrive here late May. PCH seed has also recently been collected on our behalf from South African seed orchards and we are awaiting the extraction and testing of this before importing it. The new Manager of the NTSC, Stephen Kaukha, has assured us that they will always try and reserve improved PCH and *E. grandis* seed for SPGS clients. Contact the NTSC on 041 286 049 or visit them down the Jinja road at Namanve.

¹ *Pinus caribaea var. hondurensis*



NFA's National Tree Seed Centre nursery at Namanve showing a healthy stock of PCH. NTSC sell improved seed of PCH and Eucalyptus grandis as well as selected seed from other species. They also sell seedlings direct if ordered 6 months in advance.

PHOTO



Thorough land preparation (too thorough on such a steep slope) by Masaka Diocese, who received their 1st SPGS cheque in April. No problems with weeds, however! At least Fr Edward Ssemwogerere and his colleagues' prayers were answered.



A good example of both bad silviculture and poor management practices in Mayuge: first Teak (*Tectona grandis*) is planted completely off-site and then the plantation has not been protected from fires spreading from neighbouring land.



FORRI's 3-yr old *Eucalyptus* hybrid clonal trial in Mayuge District. This is one of a series of trials throughout the country testing a range of GU (*E.grandis* x *E.urophylla*) and GC (*E.grandis* x *E.camaldulensis*) clones developed by MONDI in South Africa. The Gatsby Foundation (a UK-based charity) are funding this research with a view to providing Ugandan farmers with fast growing planting material.



More bad practice close to Mabira forest: somewhere amongst the weeds are *Eucalyptus grandis* seedlings. Please don't expect high yields and a return on your investment with such practices. If we have said it once we have said it a thousand times - Eucalypts do not tolerate weed competition. You have been warned!



A severe attack of the Chalcid wasp (*Leptocybe invasa*) on a *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* in Katugo nursery, Nakasongola. The only recommendation at present is to adopt good silvicultural practices - especially carefully matching species and site and having thorough weed control - to minimise stress. The attack from this pest is much more serious in stressed crops.



A team from the EC Delegation in Kampala visiting one of the clients of the SPGS in Feb. 2005. Jossy Byamah, manager of Busoga Forest Co. in Bukaleba CFR, is here explaining their planting programme.



We found a number of *E.grandis* trees with their roots exposed like this in Kyenjojo recently. The causes could be two-fold - namely, over zealous manual weeding (scraping too much soil away from the trees) but also planting the seedlings too shallow in the first instance.

GALLERY



Workers releasing the Pines from rampant weed growth at Ferdinand Mugisha's planting on his own land in Mukono District. Ferdinand has recently received the 1st SPGS payment for 40ha to date - which includes both E.grandis and Pinus caribaea.

We do see some amazing sights in our travels. This poor Pine seedling tried its best to find a way out of the weeds. We suspect that the sawmiller might not be too happy in a few years time though.



Mrs Migereko and her Supervisor, Simon Balidawa, proudly posing in front of their recently planted (weeding in progress) Pine plantation in Ngereka CFR near Jinja. Their 1st SPGS cheque should be on its way to them very soon when the weeding operation has been completed.



Matthias Baldus, from Global Woods Ltd posing beside an impressive wood-stack ready to be converted into charcoal. This is a way of off-setting establishment costs. Global Woods are planting in Kikonda CFR (nr. Hoima) and should also be receiving their 1st SPGS cheque soon.



Participants at the Plantation Establishment training course in Kyenjojo admiring a recently thinned 2-yr old E.grandis stand in Oruha CFR.. There was a strong showing from the private sector on this course.



The Secretary (right) & Vice-Chairman of the Kamusiime Memorial Scheme, posing in their impressive Pine plantation in Bushenyi. This Association of 22 small farmers now have received 1st SPGS payment for 33.7ha. A great example to others we feel.

TRAINING LATEST

According to the questionnaire, only just over half (56%) of the SPGS clients have sent their staff on one of our practical establishment courses. Shame on you 44% for wasting such an excellent opportunity! The most recent Plantation Planning & Establishment course in Kyenjojo in April was well attended, with a record 10 SPGS people on it.

Plantation Maintenance

We unfortunately have had to postpone the course planned for 22nd - 27th May 2005 due to too many other commitments, in particular with most of the SPGS team travelling to South Africa. However, we have rescheduled the first Plantation Maintenance course from 17th to 22nd July 2005. The venue is to be confirmed but looks like being centred in Mbarara, with much of the field work in Rwoho Central Forest Reserve. 10 places are reserved for SPGS people so contact Allan soon: as usual tuition is free – you pay for local accommodation and transport to and from the venue. The course will focus on the following topics:

- Post-plant weeding (manual and chemical).
- Pests and diseases.
- Measuring and monitoring tree growth.
- Thinning & pruning to maximise yield and quality.
- Eucalyptus coppice management.

Protect your Assets

During June 2005, we will be running an important course specifically on Plantation Fire Protection. This is timed so that you can learn how to protect your forests as we enter the hot, dry period of July and August.

From 6th to 17th June, the very practical 2-day course will be run in four venues – Lendu (6-7th), Luwero (9 – 10th), Kyenjojo (13-14th) and Kabale (16 – 17th). Five places on each course are reserved for SPGS clients. We restrict numbers so that we can ensure each participant goes away having learnt something.

We are now also planning to give SPGS clients feedback on the performance of the staff whom you send on our courses as we feel that it is important. Not everybody we see on the courses wants to learn the new techniques we show them (though the vast majority are very keen).

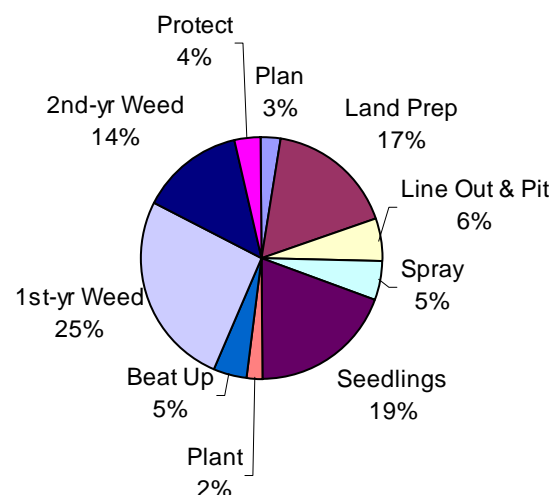


Participants at the SPGS/NFA's Planning & Establishment training course in Kyenjojo in April 2005 learning how to plant in straight lines.

ESTABLISHMENT COSTS

There was considerable discussion during April's meeting on plantation establishment costs. Paul Jacovelli's presentation on costs and cash flow was meant to make people more aware of the commitment and level of investment required in plantation forestry. The talk will be published as an NFA Plantation Guideline shortly but in the meantime, we thought that it would be useful to present graphically a summary of average establishment costs. The chart below clearly shows where the biggest expenditure is incurred - namely, land preparation, planting (including purchasing seedlings) and especially weeding. The focus therefore needs to be on techniques of reducing unit costs in these areas and include mechanised land clearance, pre- and post-plant use of Glyphosate, better timing of planting, earlier weeding and also reducing nursery costs.

AVERAGE PINE ESTABLISHMENT COSTS



COMMUNITY ACTION

One of the common criticisms of the SPGS is that it only caters for 'big' planters. Well we really don't mind what size you are provided you plant a minimum 25ha over 3 years! But seriously, we are very aware that there are many people who cannot reach the minimum area but need assistance to grow trees properly. With this in mind the two SPGS Community foresters have been encouraged to come up with some concrete proposals to assist willing communities.

George and Anaclet have been following up with two such communities – in Sango Bay (Rakai) and Luwero. They are currently drawing up agreements whereby the SPGS will purchase seedlings (from Namanve and Katugo nurseries respectively) for the Sept/Oct 2005 planting season. The people will be shown how to prepare the land and will provide all the required labour. The logistics are not easy – in Luwero, for example, we are talking about 87 farmers with an average of 1.5ha each. We will keep you informed of developments, however, but would also welcome suggestions from existing SPGS clients of how to go about this.



Chief Technical Adviser, Paul Jacovelli (left) and Peter Ogwayi (NFA Zone Manager, Kyenjojo; right) explaining how they have achieved such good establishment of their 2-yr old Pinus caribaea in Oruha CFR to a trainee on April's Plantation Planning and Establishment course in April 2005. The seed origin was from Australian seed orchards and the site was pre-plant sprayed with Glyphosate herbicide.

LIST OF SUCCESSFUL PLANTERS

In our 1st SPGS Newsletter (April 2005), we printed the names of the first 9 clients who had received payments for a total of 325ha that met the required standards. Joining this group are a further batch of 10 planters – taking the total established area to 1052ha by the end of April 2005. Well done to the following:

- Arhu Chris.
- Major-General Wamala.
- Precision Sawmills Ltd.
- Masaka Diocese.
- Bavame Enterprise.
- Hon. Mishambi Sheila.
- Kirasha Jonathon.
- Hon. Miyingo Kesimbira.
- Begumisa Fidel.
- Besepo (U) Ltd.

The last name on the list – Besepo – deserve singling out for the fact that they have established no less than 298ha. Of course, before we get carried away, all these initial plantings have to be maintained before the balance of payments are made (2 x Ushs 150,000 per ha).

PLANTATION GUIDELINES

Plantation Guideline No. 12 – *Establishment and Management of Commercial Pine Plantations in Uganda* - is now published and you should have all received some copies (one for the client and one for each of your site manager/supervisor). More copies (free of charge – unless you want serious numbers) are available from Josephine Mbogga (NFA/SPGS Secretary) or the SPGS office (see contact details on last page).

It seems from April's questionnaire that you are very appreciative of the Plantation Guideline series that we are publishing. You gave us some good ideas for improvements too: more photos and more practical information a number of you recommended and that is what you will get! You also gave clear indications, which other ones you would like to see as a matter of priority and as you read this we are busy working on them.

Incentives Consultancy

We mentioned in the April meeting that we were seeking to hire the services of some 'experts' to assist us to review the incentives (or lack of them) aimed at encouraging private sector tree planting. Four international companies submitted bids for this work and the successful team was from the Edinburgh-based LTS International.

The Team Leader is Pat 'the Pipe' Hardcastle, who is no stranger to Uganda or even the FRMCP. Pat will be accompanied by David Grundy, who worked for 15 years with the UK Forestry Commission and was directly responsible for their revision of the grant and taxation system to encourage private sector planting. Interestingly, the UK's Woodland Grant Scheme has many similarities with our SPGS.

The LTS team will be assisted in Uganda by Cornelius Kazoora, who has been actively involved in the setting up of the SPGS. We are also hoping to identify a local taxation expert to advise the team when they arrive here (expected early July 2005). We very much want the input of SPGS clients into this work as it is aimed at improving the investment environment for you. We will be contacting many of you individually to meet the consultants and will invite all clients to their presentation before they leave the country. We will inform you in the next Newsletter of the details.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE

In the July/August 2005 Newsletter, you can look forward to the following features:

A Foxy Story

Many of you will have seen the appearance of the phenomenon known as foxtailing, particularly where PCH is being grown on hotter sites. To gain some factual information on the matter, we despatched some of our SPGS



foresters to carry out a survey in the 2-3-yr old FRMCP plantings in Kasagala, Kasana-Kasambya and Oruha CFRs. In the next issue we will reveal the results. Bet you can't wait?

South Africa

A major part of the next SPGS Newsletter will feature South African plantations and their relevance to Uganda. The group that are have headed down there (from 8th – 20th May) include a strong representation from the SPGS – as well as Allan (Accountant) and Bric (Chief Guide), two SPGS clients – 'Kamusiime' Brenda and Jossy 'Busoga' Byamah will be going along. We will expect some interesting reports from them all and will share them with you.

Believe us, a country with no less than 1.3 Million hectares of commercial plantations - largely Pines and Eucalypts too - can teach us a thing or two.

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