



**drynet**

www.dry-net.org

**No. 5**

May 2009

# News from Drynet

*A global initiative giving future to drylands*

Drynet is a project of 14 organisations from all over the world. They work together to combat land degradation

## GLOBAL NEWS

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### PUBLISHED BY



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## Drynet Update

Welcome to the fifth issue of "News from Drynet", a newsletter from the Drynet network on global concerns for drylands from local perspectives. This issue highlights the current debates on climate change and its consequences for drylands, the desertification processes and the possible methods of adaptation.

During March 2009 the Drynet network held its regional meetings in Asia, Africa and Latin America to discuss the (regional) progress on project activities, the situation in drylands, and the prospects and directions for future cooperation. Besides the project related work, each meeting gave participants further inspiration through a field trip in Kazakhstan, an open conference with a broad range of stakeholders in Senegal and the presentation of a research on bioremediation initiated by Drynet in Bolivia.

One of the themes which emerged from all three meetings as a crucial issue for the future work of Drynet was the debate on climate change, the impacts this will have on dryland inhabitants and various strategies of

adaptation to these changes which are propagated. Being an already highly fragile ecosystem, drylands are likely to suffer heavily from even minimal increases of temperature or variations in rainfall. In the wake of these changes many more regions will be adversely affected by the process of desertification and land degradation. For these reasons the implications of climate change and the strategies of adaptation will be a top priority for our work in the coming years.

**By Drynet partner: Both ENDS, the Netherlands - [drynet@bothends.org](mailto:drynet@bothends.org)**



*Regional Meeting in Africa. Drynet team visits a farmer's field outside Dakar, Senegal - Photo by Maude Gentil*

## GLOBAL NEWS

### Adaptation to climate change:

#### **SYNERGIES RESULTING FROM THE INITIATIVES DRAWN UP AT THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION**

It has been several years since multinational efforts to develop and implement action programmes to combat desertification were begun. These processes have led to the implementation of various initiatives to mitigate the effects of drought and also the consolidation of survival strategies for local communities faced with land degradation.

The initiatives undertaken in the affected countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America primarily address agricultural development and food security, conservation and protection of natural resources, water resources management, efficient energy use, information and communication.

These initiatives largely correspond to the priority activities identified in the National Adaptation Programmes of Action to address the most urgent needs and concerns regarding the adverse effects of climate change in the least developed countries (LDCs). In Africa, this applies particularly to water resources, food security, arid zone ecosystems, forestry and coastal areas.

In overcoming the difficulties posed by climate change, it is difficult to differentiate between the efforts

against desertification and adaptation to climate change. Some actions designed to combat desertification may also contribute to the mitigation of climate change, such as sustainable land and forest management with carbon sequestration. In addition, improving the access of affected developing countries to renewable energy technologies could reduce greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the use of fossil fuels.

The needs stated by the concerned parties through the National Adaptation Programmes of Action for Climate Change and the National Action Programs to Combat Desertification highlight common priority areas and the need for concentrated execution of these strategies to create a real sustainable development perspective. Although their methods and approaches are different, the programmes from the UNFCCC and UNCCD conventions share a common objective: to improve the living conditions of vulnerable and impoverished populations affected by

desertification and climate change. To accelerate the course of action, the adaptation programmes must reinforce and extend the reach of the activities already begun within the framework of the NAP to Combat Desertification. This approach will reinforce the collaboration between different players and institutions without duplicating the implementation of actions resulting from the conventions and, with the existing financial resources, effectively respond to the needs of the most impoverished populations living in arid zones in developing countries where the means of subsistence are directly linked to natural resources.

Approaches to addressing adaptation to climate change can derive global benefits from the synergies of the initiatives and models drawn from the Convention to Combat Desertification.

**By Drynet partner: Emmanuel S. Seck, ENDA TM, Senegal** (*Environmental Development Action in the Third World*) - "Environment Energy Development"



## GLOBAL NEWS

### EXCERPT FROM ARTICLE:

## Can we survive the real and semantic pitfalls of adaptation?

Recognition by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that the climate is rapidly changing and will affect the world's most vulnerable communities most severely, has put adaptation high on the global agenda. What does this imply for development policy and practice?

As circumstances and the physical environment change, living things and their societies must also change if they are to survive and prosper in the new conditions. The particular combination of qualities, abilities and mental and emotional resources that enables some people to face and respond to change positively we call "adaptive capacity": the ability of a living social-ecological system to adjust responses to changing internal demands and external drivers.

If they are to survive and thrive, agricultural and pastoral communities in the drylands will have to manage their resources in ways that draw on past knowledge and experience, but which go beyond the bounds of the familiar and the traditional. It is essential that we understand what sorts of conditions will enable the world's most vulnerable communities

to thrive in this changing global environment, use this knowledge to shape our policies and practices. "Poverty traps" and "rigidity traps" both limit the ability of people and their institutions to adapt successfully to changing societies, and relative wealth does not protect institutions from crumbling in the face of crisis.

Providing money and material resources to vulnerable communities is not enough to increase their resilience. Inappropriate aid might undermine the resilience and self-sufficiency of farming communities. The post-Copenhagen adaptation agenda must enhance resilience and preserve environmental services.

It will be vital to focus material resources on ensuring that the resilience and problem solving capacities of dryland communities are enhanced. What was described as good development practice in previous eras is more relevant than ever in the "adaptation era": sustainable resource management approaches based primarily on local resources, informed by sound knowledge of local eco- and social systems, and engaging the full participation of local communities via participatory action research. "Solutions" based on analysis and technologies that only exist outside affected communities will fail. And when this happens we must ensure that the failure is not blamed on the affected communities.

**By Drynet partner: Noel Oettle, EMG, South Africa**

For full-length article please visit our website: [www.dry-net.org](http://www.dry-net.org)

## International Agenda 2009

01 June 2009 - 03 June 2009

**E-biosphere Conference - International Conference on Biodiversity Informatics in London, UK** Biodiversity Informatics is a young field that is making diverse classes of biodiversity data available online and putting these data to work for science and society. The Conference will highlight the accomplishments, capabilities and uses of Biodiversity Informatics and will gather community input for a 5-10 year research roadmap.

More information:

[www.e-biosphere09.org](http://www.e-biosphere09.org)

16 – 21 August 2009

**The 10th International Congress of Ecology: Ecology in a Changing Climate: Two Hemispheres - One Globe in Brisbane, Australia. UK** Ecologists from around the world will explore how global climate change has impacted, and will further impact, ecosystems and their vital services to human communities. They will explore unique features of ecosystems in the southern and northern hemispheres but look for common elements in a search for solutions to this looming problem. will gather community input for a 5-10 year research roadmap.

More information:

[www.e-biosphere09.org](http://www.e-biosphere09.org)

13-16 October 2009 - DIVERSITAS

**Open Science Conference: Biodiversity and society: understanding connections, adapting to change in Cape Town, South Africa.** DIVERSITAS Open Science Conferences aim to assemble the whole scientific and policy community working on biodiversity science.

<http://www.diversitas-osc.org/>

## GLOBAL NEWS

### The Camel:

#### A MAJOR RESOURCE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

With its proverbial desert adaptation, the camel is the one domestic animal that is best equipped to withstand global warming. Already it is replacing cattle in areas such as the Ethiopian Borana rangelands where a higher atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> content is driving the substitution of grasslands with shrub vegetation. Under high ambient temperatures, camels also have the major advantage over exotic cattle of not depending on energy-intensive air-conditioning for providing large amounts of milk.

While it is well known that camel racing is big business in the Gulf, the economic potential of camel milk production is less frequently realized. But lately, demand for packaged camel milk has sky-rocketed in the supermarkets of the United Arab Emirates, especially Dubai, as camel milk has become appreciated as an alternative treatment for Diabetes: it contains a substance that simulates the effect of Insulin. The so-called white gold of the desert also has ingredients that stimulate the immune-system and therefore is used for the treatment of tuberculosis and even cancer. Furthermore it can be consumed by the increasing number of people who suffer from lactose intolerance. Demand for camel milk has also soared because Dubai's camel dairy Camelicious has entered

into a joint venture with an Austrian chocolate maker which necessitates camel milk powder. For these reasons, the Gulf countries are currently on a shopping spree in countries such as India, Pakistan, and Sudan to purchase as many female camels as possible.

Most camels in the world are still owned by some of the most marginalised people in the hottest and remotest parts of Africa and Asia. Obviously these people have a major resource on their hands, but in order to make use of this resource they require various inputs, such as awareness about the economic potential of their animals, organisational strengthening and training, as well as technological support and infrastructure for processing camel products which are not limited to milk, but also include

meat, wool, leather, and even camel-dung paper. Indian Drynet partner Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan, with support from a European Drynet partner, the League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development is currently supporting the camel breeders of the Thar Desert to cash in on their traditional assets, with significant results. However, much more needs to be done, and this NGO effort must be supported by appropriate government policies as well as targeted research efforts. It also should be replicated in Pakistan, Iran, and other Southwest Asian countries to ensure that it is not just affluent Gulf countries that can capitalize on this animal, but also the poor people of the drylands.

**By Drynet partner:  
Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, LPP, Germany**



*Camel milking in Khaba - Photo courtesy of the author*



## REGIONAL NEWS

### Why should we bother?

#### CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESSES OF THE UNCCD

The formal processes of the UN's Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) like the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) are cumbersome and not wildly exciting. Hundreds or even thousands of delegates spend endless days pouring over complicated and politically contentious text that the lay person struggles to make any sense out of. After long days and nights, often spent arguing over phrases, brackets or even commas, by the end of most of these meetings the results seem so meagre that one wonders if these processes will really contribute to saving humanity's threatened habitat on the planet.



*Patrice Burger from Drynet partner, CARI, negotiating at CRIC 7, November 2008 – photo IISD*

Should we even bother to engage, one wonders?

The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its associated Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer demonstrated for the first time that concerted international action can address a global environmental problem in a meaningful way. The mandatory reductions in ozone-depleting substances that the nations of the world agreed to brought about a dramatic reversal in the thinning of the ozone layer.

Despite all of its shortcomings, the UN Climate Change Convention has also achieved some notable successes. It has brought the realities of global warming to the world's attention. Unfortunately its good intentions are perverted by too many wealthy nations and their lobbying groups. On the other hand, the lobbying groups that have promoted the urgency of the crisis have managed to keep the issue on the front burner.

Desertification is a much more insidious environmental crisis, partly because it affects the poor more than the wealthy, and because its effects are difficult to monitor and easy to ignore. Nevertheless, with the right input from the right people we can contribute to more appropriate and urgent responses to this global scourge. If focussed and effective NGOs participate in the formal processes of the UNCCD they can and do influence the agenda and the outcomes.

The UNCCD is a unique international legal instrument for addressing environmental and social challenges because it obliges governments to engage affected populations in the processes. This was achieved by focused lobbying on the part of civil society, but unless that presence is maintained and the positions of CSOs are clearly and consistently articulated, the engagement will probably take the form of "token participation", and not profound and empowered engagement in all stages of the process.

National and international level decisions are regularly taken to advance sustainable land management. However, if there is no contribution into the decision making processes that reflects the realities and experiences of communities living off the land, including small scale and indigenous farmers, the measures put in place and funding allocated might have unintended negative impacts. CSOs can provide grassroots experiences and best practices that need to inform these decisions.

Opportunities to engage occur regularly. At a national level our government convenes meetings to review the National Action Programme (NAP) to Combat Desertification. Civil society also has a recognised role in the official meetings of the UNCCD such as the bi-annual Conference of the Parties, or COPs, and of the subsidiary bodies such as the Committee to Review Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) and the Committee on Science >>

## REGIONAL NEWS

### Why should we bother? *continued*

and Technology (CST). Furthermore there are a range of other consultative meetings, seminars and conferences where rich opportunities exist to share experiences and to engage with decision makers.

The best ways to use these opportunities are to engage actively in networks (such as Drynet) and to ensure that your organisation is accredited to the Convention by approaching the Secretariat (<http://www.unccd.int/>) for the necessary registration forms and submitting these. The Secretariat usually has a limited amount of funding to support the participation of civil society in official meetings, and you should enquire of the Secretariat how to access such support.

Remember though, in order to influence the agenda and policy process, your organisation needs to be engaged over the long-term and to build alliances with others. One voice will be "crying in the wilderness"; however, if many CSOs promote common positions they can move mountains.

**By Drynet Partner: Noel Oettlé, EMG**

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If you like to receive this newsletter electronically or for more details on the articles published, contact us at [drynet@bothends.org](mailto:drynet@bothends.org) or check our website [www.dry-net.org](http://www.dry-net.org)  
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### Drynet and EMG at the national climate change summit

"Climate change" is a phrase on everybody's tongue these days. In fact, this issue has become so topical that some in the environmental and sustainable land management arena say that other important issues are being overshadowed by this looming environmental crisis. It certainly seems to be the "hot" issue for South Africa at the moment. We are increasingly aware of our outsized contribution to it, and the massive potential impact on our nation.

In response, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Department of Science and Technology brought together more than 700 delegates from all sectors for a National Climate Change Summit between 3rd and 6th March 2009. The Summit attracted a wide range of civil society and private sector organisations, and drew in many key Ministries, including the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME), Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAFF) and Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). The Summit was opened with an address by the President of the Republic, the Hon. Kgalema Motlanthe.

The 3-day summit included important updates on the most recent climate change research and other current

South African initiatives and interventions and created a platform for all key climate change response stakeholders to discuss and agree on the framework for a National Climate Change Response Policy. It further included side events and an exhibition space where more than 40 organisations, companies and departments displayed their "wares".

The Environmental Monitoring Group was present at the Summit, both in its capacity as South African Drynet host and also in terms of its Water Services and Climate Change Programme (<http://www.emg.org.za>). Apart from engaging in the plenary and parallel session, we held two side events and welcomed visitors to an EMG exhibition stand.

The first side event, entitled Water's Carbon Footprint?, explored mitigation within water services. Jessica Wilson and Taryn Pereira (EMG) presented an overview of carbon intensive aspects of water provision and wastewater treatment. Two case studies followed – one by Shafiek Hoossein (Coastal & Environmental Services) on dry sanitation in Buffalo City, the other by Viktor Munnik (Mvula Trust) on algal pond wastewater treatment in Bedford, Eastern Cape. The seminar aimed to raise people's awareness around technology choice, the appropriateness of 'appropriate technology' and some of the links between water and climate change. It further aimed to discuss whether bringing climate change considerations into the complexity >>

## REGIONAL NEWS

### Drynet and EMG at the national climate change summit *continued*

of water services was helpful or not. The presentations were stimulating and there were a wealth of questions. Close to 50 people attended.

The second side event, co-hosted by EMG, Indigo development & change and Project 90 x 2030, was entitled Climate Change Adaptation and Small Scale Farmers. The aim was to share experiences of practical and successful adaptation by small-scale farmers and critically examine frame conditions necessary for successful adaptation. After three brief presentations by Bettina Koelle (Indigo), Brenda Martin (Project 90x2030) and Noel Oettle (EMG), the discussion was opened to the floor. Attendance included representatives of government, academia, NGOs, civil society networks, the private sector and foreign diplomats. Participants expressed a lively interest in finding out about practical actions that could be undertaken to promote adaptation by rural communities. This interest reflected a more generally felt challenge in terms of how land users could be engaged in understanding and addressing the complex and unpredictable challenges of climate change, and the void that all too often

exists between grassroots experience and policy responses.

Our exhibition stand drew a great deal of attention, with its range of interesting and colourful posters, including the collage of "mini-posters" from 24 of our South African Drynet partners. In fact, our stand was so enticing that we managed to attract Hon. President Motlanthe and some of his Ministers to our stand. Jessica Wilson had about 30 seconds to explain to him why climate change may put a strain on our ability to provide water for all!

Many practitioners at the Summit who work with climate change-affected communities expressed the need to establish a platform for discussing adaptation issues in a creative learning environment. Delegates expressed the need for a platform where those involved in adaptation work can share experiences and practical approaches and explore the relative value of theoretical frameworks and methodologies that can add value to national and international policy processes. An initial workshop is planned for the 18th June in Johannesburg. For more information please refer to the News section below.

The Summit provided an excellent platform for many companies and individuals who were touting for "green" business. There were many advocates of carbon trading and the CDM looking to make a buck from

some of the fastest growing business opportunities around. However, we were not convinced that this strong lobby and the frameworks that support it will bring about the sorts of change that are needed, which can only be achieved through strong and focused political will and the imposition of mandatory reductions.

President Motlanthe spoke of nature in rather combative tones, and one had the impression that he was advocating a more concerted fight to dominate nature and make it bend to our will. This is not likely to win any battles with climate change. A new type of leadership is required, a leadership that is in conversation with nature and recognises our infinite capacity to destroy the systems that support all life on our planet.

**By Drynet Partner: Karen Goldberg and Noel Oettle, EMG**



*EMG staff member, Jessica Wilson shakes hands with the Hon. South African President Kgalema Motlanthe - photo by Karen Goldberg*

## REGIONAL NEWS

### A new African civil society network to promote SLM

Information and knowledge sharing, coordination, communication, lobbying, setting common positions, influence in decision making processes: there are all sound reasons for networking around issues of common concern.

It was to meet these needs in the context of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) that the global RIOD network was founded more than a decade ago. Sadly, in Africa RIOD became effectively dysfunctional and has not served its members in the past four years. As a result, the voice of African NGOs has not been an effective contributor in the negotiations of the UNCCD.

Recently there has been much reflection on why the RIOD network failed in Africa, so as to be able to ensure that a credible and functional network is rebuilt that can amplify the invaluable experiences of African civil society in promoting sustainable land management (SLM) and livelihoods.

It is a curious reflection of the success of NGOs in emphasizing the importance of participation and representation of civil society that TerrAfrica (a large international

initiative which seeks to address land degradation problems on this continent) has two seats for NGO representatives on its Executive Committee. However, without an active and credible network to elect and hold these representatives accountable, their presence on such decision making bodies becomes mere tokenism.

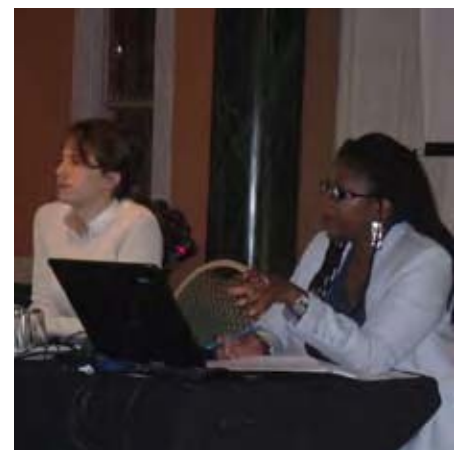
On the other hand, initiatives like TerrAfrica need to demonstrate that they are adequately consulting civil society organisation (CSO) networks and eliciting appropriate input in the design and implementation of their programmes. As such, they have a need for an effective CSO network.

It is within this context that a Regional Consultative Workshop was held in Pretoria from 23rd to 25th March 2009 to explore the establishment of a viable CSO "Coordination Mechanism for Sustainable Land Management". Twenty practitioners, representing national and regional networks as well as development partners working on sustainable land management, gathered to explore the context, think through what is needed to ensure that SLM initiatives succeed and reflect on the contribution that wider CSO networks could and should make to the processes. The workshop was convened by the UNDP, which hosts the TerrAfrica Civil Society Organisations Special Advisory Group, and followed on discussions held at a number of meetings in the past year. The workshop provided rich opportunities for information sharing and analysis of the situation. After

considerable debate it was agreed to establish national and sub-regional CSO structures to represent CSOs in national and international processes and forums. In the light of this, it was further agreed that "focal point" NGOs should consult with their national and regional networks between now and the forthcoming UNCCD COP (21st September to 2nd October 2009) to gain endorsement for the establishment of the new network. A task team was elected by those at the workshop to take the process forward so as to ensure that effective consultation takes place in the period between now and the COP. The southern African representatives are Moshe Tsehlo of PELUM Lesotho and Noel Oettlé of EMG, South Africa.

If you would like more information, to share your opinions or to contribute to the organisation of the new network, please contact Noel Oettlé: Email: [dryland@global.co.za](mailto:dryland@global.co.za)

**By Drynet Partner: Noel Oettlé, EMG**



*Paule Herodote (Global Mechanism) and Masego Madzwamuse (TerraAfrica, UNDP) at the UNDP SLM workshop - photo by Frank Masafiri, SusWatch Kenya*



## REGIONAL NEWS

### Update on Terra Madre SA

#### INTERVIEW WITH LIZ EGLINGTON

In our last issue, we featured an article on the Slow Food Movement and Terra Madre South Africa. Karen Goldberg, Coordinator for Drynet, South Africa, caught up with Liz Eglington, co-founder of the initiative, to hear about the latest developments.

**In your article in the December issue, you mentioned that you were planning to host a workshop or conference in May. Is this still going ahead?**

When we formed Terra Madre SA in November last year, we were very inspired to now go out there and make it “happen”. But then the logistics and sheer weight of work required caused us to pause and re-think. It just felt as if we had formed yet another initiative, amongst all of the other initiatives and organizations already operating in South Africa, all of whom do great work in their areas of expertise or regions. So I chatted to the Slow Food Coordinator for Africa and between us we devised what I believe is a better model.

**What is this model?**

The vision is get as many Slow Food Convivia formed and registered in South Africa as possible.

**What, exactly, is a Convivium?**

A Convivium is the basic building block of the movement, and consists of a minimum of five people: a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and 2 others. It can grow to any number of members.

Each Convivium must have a theme, focus, interest or speciality that identifies it and gives its members common ground. For example rooibos tea farmers who share the same traditional agricultural practices, organic bee keepers within a specific area, an organic or Slow Food restaurant, a Slow Food farmers market, or an organic community garden group.

Each Convivium will be totally autonomous, with its own committee, members, and focus. It’s growth and activities will be within a set area and region, and will become a “point of light” in that area.

**Where does Terra Madre SA fit in?**

Terra Madre SA will assist and encourage the formation of these Convivia. We will keep a database and assist in networking between Convivia to facilitate the transfer of skills, goods and services, and information.

Terra Madre SA will also facilitate and hold regional and national workshops and meetings so that all Convivia members can meet and share and network. This will be useful where lobbying is required, funds to be raised, and especially the transfer and sharing of knowledge and skills and successes.

**Has there been much interest in this model yet?**

We are in the process of assisting approximately 20 Convivia to form and be registered. This is just in the Western and Southern Cape and all within the last three months! By word of mouth this is going to increase tenfold within the next few months.

Also, there is tremendous interest from the rest of Africa, through all the delegates from all the African countries who attended Terra Madre 2008 in Italy. They want to follow our model, and be present at our first conference to share common views, information, challenges and successes.

If you are interested in forming your own Slow Food Convivium or would like more information, please contact Liz Eglington: Tel: 083-653-3635, Email: [lizeglington@netconnect.co.za](mailto:lizeglington@netconnect.co.za).

**By Drynet Partner: Karen Goldberg and Noel Oettle, EMG**



*Giant onions on display at one of the food stands at the Slowfood Food fair 2008 in Italy – Photo by Liz Eglington*

## REGIONAL NEWS

### Keeping cattle in a changing rural landscape

Do rural people keep too many cattle? Are cattle herds responsible for the soil erosion seen in many areas? Can a centrally managed communal grazing scheme for all cattle keepers reduce soil erosion?

These are the questions being asked in participatory action research being conducted in Okhombe, a rural village in the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Mountains in South Africa. Monique Salomon, PhD candidate at the Centre for Environment, Agriculture and Development of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is leading an interdisciplinary team of Master students in Rural Resources Management and Geography and nine community members from Okhombe. Through household interviews, participatory photography, aerial photos and other GIS tools, they are investigating how cattle keeping practices have changed since 1850, and what shifts have occurred in the social and ecological landscape. The research is based on the premise that a better understanding of the past can assist in improving the present, particularly in balancing rural cattle keeping and pursuing broader livelihood aspirations with sustainable management of agro-ecosystems.

Students and co-researchers work together as a team. They develop



*Mountain grazing area – photo by Victor Bangamwabo*

and review the research questions, undertake field work, analyze data, and discuss findings. Annual community meetings are held to keep community members updated on the research. Supervisors and research partners visit Okhombe to meet with students and co-researchers in the field and to discuss research progress.

Although the research is not complete, preliminary results indicate that fewer cattle than expected are being kept, and that the management practices of cattle keepers differ vastly. In order to be successful in this context, any communal grazing management system must allow space for each of these ways (or styles) of cattle keeping to co-exist. It also appears that cattle herds are probably not the primary cause of soil erosion. Instead, variable rainfall and drought appear to be key drivers in soil erosion in Okhombe, which

are naturally prone to soil erosion. Furthermore, Apartheid and colonial policies have significantly changed land use and concentrated more people on less land than they need to survive.

Further research is needed before concrete conclusions can be drawn and recommendations made. Relevant role players in Okhombe and the region will be interviewed and involved in developing scenarios for how Okhombe and the region could look in twenty years time. It is expected that the research will be completed by the end of 2010.

For more information contact Monique Salomon: Tel: 033-260-6173; Email: [salomon@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:salomon@ukzn.ac.za).

**By Monique Salomon, Centre for Environment, Agriculture and Development, University of KwaZulu-Natal**

## REGIONAL NEWS

### Off the Shelf

#### BOOKS, FILMS & OTHER MEDIA

#### THE EARTHSCAN READER ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE 2009

Editors: Schipper, Lisa F. and Burton, Ian  
 Published by Earthscan  
 ISBN: 978-18-4-407531-7  
 Website: <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?tabid=3909>

This reader gathers some of the most significant writings on adaptation to climate change from the past two decades. According to Prof. Vogel, BMW Chair of Sustainability, University of Witwatersrand, "This reader, drawn from the inputs of many experts, provides essential reading for those interested in climate change and adaptation issues, including policymakers, planners, the business sector, NGOs, students and researchers, and wider civil society.

#### TOWARDS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: RECLAIMING AUTONOMOUS FOOD SYSTEMS 2009

Author: Michel Pimbert  
 Published by IIED  
 Document ID: G02268  
 Website: <http://www.iied.org/natural-resources/publications/multimedia-publication-towards-food-sovereignty-reclaiming-autonomous-food-systems>

Towards Food Sovereignty' is an online book with full colour photo illustrations

and linked video and audio files. The first four chapters available describe the ecological basis of food and agriculture, the social and environmental costs of modern food systems, and the policy reversals needed to democratize food systems. The photos, video clips and audio recordings show farmers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, fisher folk, food workers and consumers all working to promote food sovereignty - highlighting the importance of locally controlled and diverse food systems to sustain both people and nature.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON TRADING AND CIVIL SOCIETY 2009

Editors: Bond, Patrick, Dada, Rehana and Erión, Graham.  
 ISBN: 978-18-6-914141-7  
 Website: <http://www.netbooks.co.za/Main.asp?D=%7B4B90857E%2DBFE2%2D4AE7%2DBA0F%2D39066CD57647%7D&PageType=Product&SKU=9781869141417>

The most destructive effect of the carbon offset trade is that it allows us to believe we can carry on polluting. This crucially-needed book provides ample evidence of the trade's other dangers to "beneficiaries", with case studies of fraud, accounting tricks and maltreatment of people and the environment. ~ George Monbiot, Guardian columnist and author of Heat

### News and Notices

The World Day to Combat Desertification is observed every year on 17 June. This year, the Day's theme is "Conserving land and water = Securing

our common future".

The World Day to Combat Desertification has been observed since 1995 to promote public awareness relating to international cooperation to combat desertification and the effects of drought, and the implementation of the UNCCD. In the light of 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention for the period 2008–2018, adopted by COP 8 in 2007, the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs (formerly DEAT) intends to hold a round-table discussion on June 17th to debate how the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification should be amended to comply with the 10-year strategic plan. At the time of going to press the round table has yet to be confirmed, and it is not clear if the re-organisation of government departments will interfere with plans, but Drynet will up-date readers as soon as it has been confirmed so that concerned organisations and individuals can apply to attend.

For more information about the Day at an international level, please go to: <http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/june17/2009/menu.php>

The Environmental Monitoring Group and Indigo development & change, will be facilitating a knowledge sharing and visioning workshop aimed at exploring how experienced practitioners and researchers might collectively share their experiences, successes, challenges and expertise so to improve their ability to support affected communities to respond effectively to climate change. This national networking meeting on >>

## REGIONAL NEWS

>> Climate Change Adaptation will be held in Johannesburg on the 18th June 2009.

Please contact Elin Lorimer to further details:  
Tel: 083-399-8332,  
Email: [elin@iburst.co.za](mailto:elin@iburst.co.za).

The UNCCD will be holding a scientific style conference during the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) meeting at COP9, which will take place in September 2009 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This conference, "Understanding Desertification and Land Degradation Trends: Biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring and assessment of desertification and land degradation to support decision-making in land and water management," is being organized by the Dryland Science for Development Consortium with the assistance of the UNCCD Secretariat. Three thematic working groups have been established to prepare white papers to be discussed at the conference. Working Group 1 focuses on integrated methods for monitoring and assessment of land degradation processes and drivers, Working Group 2 on monitoring and assessing land rehabilitation and sustainable land management efforts and Working Group 3 on impacts of economic and social drivers and knowledge management on monitoring and evaluation of land degradation. The conference is scheduled to take place from 22-24 September 2009.

<http://dspd-consortium.jrc.ec.europa.eu/php/index.php?action=view&id=150>

Newly elected President Zuma announced his new cabinet on 10th May, with some

major changes to several Ministries. Of particular relevance, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has been split, as has Environmental Affairs and Tourism and Agriculture and Land Affairs. The rearrangement of these three ends up with Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries together under Tina Joemat-Peterson. Land Affairs has been expanded and renamed Rural Development and Land Reform as a measure of the government's intent to speed up the whole process of reform. Gugile Nkwinti, former Eastern Cape MEC for Agriculture is in charge. And, finally, Water Affairs is now linked to the Environment, under Buyelwa Sonjica formerly in charge of Minerals and Energy, with Rejoice Mabhudafasi, as her deputy minister.

## Events

**20 – 24 JULY 2009**

**44th Annual GSSA Congress in Roodepoort. Meeting Rangeland, Pasture and Wildlife Challenges in a Changing Landscape.**

<http://www.grassland.org.za/annual-congress/2009>

**4 – 7 AUGUST 2009**

**Fynbos Forum: working together for a living landscape in Bredasdorp.**

The Fynbos Forum is an affiliation of researchers, planners, managers, landowners and a range of other stake-holders that meets annually to discuss management issues and research results, and to formulate priorities for future research and conservation management actions for Fynbos ecosystems. The deadline

for submission of paper and poster abstracts is 25th May 2009.

For more information contact Wendy Paisley, Conservation Unit, Botanical Society of South Africa, Tel 021-799-8824, Fax 086-520-6743, Email: [paisley@botanicalsociety.org.za](mailto:paisley@botanicalsociety.org.za)

**21 – 23 SEPTEMBER**

**47th Annual Conference of the Agricultural Economics Association of South Africa (AEASA): Promoting the competitiveness of South African agriculture in a weakened global economy in Durban South Africa.**

The objective of this conference is to bring together regional and international experts to apply their minds to critically analyse policies and programmes and to bring forward solutions aimed at unleashing the enormous potential of Southern African agriculture, lifting it into a world of opportunity and hope. Deadline for submission of contributed papers is the 3rd July 2009.

<http://www.findavenue.co.za/AEASA/Aeasa.html>

**5 – 8 OCTOBER 2009**

**Arid Zone Ecology Forum: Biodiversity conservation in arid zones: people, species and landscapes in Graaff-Reinet.**

Who should attend? Scientists, students, engineers, planners, and educators working in arid areas; Managers, particularly those in conservation, forestry, agriculture, and local government; Policy makers from government; NGOs and the private sector; Landowners & EIA consultants.

<http://www.azef.co.za/conferences.htm>