

in it. The Framework provides for the designation, support, and promotion, of individual Biosphere Reserves, while recalling that they remain under the sole sovereignty of the State in which they are situated. It is sufficiently flexible to take account of the diversity of national and local situations.

The designation procedure specifies that nominations by the States concerned are first considered by UNESCO's Advisory Committee on Biosphere Reserves, for recommendation to the International Co-ordinating Council for the MAB Programme, which decides on their designation. At the same time, States are encouraged to improve the adequacy of existing Biosphere Reserves, and UNESCO and other interested organizations are invited to assist in this process which should prove of great importance — especially as a number of the Biosphere Reserves which were designated in the earlier years of the Programme are not entirely fulfilling their different functions.

#### *Periodic Review Important*

In this respect, a most significant feature of the Statutory Framework is that it provides for the periodic review, every ten years, of each Biosphere Reserve appearing on the list. The carefully designed procedure for this review

will confer a quality label for the sites concerned. It may lead to the removal from the Network, within a reasonable period of time, of any Biosphere Reserves which still do not satisfy the necessary criteria. This should act as a stimulus leading to the improvement of most of the deficient sites and, in any case, will serve to strengthen the World Network as a whole.

In conclusion it can be said that, after the great success achieved by the Seville Conference, which was subsequently made official by having its major documents adopted by the UNESCO General Conference, Biosphere Reserves and the global network which they form are now taking a quantum leap forward. All those concerned with the conservation of biodiversity and ecologically sustainable development will welcome this progress\*.

MICHEL BATISSE, *Senior Environmental Adviser*  
UNESCO  
7 Place de Fontenoy  
75732 Paris 07 SP  
France.

\* Of course and bravo! We salute herewith the Author of this note for his tireless promotion of Biosphere Reserves which, striking at the core of the Mankind-Biosphere problem, in turn promote the Environmental Movement more than almost anything else. — Ed.

### **Environmental Activities and Prospects in Uganda**

The Government of Uganda has latterly become very concerned with environmental conservation as a lot of environmental awareness campaigns (EACs) have been launched, by governmental and other bodies, to sensitize the public to the need for, benefit of, and efforts towards various aspects of, conservation. The whole subject is probably as popular as that of foreign aid, and as absorbing as that of AIDS. Thus there are now many environmental nongovernmental organizations coming into being as we multiply *ad hoc* associations, clubs, and research projects.

#### *Some of the Organizations and Efforts*

The Ugandan Ministry of Information's Radio and Television now have programmes in which they broadcast and telecast support for their environmental campaigns by means of songs, plays, proverbs, and poems. Meanwhile the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) is concerned with research findings, legislation policy, and institutional arrangements. Also valued is the national energy consumption by households assessment, which at present is being looked into in the belief that, for future progress, such aspects should be taken very seriously.

The Environment Observation and Company Development Organization (EOCDO), which advises groups and coordinates small community projects such as adult environmental literacy classes, tree-planting, and income-generating activities, is another useful development.

Also coming into being are organizations aimed at developing improved relations and understanding between environmentalists, conservationists, and lovers of Nature, who meet with challenging questions and discuss local community and construction issues with due stressing of the need for environmental awareness.

#### *Tourism Rehabilitation and Development Planning (TRDP)*

This ensures the survival of some wildlife habitats and natural ecosystems and wider ecocomplexes in Uganda, while minimizing, at least in chosen areas, the environmental degradation that results from rural poverty. It surely concurs with the World Bank's affirmation that 'alleviating

poverty is both morally imperative and essential for environmental sustainability'. With the same spirit and objectives, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has started a project inside the 'impenetrable forest' which covers 321 sq km and is home to more than half of the world's Mountain Gorillas (*Gorilla beringei*).

While this last project aims to protect and conserve an important forest habitat, WWF also has another project, called Development Through Conservation (DTC), which focuses on out-of-forest development activities — *e.g.* improving means of land-use, soil conservation, sustainable agriculture, agroforestry practices, and conservation education. DTC is financed primarily by the US Agency for International Development (AID).

#### *Uganda Women's Tree-Planting Association, Etc.*

Women also contribute towards the establishment of sustainable forestry, and a number of women's groups have now started planting nurseries of *Eucalyptus* trees, setting up *Eucalyptus* plantations, and thus contributing to protecting the environment. At the same time the Water Erosion Prediction Project (WEPP) checks soil erosion, creating farm job opportunities and hence alternate sources of income.

The Uganda Youth Voluntary Effort in Afforestation 'Lubya', of which the undersigned is a member, is pursuing activities towards conserving the environment, while the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment organizes work seminars, shops, and conferences to educate, sensitize, and guide, people on environmental preservation — particularly on important causes and effects of, and solutions to, environmental degradation.

Leaders are asked to plant trees on ceremonial occasions, *e.g.* to mark certain events. Thus for example, King Ronald of Buganda leads a mass tree-planting in his kingdom every year when celebrating his coronation, and it is estimated that 3 million trees have been planted since he started this part of a struggle to conserve the environment. The oil company Shell Uganda Ltd is also actively involved in this struggle, emphasizing the advantages of planting fruit-trees such as Mangoes (*Mangifera indica*),

Jack Fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), and Avocado (*Persea gratissima*), for both food and income generation which also has helped a lot.

#### Other Public Involvement

Public meetings of local councils, churches' involvement, and holding of Nature talks in public places, have started bearing fruit, as has the obligation that anyone who cuts a tree must plant two others. Moreover, villagers are now forced to apply for government licences to cut down trees.

Recent developments in farming systems' research, especially regarding agro-ecosystems, have led to some invaluable regeneration of the environment: e.g. agricultural people have started rearing fish to help in the utilization of natural resources in rural areas, while poultry-farming and piggeries are on the increase to substitute for charcoal-burning activities — as does the 'send-a-cow' project by Anglican church-goers for the alleviation of poverty. A major public concern now is to educate and sensitize the community in local languages.

#### Problems Still To Be Solved

Extension of the Owen Falls Dam to increase power generation is being undertaken by the British Government and others. Whereas electricity has been an exclusive luxury of the relatively wealthy, and this has led the majority to use charcoal which is cheaper and still sufficiently abundant for domestic use, the Government is confident that if power can be made available in plenty for rural electrification, the rate of wood fuel (especially charcoal) consumption will fall dramatically.

Although alleviations of the above problems are being put into action, there are still other big ones that are not — such as Water-hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) covering freshwater lakes and reservoirs, inadequate garbage-disposal in Kampala City, and the ignorance of indiscriminate use of chemicals in agriculture and elsewhere. But the Government is saying that the 21st Century is projected to be the Environmental Century, and so we all need to work to have it be.

EDWARD E.S. MUKASA  
c/o POB 9932  
Kampala, Uganda.

### The Uganda Biosphere Club

The Uganda Biosphere Club is an action organization that is dedicated to conserving the environment in general and, in particular, safeguarding The Biosphere as the sole habitat and life-support of all Humankind and Nature. Although Uganda is not a very large country, it constitutes an integral and in some ways unique part of The Biosphere, which is the only known source of life in the entire universe and hence our bounden duty to preserve at all costs.

The Club shall continue as established to be a non-political and non-profit-making action-oriented concern cooperating and collaborating with any other appropriate bodies-corporate, concerns, or individuals, in the fulfilment of its objectives.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To sensitize the public about the need for environmental protection and to provide the knowledge therefor by means of public and private lectures, seminars, and conferences, as well as by producing, publishing, and disseminating, tracts, pamphlets, books, periodicals, and films, and sponsoring, producing, directing, and presenting, cinema, radio, and/or television programmes, and by all other possible means, thereby:

- a) Creating awareness of local or wider environmental hazards and ways of avoiding them, such as discouraging the use of environmentally dangerous chemicals which in many cases have been abolished in other countries but are still liable to be used in Uganda.
- b) Promoting ecologically *sustainable* development through appropriate agricultural practices such as organic farming and agroforestry, and sustainable exploitation of forest and other environmental resources.
- c) Promoting (where existing) or developing (where not existing) waste-recycling techniques and improved disposal of wastes to ease the problems of waste-created pollution and general wastefulness of all kinds.
- d) Promoting energy-saving techniques and alternative 'fuel' sources substituting for wood fuel.

- e) Promoting good soil management and conservation skills.
  - f) Protecting water-catchment areas, wetlands, and forests, and participating in tree-planting and reforestation programmes.
  - g) Promoting improved sanitary arrangements and health and other standards as a whole through realization of a better-to-live-in environment.
  - h) Practising all possible economy in the use especially of irreplaceable raw materials and of finite assets such as space on land.
2. To entertain any arrangement with the Ugandan Government and/or Environment Ministry and the National Environment Management Authority, and to obtain from any such Government or Authority any rights, privileges, and concessions, which the Club may consider desirable in the public interest to obtain, and to carry out, exercise, and comply with, any such arrangements, rights, privileges, and concessions, thereby:
- a) Airing the Club's considered views concerning impending decisions and/or policies affecting the environment in any major way.
  - b) Endeavouring to find environmentally-acceptable ways of dealing with the Water-hyacinth and other foreseeable local problems.
  - c) Promoting research on environmental issues and conservation and uses of medicinal plants, etc.
3. To think and act holistically in deference to the tendency in Nature for the outcome to be different from the sum of the parts (or any local effects on a part), realizing that most people are interested only in their own particular environment without thinking of The Biosphere of which they constitute an integral part and without conceding that what they do may have a profound effect, collectively, on The Biosphere, its effective survival, and with it the conditions of life of any future generations of humans and other biota.
4. Generally to perform all such acts, and to promote all such activities, as are incidental or conducive to the achievement of any — and ultimately all — of the objectives of the Club.