



### José Graziano da Silva of Brazil elected FAO Director-General

José Graziano da Silva of Brazil was elected Director-General of FAO on 26 June 2011.

Graziano da Silva, who is 61, received a total of 92 votes out of 180 votes cast, winning over former Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé, who received 88 votes. There were no abstentions.

The election took place on the second day of the biennial 191 Member Nation Conference of FAO.

As Brazil's Extraordinary Minister of Food Security and Fight against Hunger, Graziano da Silva was responsible for implementing the country's highly successful "Zero Hunger" ("Fome Zero") programme, in whose design he played a leading role. The programme helped lift 24 million people out of extreme poverty in five years and reduce undernourishment in Brazil by 25 percent.

Since 2006, he has served as FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Graziano da Silva is FAO's eighth Director-General since the Organization was founded in Quebec City, Canada on 16 October 1945. The term of the new Director-General, who will succeed Senegal's Jacques Diouf, will start on 1 January 2012 and run through 31 July 2015. [Source: FAO Newsroom, 26 June 2011.]

## FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

### FAO project shows how trees help halt desertification

A FAO-led pilot scheme hopes to highlight how trees can help people in arid zones, considered to be one of the most hostile habitats on the planet. FAO's Acacia project's goal is to show how trees provide food, fuel, shelter and income during times of hardship.

So far, six nations, including Senegal and the Sudan, have hosted tree-planting schemes for at-risk communities.

Drylands cover 30 percent of the Earth's land area, and are found in 100 nations.

"People do not often associate forests with arid areas, yet they are critical in terms of soil protection, mitigating climate change, maintaining biodiversity, etc," said Eduardo Rojas-Briales, Assistant Director-General of the FAO Forestry Department.

"In terms of supporting livelihoods for local communities, forests are very important," he told BBC News.

Speaking at the end of the first UN Africa Drylands Week, he added: "Desertification poses a very serious challenge to the world. The pace of land degradation and the impact of climate change are threatening food security, exacerbating poverty and impeding sustainable development".

Acacia trees can offer vulnerable villages a steady income, as well as fuel and fodder for animals.

Mr Rojas-Briales explained that people living in dryland ecosystems were most exposed to the risk of desertification, especially rural and pastoral communities. Globally, an estimated 2 billion people depend on ecosystems in dry land areas, 90 percent of whom live in developing countries.

The UN says that about 30 percent of dry lands are degraded, with particular susceptibility to desertification. In Africa alone, it is feared that two-thirds of arable land is expected to be lost by 2025.

Projections show that more than half of the cultivated agricultural area could be unusable by the year 2050, leaving the region struggling to feed just 25 percent of its population.

This was one of the reasons why FAO had developed the Acacia pilot project, Mr Rojas-Briales continued. "Forests and trees in arid zones are central to understanding the process of desertification – they provide local communities with sustainable livelihoods but also fodder for livestock, fuelwood, medicine, timber, resin and gums."

Extracting gum from acacias allows people to earn money from alternative revenue streams. "They are also invaluable for carbon storage and for the provision of clean water and for soil protection."

As well as providing foliage for animals and fuel for cooking, the trees produce gum arabic, a product that is used in the food and pharmaceutical industries. [Source: BBC News, 20 June 2011.]

*(Please see following page for more information.)*

### Destruction of world's biggest rain forests down 25 percent, says FAO report

The rate of destruction of the world's three largest forests fell 25 percent this decade compared with the previous one, but remains alarmingly high in some countries, FAO said.

A report entitled *The State of Forests in the Amazon Basin, Congo Basin and*

*Southeast Asia* was released to coincide with a summit in the Republic of the Congo bringing together delegates from 35 countries occupying these forests, with a view to reaching a global deal on management and conservation.

The Amazon and the Congo host the world's first and second biggest forests, respectively; the third biggest, the Borneo Mekong, is in Indonesia. These forests sink billions of tonnes of carbon and house two-thirds of the world's remaining land species.

The study found that annual rate of deforestation across the three regions, which account for more than 80 percent of the world's tropical forests, was 5.4 million ha between 2000 and 2010, down a quarter from 7.1 million ha in the previous decade.

Statistics showed that forest destruction in the Congo Basin had remained stable but low over the last 20 years, while in Southeast Asia the rate of deforestation more than halved. Countries that had previously had high levels of forest loss, such as Brazil and Indonesia, have had some success tackling the problem through better conservation awareness and government policy said the report's author, Mette Wilkie.

But she suggested this was no cause for complacency, especially of the threat from farming. "Deforestation is higher than it ought to be," Wilkie told Reuters. Indonesia's forests in particular have been ravaged by clearing for palm-oil crops in the past, although the government last month signed a two-year moratorium on forest clearing, part of a carbon offset deal with Norway worth US\$1 billion. Ecuador, Burundi and Cambodia had the highest rates of forest loss while Rwanda, Viet Nam and the Philippines were among countries that had seen their forests grow in recent years, according to the study.

Wilkie said growing global demand for food, expected to rise by 70 percent by 2050, would put more pressure on these ecosystems. [Source: Reuters, 1 June 2011.]

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### FAO releases forest health guide and video

Our world has become more global, with greater access to world markets from more places on Earth. But with it comes an increase in the transport and introduction of invasive bugs. Such pests can lead to agricultural and economic disaster if left unchecked and unmonitored.

FAO works on a global scale with nations and organizations to stem the movement of these bugs and pests. Recently, using an integrated approach to deal with forest health problems, FAO produced a *Guide to implementation of phytosanitary standards in forestry* ([www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2080e/i2080e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2080e/i2080e00.htm)).

An amusing short rap video is also available at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-0ighGsrUE/](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-0ighGsrUE/)

### FAO IN THE FIELD

#### Mise à jour sur les activités 2011 du Projet GCP/RAF/441/GER «Renforcement de la sécurité alimentaire en Afrique centrale à travers la gestion durable des produits forestiers non ligneux»

Financé par le Gouvernement allemand et mis en œuvre depuis octobre 2009 par la FAO et les ministères en charge des forêts au Gabon, au Congo et en République centrafricaine, le Projet contribue à l'amélioration des moyens d'existence des communautés dépendant des forêts du bassin du Congo à travers le développement du secteur des PFNL et la gestion durable de ces ressources forestières. Les activités sont mises en œuvre au niveau international, régional, national et local et comprennent notamment pour l'année 2011:

- la création du Sous-groupe de travail PFNL au sein du Groupe de travail biodiversité en Afrique centrale de la COMIFAC, comme plate-forme d'échanges sur le secteur, et l'organisation de la première réunion de ce sous-groupe en République centrafricaine (cf. pages 13-14);
- l'organisation des réunions des comités consultatifs nationaux sur les PFNL au Congo, au Gabon et en République centrafricaine, relevant du Sous-groupe de travail PFNL de la COMIFAC;
- la participation au Forum des Nations Unies sur les forêts (FNUF 9), au Forum international sur les peuples autochtones d'Afrique centrale (FIPAC 2), au Sommet des trois bassins forestiers tropicaux, aux journées internationales sur les forêts à

Bonn et à plusieurs autres événements, en vue de présenter les activités du Projet, les PFNL clés d'Afrique centrale et leur contribution à la sécurité alimentaire sur la base d'une gestion durable, ainsi que le développement du secteur;

- la validation de la stratégie nationale et des plans d'action pour le développement du secteur PFNL au Gabon et en République centrafricaine;
- le développement des capacités des communautés locales et des organisations de base et de la société civile, à travers des formations sur la domestication de *Gnetum* spp. au Congo et en République centrafricaine (cf. page 25), sur l'approche Analyse et développement des marchés (ADM) au Congo, au Gabon et en République centrafricaine (cf. page 47), et sur la valorisation de *Ricinodendron heudelotii* (essesang/njansang) dans la Lobaye, République centrafricaine (cf. page 39), ainsi qu'à travers des actions de sensibilisation sur le droit à l'alimentation.

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#### The Acacia project in Senegal

From 2004 to 2007, in partnership with the Senegalese forestry service, FAO provided seeds and seedlings and taught women in Thiékene Ndiaye village in Senegal's drylands to sow and plant acacia trees, and how to extract and market the gum they produce. In the last year, the trees finally reached maturity and gum extraction became possible.

According to Nora Berrahmouni, FAO Forestry Officer, "Acacia offers many benefits. It feeds the soil by capturing nitrogen that restores fertility. It is a shelter for crops. It also provides gum arabic, which has an international market, and so it is good for the economy. Not only that, but it is also a source of fodder for livestock and food for local communities."

Fatou Seye, her husband and their six children live in the village and confirm that acacia has already dramatically improved their living conditions, "because now we are producing hibiscus juice and millet, peanuts and beans, which we can eat. Production of fodder for livestock has increased and we sell

### FAO'S ACACIA PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**Region.** Africa.

**Subregion.** Sahel countries, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Kenya, the Niger, Senegal and the Sudan.

**Objective.** Strengthen analytical and operational capacity of six pilot countries to address food security and desertification problems through the improvement of agrosilvopastoral systems and sustainable development of the gum and resin sectors.

**Activities.** The long-term objective of the project is to reinforce and rationalize the production methods, processing and marketing of gum and resin products, by identifying and developing methods of production in order to promote their integration in rural economic activities and their contribution to a sustainable improvement of food security and the struggle against desertification.

#### Achievements

1. Agrosilvopastoral systems in arid and semi-arid lands were established, and gum and resin production improved through a methodological approach based on the availability of an innovative technology supporting local communities.
  2. A ten-year long-term programme was elaborated with the African Union Commission for associated member countries of the Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa (NGARA), in order to improve socio-economic conditions in rural areas, strengthen institutional capacity and enhance the value and sustainability of local resources.
  3. Exchange of information, training, transfer of technology and quality control of the gum and resin sector were made possible, by strengthening the organization and management of the NGARA regional network.
- Donor.** Government of Italy.  
**Duration.** 2003–2010.  
 (Source: GTFS/RAF/387/ITA, Acacia Operation, [www.fao.org/](http://www.fao.org/))

the fodder at market. With the money, we are planning to build a mill so we can make flour and bread".

Harvesting of the gum itself has only just begun as, at seven years of age, the plants are only just mature enough. In the coming

years, the plants will provide further income for these women.

The gum is sold via intermediaries to the Valdafrique processing plant close to Senegal's capital, Dakar. From there, it will be sold on international markets.

The Chief Pharmacist at Valdafrique, Dr Madiagne Sakho, says: "the gum arabic industry is great business because the gum is in demand from many industries, including the pharmaceutical and food industries where it's used in a wide variety of products ranging from bakery and dairy products to soft drinks".

According to Sakkoudia Thiam of the Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa (NGARA), "great potential exists to provide income for these communities and also to help diversify the economy because these days the peanut market is in crisis so the gum arabic sector can help make up for losses there".

A total of 44 villages have benefited from the Acacia project in Senegal so far. [Source: FAO Media Centre, 10 June 2011.]

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**FAO-supported forest policy in Gambia wins award**

Gambia's Community Forestry Policy, put in place with support from FAO, has won silver in the 2011 Future Policy Awards as one of the world's most inspiring and innovative forest policies.

Three policies that most effectively contribute to the conservation and sustainable development of forests for current and future generations were chosen as prizewinners today by the World Future Council at UN Headquarters in New York.

Rwanda's National Forest Policy was proclaimed the first prize winner while the US Lacey Act with its amendment of 2008 and the Gambia's Community Forest Policy shared the silver award.

The Gambia, with the support of FAO and other development partners, has developed and implemented the first policy and legislation in Africa to provide local populations with secure and permanent forest ownership rights. Transferring forest tenure from state ownership to management by local communities enables them to reduce illegal logging and forest fires, slow desertification and benefit from using forest products.

"The success of the Gambia's Community Forest Policy proves that even in the world's poorest countries, with the right policies and legal framework in place, rural populations can benefit economically from forests and significantly improve their food security and environment," said Eduardo Rojas-Briales, Assistant Director-General of the FAO Forestry Department.

"The Gambia's experience has shown that the challenge of sustainable forestry can be attained through the Government's willingness to empower rural populations," he added.

The Gambia has managed to buck a strong deforestation trend in Africa, with over 350 villages managing 12 percent of the country's forests and a net increase in forest cover of 8.5 percent over the last two decades.

FAO Goodwill Ambassador and Olympic track legend Carl Lewis, who attended the awards ceremony, said that "the Gambia's people-centred approach has been highly successful and represents a model to replicate in other countries with a similar forestry environment".

Between 2000 and 2004, FAO has facilitated the introduction of economic incentives in the community forestry concept. In 2009, the Gambia joined the National Forest

Programme Facility hosted by FAO and received help with expanding community forestry areas and enhancing the capacity of stakeholders to derive economic benefits from community forestry. A recent FAO-supported project provided assistance to the revision and popularization of the forest policy.

It is intended that, by 2016, nearly half of the forests in the Gambia will be under community management. Communities have established producer groups, generating income from forest management.

Based in Hamburg, the World Future Council is a political advocacy group led by 50 leading personalities from all five continents. It focuses on environmental and social issues with the aim of safeguarding the rights of future generations. [Source: FAO, 21 September 2011.]



**The project**

The sustainable rattan project "Establishing a sustainable production system of rattan products in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam" of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) kicked off in 2007. It aims to make at least 50 percent of rattan processing in these countries sustainable by 2015, leading to environmental improvements, strengthened competitiveness, poverty alleviation and other national economic benefits.

A key aspect of switching towards sustainable rattan involves adopting cleaner production techniques in the manufacture of rattan products. This is because technologies and equipment for rattan processing are often outdated. Cleaner production helps to open up new market opportunities and produce better-quality products. This can be achieved through optimized management, increased materials and energy efficiency, and with more effective equipment, among others.

The project focuses on the three neighbouring countries as this region is rich in rattan resources, with more than 50 species. This forms the basis for a growing rattan processing industry, particularly in Viet Nam, which has recorded an average increase of more than 30 percent per year in rattan product exports.

The growing international and domestic market demand for rattan products, combined with uncontrolled and unsustainable harvesting practices, has led to the

**2011 FUTURE POLICY AWARD:  
CELEBRATING FOREST POLICIES AND  
FOREST FOOD**

The Future Policy Award celebrates policies that create better living conditions for current and future generations. The aim of the award is to raise global awareness for these exemplary policies and speed up policy action towards just, sustainable and peaceful societies. The Future Policy Award is the first award that celebrates policies rather than people at the international level. Each year the World Future Council chooses one topic where policy progress is particularly urgent.

This year, forest policies were on the agenda and forest food on the menu. Caterpillars, mushrooms and other forest foods were sampled during the Award ceremony. Pictures of the event can be seen on FAO's Washington blog: <http://faowashington.org/celebrating-forest-policies-and-forest-food.html/>

overexploitation of rattan resources and forest degradation. The rattan processing industry is falling short of minimum, internationally accepted production standards and market requirements, resulting in environmental pollution, health risks for workers and less competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Poor ethnic minority communities in rural Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) and Viet Nam rely heavily on rattan as an income source. Rattan sales account for up to 50 percent of cash income for many villages.

#### Where WWF is headed

By 2011, 40 percent of all targeted small and medium enterprises in the supply chain will be actively engaged in cleaner rattan production. Fifteen percent of processing industries will provide environmentally friendly products to European and worldwide markets.

By 2015, 50 percent of the rattan processing industry in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam will be environmentally cleaner and more competitive within regional and worldwide markets, generating better economic returns.

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#### RATTAN TRADE

Rattan is a growing, US\$4 billion/year industry. Village communities in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam rely heavily on the rattan trade. Sales account for up to 50 percent of cash income in villages, making rattan a major contributor to poverty alleviation in rural areas.

(Source: WWF Web site.)

#### Country updates

##### Cambodia

The most common rattan product in Cambodia is furniture, accounting for approximately 70 percent of total rattan products; other products are handicrafts, such as baskets.

In the Prek Thnot community protected area (Kampot province), WWF recently worked with local communities, guiding them towards sustainable rattan harvesting and production. The project

introduced villagers to sustainable ways of rattan management and harvesting, established rattan permanence plots, a rattan nursery, and a rattan plantation in the community. Moreover, the project provided training sessions on rattan processing techniques to enable the community to manufacture more profitable rattan products independently.

Additionally, a study on rattan value chains was undertaken, and a rattan field guide for sustainable rattan production was developed.

Following the establishment of a model in Prek Thnot, the project has been scaled up to other villages, involving a total of 4 900 families in five provinces, namely Kampot, Koh Kong, Preah Sihanouk, Kampong Thom and Preah Vihear. [Source: WWF, 2010. *Research and case studies: potential assessment and proposing cleaner production solution for the rattan sector in Cambodia.*]

##### Lao People's Democratic Republic

Rattan collection is an important source of income for many communities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification increases the incentives to protect forests from conversion and other unsustainable land use.

Earlier this year, the Leudnilan Agriculture Promotion Co. Ltd received an FSC Chain of Custody (CoC) certificate with support from the WWF sustainable rattan project. This certificate shows that the company has a proper production chain that ensures sustainable traceability and legality of rattan products. "Lao rattan companies need to switch their conventional production methods to a more systematic, documented and innovative process," said Bouaphet Bounsourath, WWF Sustainable Rattan Project Manager. "Sufficient documentation of inflow and outflow in rattan production shows efficient processing and facilitates access to the global market."

Such a certification is an incentive for communities and forest managers as they receive a higher income from selling FSC rattan compared with non-certified companies.

"If we compare the new rattan model to seasonal jobs we have had in the past with what we are doing now we can see a big difference," said Mr Kensity Milamith, Vice Village Head of Thaveng village, Bolikhaxay province. "We used to earn a few hundred thousands kips per month, but now when we weave baskets and sell them to the Leudnilan

company, we can earn more than 3 million kips/month."

Lao PDR currently exports raw rattan to its neighbouring countries, particularly Viet Nam, and is aiming to be seen as a global leader of sustainable and certified rattan exports among traders, global retailers and consumers. [Source: WWF Web site, 27 June 2011.]

##### Viet Nam

In Viet Nam, the rattan sector employs up to 400 000 people. Although the country is an important exporter of finished rattan products with almost 60 percent of its total production going to the EU in 2005, the rattan sector cannot yet compete with other rattan manufacturing countries such as China, Indonesia and the Philippines.

According to WWF's recent study, there are currently 238 enterprises working in different processes of the rattan sector [exploitation, processing, exporting] in Viet Nam, mostly in the Hong River delta. Rattan manufacture trade villages, located all over the country, especially in the delta, play an important role in creating jobs and incomes in rural areas.

Recently, under WWF's sustainable rattan project, 26 members of ethnic minority communities from Thanh My town in the central province of Quang Nam underwent a ten-day rattan product-making course.

WWF is planning to carry out six more courses in the near future, saying in a statement that strengthening the villagers' role as rattan preprocessors/traders in the value chain would result in more benefits and better livelihood security for them. "The specific objective is that by the end of the action, at least 40 percent of all targeted small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the supply chain are actively engaged in cleaner production of rattan products in Viet Nam and at least 15 percent of targeted processing SMEs are providing sustainable products to European and other markets," the statement said. This would deliver a "measurable improvement of this sector's environmental performance," it added. [Sources: *Viet Nam News*, 6 July 2011; WWF, 2010. *The potentials and unsustainability of rattan sector in Vietnam.*] ♣

**Have patience. All things are difficult before they become easy.**

Saadi