

Case 24: Z I M B A B W E

Hurungwe Sustainable Forest Management project

Reported by Lewis Radzire

Affiliation: Forestry Commission

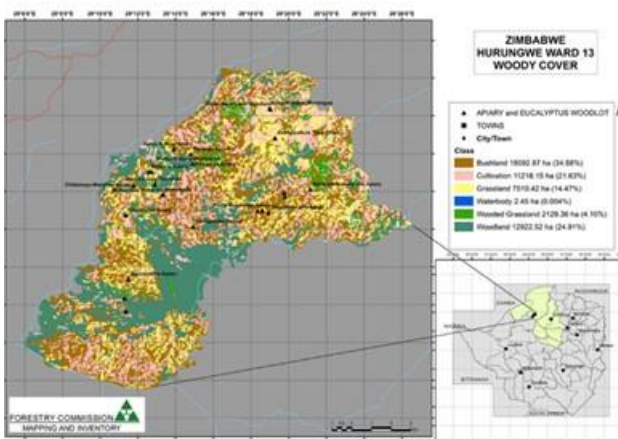
Email: lradzire@gmail.com

The Hurungwe Sustainable Forest Management project seeks to address the high deforestation rate resulting from over-reliance on indigenous tree firewood for tobacco curing by the local community. The community of Ward 13 has been engaged to implement the following projects at community level. Tree seedling production; woodlot establishment; woodland management; beekeeping; and construction of wood-saving bans for tobacco curing. It is expected that the forest cover of the ward will improve due to a combination of availability of a renewable source of tobacco curing firewood as well as conservation of local woodlands as forage for honey bees. A total of eight community-based groups have been formed and capacitated in the ward to implement tree nursery establishment (148 farmers trained in seedling production), woodland management and bee keeping (400 kg of unprocessed honey was produced sold at first harvest). A total of 111 ha of indigenous woodland has been identified for community management by 123 households.

A key lesson learnt from the interaction with farmers was that they identified the decline in forestry-related benefits they used to derive from the forest in the past but not anymore due to deforestation. This implies they are now in a position to make conscious efforts to restore the lost forest. The setting up of community-based project implementation structures ensures continuity of good practice beyond the current phase of project funding.

Implementing Organization	Forestry Commission, Zimbabwe Apiculture Trust (ZAT), Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB), Agriculture Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX) Add : C/O Forestry Commission, P.O. Box HG139, Highlands, Harare, ZIMBABWE
Funding Source	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
Implementing Period	2014 – 2017
Project site	Ward 13, Hurungwe District, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

Key Words: Sustainable Forest Management, Community participation, Afforestation, Deforestation, Nursery, Mapping and Inventory, Woodland management, Apiculture



Hurungwe District Ward 13 woody cover and project site location map:

The map shows the state of vegetation cover as at 2016, indicating that about 25% of the total ward area was under woodland cover, 22% under cultivation, with the rest (53%) comprising bushland and a variety of grasslands. The map also shows the location of woodlots and apiaries established under the project.

Background of the Project

Hurungwe district in Mashonaland West province in northern Zimbabwe is the largest contributor to the country's flue-cured tobacco. In 2006, the number of registered tobacco growers was 4 295 and by 2014 the number had increased to 22 007 (TIMB Annual Report, 2015). Tobacco production has emerged as a key indirect and direct driver of deforestation in the district through the conversion of forests into agricultural land and cutting down of trees for tobacco curing. The loss of forests and woodlands contributes to habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss, decreased base flows, land degradation and reduced capacity of forests to sequester carbon dioxide. In view of this background, a Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) pilot project was initiated in Hurungwe ward 13, in 2014.

Objectives of the Project

- Objective 1:** Increase tobacco productivity and tobacco curing efficiency in order to reduce deforestation. This is feasible in view of the **availability of forest resources** in Ward 13.
- Objective 2:** Intensify and commercialize beekeeping in order **meet** the livelihoods **needs of the people** as well as ensuring their **effective participation** in the good practice activities.
- Objective 3:** Support the effective implementation of local and national laws on SFM. The Communal Land Forest Produce Act allows inhabitants of communal land equal access to local forest produce for subsistence use and prohibits exploitation for commercial use, as a way of providing a framework for **clear rights and tenure among resource users**.
- Objective 4:** Promote tree planting and the deliberate management of existing forests and woodlots as a way of sustaining the availability of local forest resources in posterity.

Challenges and limitations of good practice implementation

The challenges of effective implementation of SFM include: (1) Short-sightedness of communities in appreciating implications of over-reliance on indigenous tree firewood for tobacco curing; (2) Unavailability of affordable interim alternative sources of energy for tobacco curing; (3) Lack of corporation from the local Rural District Council.

Major Activities

- ✓ Mapping out woodlands and project locations – this has been done
- ✓ Establishment of tree nurseries – 5 community-based nurseries so far established
- ✓ Tree planting – still to be done
- ✓ Fire management – communities still be capacitated with skills and equipment for fire protection
- ✓ Establishment of apiaries – Eight (8) community-based beekeeping groups established with 706 hives mounted
- ✓ Training of communities in various forestry-related courses – 148 farmers trained in tree seedling production; 255 trained in beekeeping;

Direct Outputs from the Project

- ✓ 255 beekeepers (54 female; 210 male) trained and established their own apiaries, with a total of 709 hives mounted, of which 596 (84%) are productive.

- ✓ Eight community-based tree nurseries established and produced 4 000 tree seedlings for own planting in the first year to established tobacco curing woodlots
- ✓ Benefits: 2.14 tons of unprocessed honey was harvested from the established apiaries and communities were linked to Harare-based honey processors who purchased all the honey at \$2.50 per kg (= US\$4 620 accrued to community so far). Some of the produced honey (quantity still to be determined) was locally consumed by farmers at household level.

Indirect Impact of the Project

Community cohesiveness was observed as a result of joint implementation of the project, especially in tree seedling production and honey marketing activities. There is improvement of household economies from the revenue generated from honey sales. Planted trees have improved the landscape of Ward 13.

Intervention of Central/Local Government

- ✓ WWF funded the project;
- ✓ Forestry Commission provided technical training of farmers in tree seedling production, woodland management and mapping of the project area to show land cover trends, project site location and the project area's biophysical characteristics;
- ✓ Zimbabwe Apiculture Trust (ZAT) provided training in beekeeping, honey marketing linkages and the field level coordination of project activities;
- ✓ AGRITEX, TRB and TIMB established improved tobacco barns.

Way Forward

- ✓ Intensive awareness raising being done to make farmers appreciate the long-term hazards of over-reliance on indigenous tree firewood in tobacco curing. This includes taking farmers on relevant look-and-learn tours;
- ✓ The energy conservation stakeholders are introducing the Rocket barn which is an energy-saving tobacco-curing technology. This ensures that less wood will be required to cure tobacco than in the use of current conventional methods.
- ✓ The local Rural District Council which is interfering with the Forestry Commission's tobacco firewood use regulatory activities, has been engaged at their ministerial level and the dialogue is on-going.

Reference Documents/Materials

- ✓ WWF Hurungwe SFM Project document of 2014 provides the framework of the project;
- ✓ The Communal Land Forest Produce Act Chapter 19:04 provides guidance on the utilization of communally owned forest resources;
- ✓ Statutory Instrument Number 9 of 1989 prohibits the commercialization of forest produce on communal land, except under license.

Resource Persons

Name	Affiliation	Contact details
L. Radzire	Forestry commission	lradzire@gmail.com
Ziome P (Mr)	ZAT	---
Chitapi S (Mrs)	ZAT	---
Mrs Ziome	Agritex	---

District Forestry Officer for Hurungwe, Mr. George Ncube, supervising pot-filling practical during training



Tree seedling production training: Photo shows Tree Nursery Establishment course at Kemapondo Group. The Officer is monitoring pot-filling practical by participants.



Tour of apiaries: A beekeeper and village head, Mr Chioreka, of Takaronga Group, explains to tour participants how he manages his apiary. Looking on is the Executive Director of Zimbabwe Apiculture Trust, Mrs S. Chitapi