



SeedTree



10th Anniversary Issue **Projects in Progress** 2005 Annual Report

SeedTree Directors met June 1st in Maine, integrating our perspectives and the experience of our first decade to optimize our forth-coming efforts for forest communities. As we sustain our evolving, action-oriented work in the hills and valleys of Nepal, we explore and find opportunities for effective service to new human ecosystems abroad and at home. Education continues as a ascending priority. (*Education, cont. p.2*)

The basket-making brown ash tree,



fraxinus nigra, has been so interwoven into the cultural and economic life of the Penobscot People, one teaching story depicts them as coming from



a brown ash tree. In June, the Penobscot Nation's Boys and



Girls Club joined us in planting brown ash on the Department of Natural Resources' indigenous plant demonstration site on Indian Island, at Old Town, ME. Horticulturist Shannon Post (above right) cared for and brought saplings donated by Fedco. Carol showed the Penobscot-made basket of brown ash and sweet-grass (above) and reminded the children that just as an oak from an acorn, so from such small "seed deeds" as this planting of trees together, something good and strong may grow. Roger Paul (center) inaugurated the program as a cultural event, teaching related Penobscot words, and the importance of thanksgiving to the Wabanaki (People of the Dawn). (cont. p. 2, top.)

Forests of the Sea

The phrase connotes branching coral, reaching up through turquoise waters, like an underwater forest, from reefs teeming with a brilliant diversity of aquatic life. Yet many of the species that play, hunt, feed and mate in these reefs, depend for their start in life upon an actual forest of trees that grow in the inter-tidal zone. The coastal mangroves, serve a vital ecological role as a



nursery for hosts of marine species. Also, as the great tsunami of December 26, 2004 revealed, the mangroves offer protection to the shore and to the coastal communities. Where concrete structures failed, mangroves held fast, allowing the water to pass while significantly dissipating its destructive force. Both these natural services of the mangrove are vital to the coastal fishing communities served by our local partners in Andhra, South India: Rural Reconstruction Society (RRS). The villages are recovering not only from the tsunami, but from ecologically destructive salt panning and shrimp farming. Visits to our sites confirmed Dr. Vandana Shiva's report of her investigation of coastal aquaculture along India's southeast coast. (p.3, top)

(brown ash, cont. from p. 1) Before planting, we joined Roger in offering and a prayer of thanksgiving to Mother Earth. Thanks to Jason Mitchell's patient coordination and to all, especially the boys and girls for such good-spirited participation. Brown ash, a species needing moist soil, is thought to be in decline in Maine. Planning is under way to expand these enrichment plantings to other islands in the Penobscot River.

(education, cont. from p.1., top) With support from Debley, Inc., Kate Kinley Gregg and Anderson Rogers Foundation, David Thanhauser and Cloe, we are developing educational materials to serve a range from the best universities, an intermediate curriculum for Nepal, to villagers' low-literacy needs.



Carol lights inaugural lamp and working group edits manual

Sept. 15th, SeedTree Nepal held a Chitwan District level conference on **Non-Formal Environmental Education and Its Implications for Environmental Conservation in Nepal**. It was well attended by diverse sectors from district officials, National Park administrators, college professors, allied NGO leaders, media, college students and teachers and participants from our rural classes. After the morning speakers, 3 groups met for networking, policy development and for editing our manual *Ourselves and Our Environment*. This latter (above), contributing many useful suggestions to the revision in progress.

Our donor-initiated scholarships continue for one college boy, three children in Chitwan and 5 girls from the disadvantaged Badi community. This year we also provided our environmental ed. class to Badi women in Dang. Prema Nepali (right of Carol) expressed her appreciation at how our course was unique in how it asked each student to



ask themselves what will they do to improve their lives and environment together.

Cloe Chunn introduced our program June 1st at the University of Maine's Hutchinson Center. John Perlin, gave a slide presentation of his newly revised, acclaimed Harvard Classic: *A Forest Journey: The Story of Wood and Civilization*, documenting the consequences of deforestation from Mesopotamia to Maine. John, leading our team effort to develop a university level course, whets our appetite to read more, writing: "While working on the second edition, ...,it surprised me to [come across a booklet published in 1900,] ... a collaborative effort between John Muir and Gifford Pinchot to advocate the protection of the giant sequoias. ... Hadn't the forest products industry and eco-people painted Muir and Pinchot as antagonists, with Muir as the preservationist vs. Pinchot, the man who gave the Forest Service the license to clear-cut? ... It turned out that both fought deforestation, supporting preservation when necessary and logging without denuding the land, ...what we presently call forest stewardship."

Carol Kinsey gave a slide-talk of SeedTree's strategies and the decade's evolving programs aimed to protect and renew healthy, diverse forests. Tom Hammett concluded with promising trends in world forestry, such as non-timber products and certification of sustainably managed forests. Tom's education for both these continues to have a significant impact in Nepal.



SeedTree Nepal

published "Forest Certification: Experiences from Parbat District," telling of our Integrated Human Ecology Project's initiative towards establishing a working model in Nepal. UNDP/Global Environment Facility (GEF)/Small Grants Programme (SGP), our major IHEP co-sponsor, is building on this beginning, which established local standards in our project area, by funding the Nepal Foresters Assoc. to establish national certification standards. (cont., p.3, col. 2)



(cont from p.1) “What I witnessed was unbelievable—agriculture and fisheries destroyed by an industry that ... left ten dollars of destruction in the local economy and ecosystem for every dollar of profits ...[and] wiped out 200 acres of mangroves and coastal ecosystems for every acre of shrimp farm.” -Dr. Vandana Shiva from *The Color of Freedom*



Above, Srinivasa Babu and Samuel Chandra Mohan of RRS survey the devastated coastal area we plan restore. Srinivasa is ready to plant a fruit of *rhizophora mucranta* from the remaining acre of natural mangrove. A nearby trial reforestation patch has demonstrated the success we expect to achieve. There we saw fish and shrimp ripple the waters as a cloud of white egrets rose from the grove. It is evident how they foster life and how the our five communities are so motivated to



restore their healthy coastal mangroves.

We will also diversify with species that can grow in the difficult conditions and improve the human ecology. One of the most exciting of these is *pongamia piñata* shown at right behind Srinivasa and Sam. This tree’s seed yields an oil, traditionally used in lamps, which can also make biodiesel, as we intend to demonstrate.



Bokod, Philippines: Our support of the Igorot Tribal Assistance Group’s PINETREE project, emphasizing indigenous species, concluded this year. The

Karao farmers, whose red rice fields had been inundated by earthquake-triggered landslides, have now planted thousands of the local Benguet pine, *pinus kesiya*, to help stabilize the upper slopes of their steep valley home, as Richard Batayan shows in an earlier planting (above). Last year mango and jackfruit seed were locally collected and planted. This year the Karao farmers’ plantings included the less well know local fruits: lanzones, *Lansium domesticum* Corr. and rambutan, *Nephelium lappaceum* L. The rambutan is very much like the more well known lichee. The project has gained wider support under the leadership of Michael Bengawayan.

(cont. from p 2) Tom reports: “SeedTree Nepal staff and that of our partner OUEST in Nepal participated in a stake-holders workshop conducted by Tom Hammett, Bill Burch, Mike Rechlin (all former Yale/IOF Chiefs of Party) and Bishma Subedi, of ANSAB. The result ... was incorporated into ...[proposing] a long-term research project entitled “Assessing the Linkages between Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Governance, and the Provision of Products and Ecosystem Services.” Based on this work..., Tom Hammett was invited to give a featured paper entitled “Indigenous Knowledge and Decision Making in Community Forestry User Groups in Nepal: Are there Lessons Learned for Africa?” at a major conference on human ecology and sustainable development held in Brussels, Belgium. This event, attended by over 150 practitioners from all over the world, ...[was] hosted by the Human Ecology Department, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Jette Campus. SeedTree is well positioned to take on other projects based on its experience in human ecology.” Carol Kinsey and Bishnu B.K. attended a follow up with ANSAB in September. As a complement to Bill Burch’s analysis of the components of human ecology, Carol presented SeedTree’s synthesis for optimum action. Our educational focus will continue to highlight the inestimable value of forests for the abundant natural services they provide guarding soil, water, a healthy atmosphere and habitat for ourselves and all our relations.

With thanks to our major tree-planting partner, Working Assets, to Debley, Inc., Kate Kinley Gregg, Barbara Bradford, Anderson Rogers Foundation, and to each of you, of our supportive friends, let's see **what a difference a decade can make:**

Before

After



Left, a Dang community shares remaining water with livestock, before the dry season. "This summer ...there was acute shortage of water... 40-50 women and girls were in queue at night time to pull drinking water at the well in Tikary which benefits more than 140 households of 5 villages. They were singing songs and the environment was like a ceremony. They were blessing the well builder. I convey their blessing to you and many kind hearted donors too." -- Ved Bahadur K.C., 2005

46 wells and 7 ponds now improve health and prosperity for communities.



All our aims are served by each planted tree. We planted 102,610 trees in 2005, with special thanks to Working Assets' \$7500 donation, and **2,778,000 trees since 1996.** **After 5 years** the trees that Tulsi school children planted in 2000 (left). are well grown in September, 2005 (right).



After eight years: At left Huldah Warren broadcasts Nepalese Alder seed on SeedTree landslide test plot outside Pokhara, Nepal, 1996. To the right, Carol finds a grove of mature alders protecting and enriching the soil in 2004. The results are promising for success of an expanded program we began with 3 Eco-trekking agencies for Nepal's hills.



The **95-05 decade** left and right reveals transformations viewed from the 3rd story school (left) showing eroding river banks in 1995, now overgrown with our planted trees, protecting the banks, providing shade, fodder for goats, and wood for chairs and desks for the students.



Before getting improved fuel-efficient stoves, right (20 in '05, 186 total) women and children breathe smoke daily and waste fuel, as at left.



Imagine the "before" and the transformation after 113 families got latrines, 91 of which have biogas plants, right (5 built in '05) for sanitation, fertilizer and clean cooking fuel.

Radhapur's silkworm center got SeedTree's first solar-electric installation in '05.



24 Rural classes (6 this year) on Environmental Science and Human Ecology, motivate communities through a deeper understanding their relation to the natural world.

Community Environmental Trusts (micro-credit endowments - 4 in '05, 13 total) allow more to participate in such projects with self-reliance.

