

REVIEWS:



Lies, Profits & Betrayal.

Ever since putting this paper together back in 2009, and having written many others besides, I've become increasingly aware of the utter bullshit, and there really is no other word for it, that each and almost every conservation organisation will spiel. The real problem is, you have governments, commerce and most of these organisations on one side, and you've got us, the real conservationists, on the other side picking up the pieces out of the dirt. So much so is this the case that it's not been difficult to understand just why it is the rainforests and everything else are in so much trouble. To begin with, there's a real lack of genuine will to get things done that was ever going to save forests on anything like the meaningful landmass they deserve, and there are so many funny ideas being banded around too. One that fills me with dread is the campaign currently being railroaded through by the Roundtable. They come up with these sweeping statements like 'rethinking palm oil/soya', 'helping companies work for the environment' and 'palm oil/soya aren't going away; we can either stand on the sidelines and watch, or get in on the game and make it better.' My message to anyone believing this, is to wake up, get real and get their heads out of the clouds. The idea that we can simply talk the enemy around by being nice to them is just plain naive. There are other products and organisations too and all of these we will be going through and taking a good long look at what's going on and who's doing what.

What this is really about of course is corruption at its highest and most pungent level. Those working within the conservation organisations who are not the vaguest bit interested in saving the natural world, basically going along with just about anything and everything and this we can find examples of this in almost every letter or fact sheet they care to send out. Take the Roundtable and let's take a look at the kind of people they are. I've been looking into the history and one of its aims is to raise funds for charitable organisations, and there can be no doubt that this is much of what they do. But they are not without power and influence, they will often deliberately fudge key issues in order to deceive and anything given by way of a donation is nothing more than a bribe. They constantly remind us they are not a secret society and nor have they any hidden agendas, but they do have unhealthy connections with industries and governments and they widely known to infiltrate and influence other groups.

We've seen in the past just how dangerous infiltration can be. It attacks in two main ways, either by those entering boards of decision makers and then by changing or watering down policies, or, it can be bought. It is an evil, parasitic and insidious practice, and it must be recognised and stamped upon as and where it is encountered. We need only to look at the Roundtable's extremist views on palm oil to question just what connections or agendas they might have. It's a \$multibillion industry, run by thugs and it must be asked just why they are so focused on that one single issue, fuelling consumption what's more, and yet so absent on all other aspect of rainforest destruction. To quote a line from the Good Book, Matthew 7-15, 'Beware of false prophets, that come to you in sheep's clothing, who inwardly are ravening wolves.' I urge anyone accepting morsels from them to take all possible steps to keep their fingers out of harm's way.

Palm oil, soya and those behind the deals. We have identified most of those who are licking up to these 'sustainable' cop-outs, we know just who they are and have listed them on a separate sheet we call 'The Good, the Bad and the Downright Ugly.' It's a global disgrace, a total sell-out and, at best, grossly misguided; conservationists and industrialists of every persuasion, each and every one of them up to their necks in a murky 'greenwash' sludge, endorsing some of the most murderous commodities on the planet, with the stench of depravity exuding from every pore. Weighing things up I find the concept at best grossly misguided and at worst downright threatening to the forests they purport to be helping, and does, I think, fuel not only complacency but the very trade itself and takes the whole rainforest campaign into totally the wrong direction. Here at home everyone breathes a sigh of relief on reading the word sustainable and in the meantime the forests out there are getting the chop. Any labelling containing the words 'sustainable' on our bottles of undisclosed vegetable oil, margarine, cakes or biscuits shouldn't, shall we say, overly fill us with confidence and after the horse-meat scandal, who knows what we're getting any more. As we read the magic word, we keep on buying it; buying into their lies and deceit more like.

By contrast please read our own thoughts on sustainable palm oil on pages 5 & 6, and something we can at least agree on, is that we should be getting out there and working with palm oil, but creating habitat and having the proceeds lining our own pockets instead of theirs. The thought of alien trees replacing natives and conservationists consorting with self-serving lowlife who would sell their own grandmothers for a couple of quid and working with them to save the environment; none of it adds up. Ours is about a real solution of genuine sustainability and not the miserable 'lies, profits & betrayal' approach we read about here. If conservationists were to buy up land and truly 'get in on the game' there, we could consume palm oil until we puked on the stuff, and be genuinely ecological about it for once. We should be growing it ourselves, in Western Central Africa where it belongs, using as near as damn it as locally acquired seed as we can get, where, along with native rubbers and other trees, it not only could be done but should be done and where not only would it be acceptable but desirable, pushing back the deserts and knitting together the fragmentation and creating some proper habitat for once. By working this ourselves we would do all of these things as well as diverting the profits away from those gangland, mafia-styled outfits who are currently running things, towards our own conservation projects. All of the commodities we've listed on pages 43-47 would steer conservation towards that level playing-field enjoyed by the rest of the rainforest exploiters.

And there's nothing at all wrong with getting involved with industry either by the way, well meaning sponsorship deals are quite different and raise huge amounts of funds every year, but it's the selling out of principles that I find totally objectionable if not repugnant.

The main issue is always related to the origin of the palm oil. All programs have a date related to when the field was deforestrated. 2007 is an often used year. In other words **if the oil comes of fields deforested after 2007 it can't be called sustainable**. There are more criteria, but mainly related to actual management and administration.

Source Control Union Certifications

The problem as always is the falsification of documents and even though you cannot trust a word it's good to know exactly what is meant by their term 'sustainable.'

**This is 'sustainable' palm oil; don't
let anyone tell you different.**



**The more fortunate one on the right is about to be rescued; not by those who
nearly killed him it has to be said.**

Rainforest Alliance



Our little green frog is recognized by consumers around the world as the symbol of environmental, social and economic sustainability. Use one or more of the menus below to find Rainforest Alliance Certified™ products available near you:

Our Work in Sustainable Finance

The Rainforest Alliance recognizes that in order to conserve our world's most precious ecosystems, we must promote an economically viable future for those who depend on the land for their livelihoods. Our Sustainable Finance Initiative was established in order to support small and medium-scale farms and forestry enterprises working toward Rainforest Alliance certification, and those already certified, to access the financing they need to help their businesses grow and become economically sustainable.

Many farmers, foresters and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) need credit to finance the investments necessary to improve the environmental, social and economic sustainability of their businesses. And in developing countries, agriculture and forestry businesses are typically owned by smallholders, who often have difficulty accessing credit lines. Banks sometimes consider these potential clients to be high-risk borrowers, particularly for long-term loans.

Fortunately, lenders at the forefront of the sustainability and impact investment movement already recognize that Rainforest Alliance Certified™ producers that meet the environmental and social standards of the Sustainable Agriculture Network and Forest Stewardship Council -- as well as those that are well on their way to certification -- are worthwhile investments from a financial and social impact return perspective. The Rainforest Alliance's technical and market access assistance is also highly valued by lenders as a risk mitigation tool.

The Rainforest Alliance: They have a cute 'little green frog' logo that's 'recognised by consumers around the world,' and, using their 'sustainable finance initiative,' they 'support forestry enterprises working toward Rainforest Alliance certification.' So far so good, as a news reader once said about Fukushima, but as we read through things become more and more questionable.

Rainforest Alliance Certified Cattle

In Brazil, one forward-thinking ranch is proving that cattle, wildlife and the environment can coexist. Fazendas Sao Marcelo -- whose four properties span 79,000 acres (32,000 hectares) in Brazil's cerrado (wooded grassland) and Amazon region -- recently became the first in the world to earn Rainforest Alliance certification for sustainable cattle production.

Across the Brazilian Amazon, 80 million cattle roam land that was once cerrado or tropical rainforest. Cattle ranchers are responsible for more than three-quarters of all forest loss in the Brazilian Amazon and, despite public awareness and numerous campaigns to stop the destruction, have shown few signs of improving their environmental stewardship.

Today, change is in the air. Businesses and consumers are aware of the link between beef and rainforest destruction, and asking for certified sustainable meat and leather. Now, the first of many farms has earned certification to help meet the demand.

With multiple protected areas, including a 32,000-acre (13,000-hectare) reserve within the Amazon, Sao Marcelo helps to buffer the natural forest and provide shelter and migration routes for wildlife. Its cattle are kept away from riparian areas and degraded land is replanted. Cowboys are also prohibited from killing local wildlife, even predatory animals that might attack calves.

"Fazendas São Marcelo's certification breaks a paradigm and shows that large scale cattle production can be carried out in accordance with good pasture management, humane treatment of animals, conservation of natural resources and respect for workers and communities," explains Luís Fernando Guedes Pinto, manager of agriculture certification at IMAFLORA, the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) representative in Brazil who carried out the certification.

Because livestock are responsible for 18 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, São Marcelo manages its cattle's diet closely to reduce their methane emissions. The cows eat an easily digestible mix of grass and mineral salt, complemented with organic sugarcane grown by nearby smallholders. Shade trees on pastures and conservation areas also reduce the climate footprint of the operation.

Arnaldo Eijnsink, director-general of Fazendas São Marcelo, Ltda, says that Rainforest Alliance certification "represents the sum total of the work we have done in sustainability on the farms over the past 10 years." He adds, "It is possible to produce cattle the right way in the Amazon."

"This certification is good news for conservationists and food retailers. Conscientious consumers want to make intelligent food choices that contribute to healthy ecosystems and sustainable communities," observes Sabrina Vigilante, the Rainforest Alliance's director of strategic initiatives for the Americas. With a world population of seven billion and growing, demand for beef, milk and leather will only increase. **Sustainable ranching ensures that farms are efficient, productive and contribute to responsible land stewardship.**"

Why on God's earth would anyone in their right mind ever want to source sustainably ranched Amazonia beef? Amazonia by definition is dense impenetrable rainforest and, if I may compare, it's a bit like promoting an ugly but non-malignant growth. These forests are becoming increasingly fragmented and as a result are drying out as a habitat, and whilst non-malignant may be preferable to malignant, it certainly shouldn't be celebrated as if the problem had suddenly evaporated.

Rainforest Alliance Certified Coffee

More than 25 million people in the tropics depend on coffee, a crop that is the economic backbone of many countries and the world's second most traded commodity after oil. **Coffee** is farmed on about 30 million acres (12 million hectares) worldwide, an area larger than Portugal and nearly the size of England. Most of the farms are in areas regarded as high priorities for conservation.

In 1993, the Rainforest Alliance and its partner groups in the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) demonstrated that traditional, forested coffee farms are havens for wildlife. Now, coffee lovers everywhere can support farmers who maintain these rainforest refuges simply by buying beans stamped with the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal of approval.

Like any kind of farming, growing coffee is risky business. Coffee farmers face difficult challenges: oversupply and low prices, inclement weather, pests and diseases, rising costs and sometimes unhelpful government policies.

For more than 150 years, coffee had been widely grown under the leafy canopy of native rainforest trees. In the 1970s, agronomists began promoting a new farm system in which the sheltering forests are cleared and coffee bushes are packed in dense hedgerows and doused with agrochemicals. These monoculture farms produce more beans, but at a tremendous environmental cost.

A traditional agroforestry system provides good wildlife habitat. The new monocultures have little habitat, accelerate soil erosion and pollute streams. The new methodologies were not only environmentally destructive, but put more beans into an already overstocked market and converted coffee farms from self-sustaining sanctuaries into stark and lifeless monocultures. Wildlife disappeared, soils washed downhill and streams were choked with silt and agrochemicals.

The biodiversity on well-managed coffee farms can be awesome. One certified cooperative in El Salvador contains more than 100 tree species. SAN biologists have spotted dozens of species of rare birds, wild cats such as ocelots, postcard-size butterflies, technicolour frogs, seldom-seen orchids, monkeys and (once) a giant anteater. Forested coffee farms are critically important as migration stopovers for birds travelling from as far away as Canada and Alaska. In areas where deforestation is rampant, these coffee farms may be the only habitat available to provide shelter and food for wary birds. Certification is one way to guarantee that coffee farms maintain wildlife habitat and other environmental benefits, while protecting the livelihoods of coffee farmers.

In all of this script there's absolutely nothing about Ethiopia as being the place where these trees grow in their native state and ultimately where they should be grown in order to create natural areas of forest habitat. Obviously the demand for this product on the world-market would quite probably outstrip this small corner of the planet, but it wouldn't 've hurt to have given this place a much needed and a well deserved mention. The Rainforest Alliance however does not do this.

Rainforest Alliance Certified Cocoa

Adrien Koffi Kouadio owns a **Rainforest Alliance Certified™ cocoa farm in Paul Kru, Côte d'Ivoire**. For Kouadio, cocoa cultivation is a way of life that is intertwined with family traditions reaching back for generations. Most of the world's cocoa is grown by farmers like him on small plots of land throughout West Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. The world's five million smallholder cocoa farmers—many of whom are already struggling with economic hardship—are also contending with the effects of climate change: hotter temperatures, unpredictable rainfall and a shift in growing seasons. Rigorous training in efficient and sustainable farm management is the key to stabilizing their microclimate and stopping the destructive cycle of poverty and deforestation.

Here again, Côte d'Ivoire is hardly Central America which is where Cocoa should rightfully be grown. Cocoa anywhere else competes on the world-market with the countries of origin and again diverts us from the direction we should be heading.

Sustainable Sourcing Policy, Palm Oil

Sustainable Agriculture Network Standards for Palm Oil. The Rainforest Alliance supports the expansion of sustainable production and manufacturing of palm oil and palm kernel oil as a means of reducing the social and environmental impacts of a growing and important industry.

We share the concerns of many about the impact of expanding oil palm plantations on the rainforests, particularly in the South-east Asia region and especially on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra. Deforestation in this region, as in the Amazon, is one of the most urgent challenges facing environmentalists today. The Rainforest Alliance's Sustainable Forestry division, working in concert with other non-governmental organizations, has for years worked to control logging in Indonesia.

Certification has the ability to address these environmental issues and more, such as displacement of indigenous peoples, competition between large agribusinesses and local farmers for water and basic resources, and the impact of mass palm oil production on food prices and security. In addition to supporting the efforts of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) the Rainforest Alliance has created its own rigorous, complementary certification system for oil palm, based on the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) standard. Farms that meet the exacting criteria of the SAN standard for palm oil can earn the Rainforest Alliance certificate.

In order to find out which oil palm farms have now achieved Rainforest Alliance certification, please conduct a search by crop on the Sustainable Farm Certification International website. The SAN standard was created in the tropics more than 15 years ago through a long process of research, experimentation and consultations that involved farmers, scientists, NGOs, universities, government agencies and agricultural companies. The process was led by biologists; protecting wildlife, rainforests and other tropical ecosystems was and remains a foremost objective.

The underlying causes of deforestation in Indonesia are complex. The Rainforest Alliance and SAN are working with other local and international NGOs to hold the loggers, plantation managers, miners, government agencies and other actors accountable for the declining forest and biodiversity in this region, as in other areas. We will put the spotlight on uncooperative and illegal operators and verify -- through the certification process -- the best management practices of progressive forest and plantation managers.

Palm oil is used in a range of products from food products to soaps, body care and cleaning products, and latterly in the production of biofuels. Focusing attention on one product which contains a small percentage of palm oil risks missing the bigger problem of needing to tackle the serious issue of how to increase the percentage of supply of palm oil which comes from sustainable sources. Currently this percentage is very low and given the commitment of many companies to source all their palm oil from sustainable sources by 2015 a lot of work needs to be done to ensure the availability of such supplies. The Rainforest Alliance accepts the practical realities of ensuring an adequate and traceable supply of palm oil from plantations that are certified as being well along the path toward sustainability. We, along with others, are working tirelessly to address this.

When the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal appears on multi-ingredient products, the ingredient which is covered by our standard is clearly and transparently labelled. This is the best practice policy across all independent certification systems. The Rainforest Alliance continues to work with those companies producing such mixed-ingredient products to bring other appropriate products under suitable, independent certification. In addition the Rainforest Alliance requires a risk assessment for these non-certified ingredients before the use of the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal is granted on these products.

Do I even need to comment?

Rainforest Alliance Certified Vanilla

Vanilla is derived from an orchid that originated in Mexico and was introduced to Madagascar in the early 19th century. Today, Madagascar accounts for much of the global production of vanilla, where there are approximately 60-70,000 vanilla farmers.

In Mexico, vanilla is pollinated by tiny, indigenous bees, which means that the plant has to be hand-pollinated in Madagascar. This is delicate, labour-intensive work and requires someone with practiced hands. While an experienced person with small hands can pollinate as many as 2,000 plants a day, vanilla farms are spread across large distances, and flowers can only be pollinated in the morning, when they are wide open. Each blossom lasts for only one day. Dried vanilla, what we know as the black vanilla pods, is only a fifth of the weight of the green vanilla, meaning that to get 10kg of dried vanilla, 50kg of green vanilla is needed. Green vanilla takes about three years to grow.

"Farmers who work with the Rainforest Alliance learn to increase productivity and control costs." Rainforest Alliance certification - awarded to farms that meet the comprehensive standards of the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) - focuses on how farms are managed. The SAN standards encompass all aspects of sustainability - social, environmental and economic - and empower farmers with the knowledge and skills to negotiate for themselves in the global marketplace.

The exporter is responsible for financing a group administrator to manage the producers and processors in the supply chain, ensuring that there is a traceability diagram in place, with relevant traceability records in each chain. Procedures and sanctions must also be in place - including the training of farmers, warehouse workers and drivers who are responsible at each stage of the supply chain - in order to avoid the mixing of certified and non-certified products.

As certification becomes more mainstream and the variety of, and demand for, available certified ingredients increases, the food service industry has a responsibility to ensure that it is offering the sustainable option. With products carrying the Rainforest Alliance's little green frog seal, consumers can enjoy their food and drink - and feel good in the knowledge that they are supporting a healthier future for farmers, their families and the environment.

Delicate work requiring practiced hands; makes it sound so nice doesn't it. 60-70,000 Vanilla farmers in Madagascar! Can you imagine the impact this is having on the Mexican trade? Mexico simply cannot compete with countries like these undercutting prices and it's all down to the strengths of currencies which is a bit like cheap Chinese imports over here. All around the globe there are both weaker and stronger foreign exchanges, and there can be no doubt at all that this is what drives trade on the world-markets. Mexican Vanilla is considerably more expensive than Madagascan for this reason and so there's instantly one big obstacle standing in the way of this particular commodity. The Rainforest Alliance is doubtlessly well aware of this, as well as the knock-on effects this would be having on the forests of both countries, but fails spectacularly to make this known.

This is a problem but I don't think an insurmountable one. It's the matter of swings and roundabouts, and with all the other goods from different parts of the world, things could quite easily work the other way. And for me this is all the more of a reason why a conglomerate would need setting up, if this idea of forests working their way out of destruction were ever to become a reality, so that trades with higher end market values could be subsidised by others. This way problems like this could be ironed out.

The Tree Trust, another shadowy figure and like the Roundtable they too work within corrupt countries and rubber-stamp this time what's described as 'sustainable' hardwood. This overused and overfamiliarised word, sanctioning over and over again wherever it might be and whatever they might be getting away with. And it's a pity because some things really could be sustainable as our work sets out to demonstrate.

With people like this in charge of doing the bidding for us, it really cannot be wondered just why it is there's so little left in the world and I'm becoming more and more frustrated both with what I'm finding and with what's being done. Forget the respectable looking logos like the RSPB's. 'Avocet,' WWF's. 'Panda' or that cute 'little green frog' we saw earlier; these are mere trappings. It's those faceless individuals behind the logos and what their agendas are that are the real considerations. If all they ever do is work against the natural world and sell everything down the river then these logos count for nothing. We are losing things like we've never lost them before and they are all so dismissive of outside suggestions. When I first disclosed this paper in 2009, I received several replies, all of them casting doubts as to whether it would work and one of them enclosed, I had to smile, some Fairtrade and FSC. leaflets, suggesting I could do my bit by making any purchases from them. In writing this, I'm hoping to do a bit more than my bit; I'm hoping I can completely transform the way we tackle conservation once and for all by both creating habitat and getting projects funded like never before.

The World Bank and similar organisations only serve their private owners who appear to be holding countries to ransom. They lend money to governments knowing that the capital and interest will never be paid back. This enables them to force public utilities, services, properties and land to be privatised whilst taking ownership of all or part as 'security' against the loans. In effect these corrupt bankers just print money from thin air and then progressively take over ownership of more and more real assets. Printing more and more money enables mining companies to destroy more habitat to extract more of the earth's resources and multinational farmers to destroy more natural habitat to produce palm and other crop based oils as well as more soya and similar crops to feed more animals for meat.

As far as the NGO's are concerned, many of the good ones fail through lack of finance and exposure whilst the bad ones who are funded by the corporate multinationals obtain all the support and publicity they need to dispel the real truth and their bosses and staff are paid so well they will always toe the party line. The whole process is made worse since the corporate multinationals fund and control the media. Time and time again, we have visits from reporters who come to cover a particular item of unimportant news. Each time I explain issues like the real causes of climate change and these individuals enthusiastically understand and become inspired by what we have to say but nearly every time, the articles they produce for their editors are ignored and rejected! Oops, could these articles upset their corporate advertisers?

With forests, at the moment no-one owns them and it's a complete free-for-all. The solution, at least as I saw it, was to buy up as much as we could and to divide it up into estates. With each estate then responsible for protecting and managing of its own section of forest, we would then be very well placed to keep them safeguarded as well as self-funded as described. Throughout history, influence and power has always been determined by wealth, industry and land-ownership; and for conservationists there is no better industry for gaining wealth than forestry. Relying on government goodwill and handouts has come with a hefty price-tag. Do as we say and don't rock the boat too much and your fundings will be assured. Conservation deserves better than that and by forming our own industries instead of consorting with the cut-throats as we have been doing would put us in a far stronger all round position.

Nothing is ever written in stone, just because it's the way things are done, doesn't mean they can't be different. With piecemeal purchases, bit by bit, and then a bit more, all of it adding up into endlessness. It's the landowners who decide what's grown and the landowners who reap the profits, and just as the previous landowners felled trees and planted crops, then so too could we fell trees and plant crops. A Palm Oil or Rubber plantation in S.E. Asia could just as easily be converted to Coconut, Rattan, Bamboo or Spices etc. In Western Central Africa Oil Palm and local Rubbers, and likewise, and moving around the planet a bit here, there's no reason why those parts of Amazonia, that are now under cattle or soya, couldn't be converted to Rubber and Brazil Nut. It's a vision, and with a bit of get out there and get on with it, it could become reality. In the meantime, as we switch on the late night news, we hear about Chinese land-grabs on the horizon in the very parts of Africa we're talking about here, and if they get hold of it, it won't be for the common good, everyone can be sure of that. Buy it or lose it; productive, ecological forestry or GMs., chemicals and abuse, that's the stark reality we face and it should be a massive wake up call. I wrote these lines around four years ago now and no-one took a bind bit of notice of it. Since then we have seen an astronomical increase in rhino horn and ivory poaching, and shark finning is now occurring in many places all around the African coast.

Commercialisation would put us onto the same level as the rest of the exploiters but instead our methods would create great ecological expanses. All of us live in the real world and with the passing of each and every decade this reality becomes more and more clear; we simply cannot expect governments to sit back and admire their forests while their economic standing in the world goes down the tube, and neither, it is also becoming increasingly clear, can we ever imagine this was ever going to happen, at least not on any sort of mass. For our part, we need to protect the pristine, species rich forests that are left, increase the acreage to its rightful and original land-mass, and we need to knit together all the fragmentation that's occurred (in satellite imagery terms, it's a bit like darning socks). I am absolutely certain that making them pay is the only way to secure their long-term future and to put an end this abysmal void once and for all and to save them on the mass they undeniably deserve. The only other alternative is to continue with this corporate led, government handout approach, doomed to failure from day one.

Imagine a piece of land in which there lives a species that exists nowhere else in the world; pockets of habitat with species in them do still exist amongst many ruins. We now own this place which has been bought up under one of these systems and the whole area would be turned into non-regimented, non-mono-culture, no chemical plantations of whatever, depending on whereabouts in the world you would happen to be. The results, which would be semi-natural, by the nature of everything growing there would be native to the region, would serve as a perfect buffer-zone, whilst the part in which this species lives could be given nothing short of a five star treatment, the land area could be expanded, the water quality could be assured, pools could be dug out or deepened as required, log-piles built and wardened study areas set up, you name it. Anyone else owning this site, and you can just imagine what some people might have planned, the future of this species would be a lot less assured. Multiply this over and over with all the other isolated populations scattered around the globe, and you can see just what potential for good these systems have to offer. Whole communities could be saved and corridors created; the ultimate of course might be to have Tiger corridors linking up various forest reserves in the heart of India. The limitations exist only within our own lack of imagination.



2000



2005



2010

Rondonia State, west Brazil.

Images courtesy of NASA.

In the state of Rondonia in west Brazil, we can see first-hand the terrifying fish-bone effect you get after roads have been constructed through forests. The actual damage caused by the roads themselves is negligible, but it's what comes next that causes the real problems. First you get the opportunist loggers, followed shortly by the ranchers and soya farmers, all three are the real villains in all of this, but mixed up in these groups you get those who are simply trying to make a living. They are not necessarily evil, but are simply desperately strapped for cash and are doing all they can to make ends meet. By bringing this land into ownership, we could immediately end this destruction. The back-bone (road), that initially caused these problems in the first place, could carry supplies in and out, the ribs could be planted up with Rubber, Brazil Nut, Cashews, wild Papaya or Kapok etc., and the bits in between designated as nature reserves. Anyone in that latter category I am sure would be only too pleased to have employment on such systems, working at repairing the forests and not destroying them. The end result would be areas of renewal and generated wealth.

In the meantime, there's news coming in from Brazil saying the government out there is not only about to side with all kinds of logging concessions and other developments, but are also sponsoring gunned assassins to take care of forest campaigners on a regular basis, two were killed only the other week. We really do need to organise ourselves better don't we and as a matter of some urgency. If we're ever going to win this fight, and I keep saying this, we need to make these forests pay, creating wealth for our own projects and paying taxes what's more to these forest owning nations, demonstrating that we mean business and that proper forestry projects can indeed be profitable. As for the gunned assassins, we need to get more organised on that front too; basically, we need to get these campaigners tooled up. It's the law of the jungle, and some parts of Amazonia seem to be a bit more of a jungle than others. It really is no good fannying around any more, if assassins are out there, then conservationists need to protect themselves.

The Inter-Oceanic Highway, constructors Odebrecht, Brazil to Peru: Type these words in and read what comes up. This is so damn typical of so many governments, in order to do trade with China, they've built this monstrosity. Fair enough, but they could have used one of their existing ports and then sailed on via Panama; instead of that they've railroaded this thing right through Amazonia. The one positive thing in all of this is that the world economy's going down to zilch, trade could dry up and on completion with any luck it could bankrupt the whole project.

This week too we hear about the Russian Soyuz Rocket being launched in French Guiana. 120ha of rainforest was cleared, together with all the roads, infrastructure, noise and disturbance, that, as we've seen, are so intertwined with all the other kinds of forest clearances. All of this so as we can have greater sat nav links; just what the world needs, less forest and more sat navs for fume-laden vehicles for clogging up the streets. Arianspace is the company behind the project; please email them and let them know what you think. info@arianespaceonline.com

The Rainforest Vanilla Conservation Association: Articles are given here and our response is written below them. They never did get back to me but this seems to be running along similar lines to what I've been describing.

Written by David Gardella.

The Rainforest Vanilla Conservation Association was founded here in Costa Rica by a group of old friends with a common interest in saving the tropical rainforest in our lifetimes. We realized that this is a pretty ambitious goal but by putting our collective experience together we might be able to have some impact. Now we think we've actually figured out how to save the rainforest.

The Rainforest Vanilla Conservation Association is seeking corporate sponsors to help it save the tropical rainforests of the world. We offer a program of carbon offset payments directly to landowners based on scientific principles and low cost monitoring techniques.

The tropical rainforests of the world are disappearing at the alarming rate of 10 million hectares or 25 million acres a year. This produces approximately 20% of the carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere causing global climate change. At the same time tropical rainforest occupies a mere 6% of the land surface of the planet while generating 40% of the oxygen we breathe. So if we could stop this destruction we would stop emitting 20% of the carbon dioxide causing global warming and protect 40% of the oxygen generating capacity of our planet.

But have you ever wondered why after years of planting trees all over the planet there aren't forests everywhere you look? Well the answer is that reforestation projects are mostly colossal failures. Once the local politicians in the inevitable inauguration ceremony have gone home, after patting themselves on the back for saving the planet from global warming; the poor people who are suppose to plant the free trees usually don't. Or if they do plant the trees they sooner or later cut them down for firewood or let the goats eat them.

Here in Costa Rica rainforest is cut down for the lumber and then planted as pasture for cattle ranching. This gives an annual return of approximately \$200 per hectare; that is if the cattle aren't stolen or die of snake bites. The cleared land can also be planted with heart of palm for an annual return of \$775 per hectare. The land can also be leased to a pineapple exporter for an annual fee of \$450 per hectare, but only if the land just happens to be adjacent to the pineapple plantation.

Both vanilla and cocoa are species native to the tropical rainforest. As such their production is best in the environment of the tropical rainforest. Vanilla is a liana (vine) that grows in the rainforest canopy and therefore requires the support of a tutor tree. It is also a crop that is difficult to grow under artificial conditions in plantation style settings. In order to justify the elevated investment costs of artificial production, planting distances must be reduced to the point where disease outbreaks of *Fusarium oxysporum* root rot become uncontrollable. Planting densities of from 2,200 to 4,000 plants per acre are common in artificial production while densities of only 250 plants per acre in natural production have proved to be more sustainable over the long run. A source of vine cuttings to replace dead and dying plants should also be available usually from a traditional vanilla plantation. For this reason vanilla production is most sustainable under natural shade trees using traditional production methods and cultural practices, and employing low planting densities.

Also, the highest yields are obtained when each individual plant is cared for on a daily basis. For this reason, large scale production that requires the management of thousands of plants is usually a risky endeavour. Sustainable production over many years is usually carried out on smallholder plantations situated in semi-forested or forested areas. Smallholder vanilla production has the added benefit of conserving the rainforest that provides the necessary environment for sustainable production.

The one major drawback to vanilla production is the low prices obtained by growers using intermediaries to export their production. Also due to the price instability of recent years flavour manufacturer have increasingly switched to artificial vanillin. Today an estimated 98% of all products claiming to contain vanilla actually contain artificial vanillin further suppressing already low international prices and making vanilla production an activity of subsistence farmers and a hobby for rich landowners.

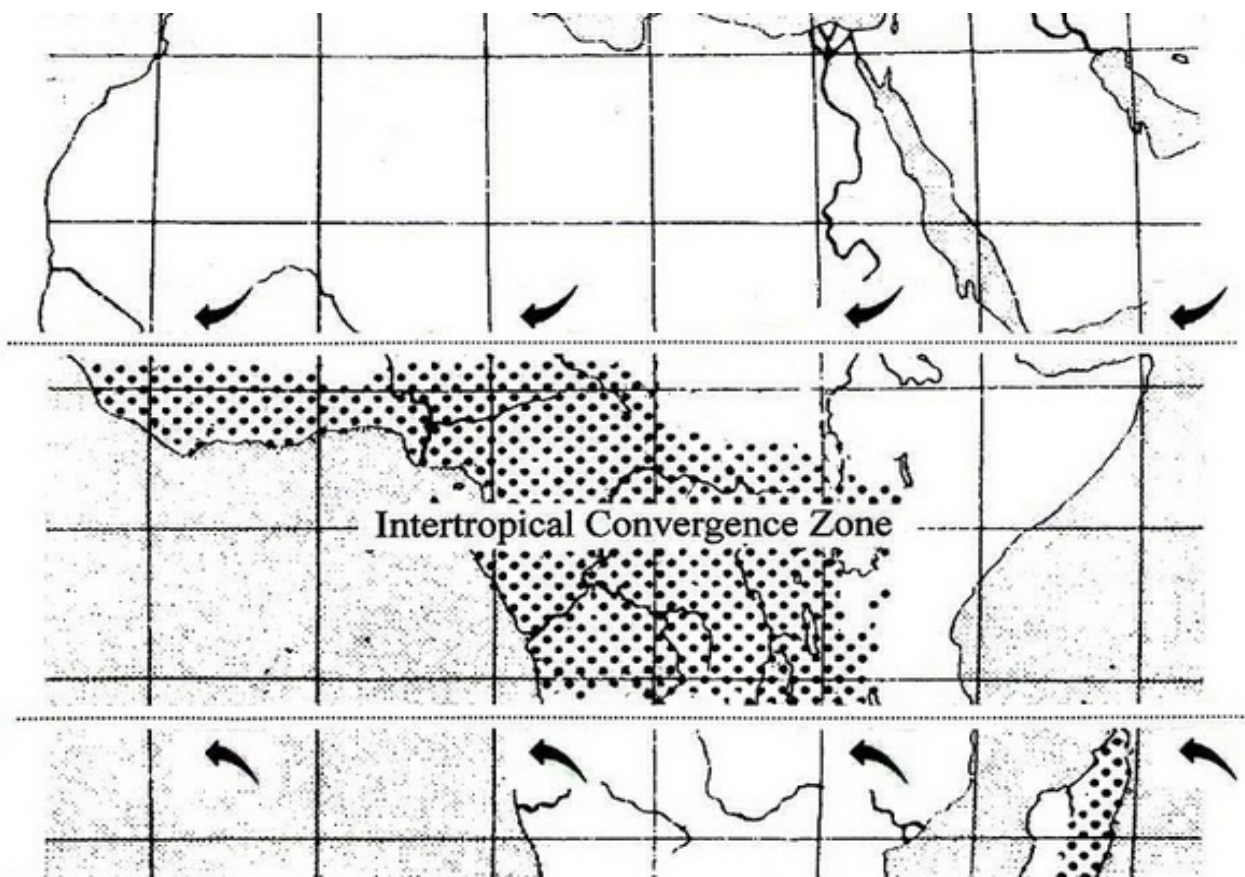
Cocoa is a species often encountered growing wild along river banks in the tropical rainforest. Sustainable production requires natural shade from a forest canopy. Intensive cocoa production for high yields requires the use of chemical fertilizers and improved, disease resistant clonal varieties. Both are inputs not easily accessible by poor farmers.

Cocoa prices have been kept artificially low by large flavour manufacturer for decades and few investors have seriously considered cocoa production as a viable business. For this reason cocoa has always been a subsistence crop of poor farmers in the Third World. More recently, however, cocoa prices have started to rise mainly due to a dwindling supply caused by cocoa farmers abandoning the crop in favour of more lucrative agricultural activities and the low yields of ageing plantations that urgently require renovation.

However, cocoa makes an excellent tutor tree for vanilla vines when it is managed correctly to limit the amount of shade it provides in a plantation. It also has the added benefit of providing an additional source of income for the vanilla farmer. If vanilla and cocoa prices ever stabilize at a level that gives a "decent" return to the farmers, both crops will be an important source of economic incentives to conserve the tropical rainforest.

All of this is great news but although founded in Costa Rica, there is no reference that these systems would remain only in that part of the world to where both species are native and this to me remains as the very essence of what makes projects like this special. There's also no mention at all that prices and demand of Cocoa/Vanilla back home are being colossally undermined by production in other parts of the world; ie. in Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar respectively. Also the inclusion of Chicle, the sap of which is used in the making of the original chewing gum, is not even mentioned. Both Cocoa and Vanilla require a given amount of controlled shade and these three would work very well in creating the perfect forest environment in that part of the world; especially where other tree species would be allowed to co-exist within the mix.

The larger organisations have been very slow off the mark, as we have seen, preferring to sell out to the oil palm crooks rather than doing anything that's right and decent and not only that they've made these alternatives ideas considerably harder to implement than was ever needed. But as we've also seen with these places, if financially rewarding enough, they will be left to prosper and if done in the right and proper way, make for a very acceptable compromise between both conservation and economical needs; you certainly don't hear of loggers or assassins going into Oil Palm plantations to wreak havoc.



Given that rainforests produce their own rain clouds as well as holding in carbon, it's hardly surprising the rains fail more and more as these forests continue to shrink. It's a good idea to think of these shaded in areas on the map as the lungs and the beating hearts of the planet, producing both rain as well as pushing the clouds outwardly across the regions, and for any organs to work effectively they need to be large enough on mass in order for them to do their job properly. Ownership within these vascular parts is paramount and would ensure their continued existence as functioning bodies; costing nothing but actually making money. Simple, self-financing and self-regulating; the ultimate in nature taking care of a world problem.

All around the tropics there are what are known as the prevailing trade winds, both to the north and to the south; and these predominantly blow in from the N.E. and S.E. respectively (see map). Between these, there's the Intertropical Convergence Zone, in old nautical terms known as the doldrums. A band of clouds, violent thunderstorms and months of calmness that encircles the entire equatorial belt. It's a line that seasonally shifts north to south and then back again following the sun's zenith point; a climate that for me sums up the magic of what these tropical rainforests are all about.

In Africa, as an example, although the prevailers push much of the cloud out into the Atlantic, other winds move them eastwards on towards the East African game reserves and onwards to the Horn of Africa. The smaller and more impaired these forests have become, means less cloud, less rainfall and more famine for the whole of Africa. The game-reserves in the East and human populations all depend on these forests even though they're situated far away from them. The same principles also apply in South America and in S.E. Asia, and to a lesser extent other forests in different parts of the world too. These places produce rain all around the tropics and not just within the forests themselves and are without any doubt at all absolutely vital for the well-being of the entire planet just in climatological terms alone.

'We didn't know
anyone lived
there, so we
dumped our waste
in the river.'

The statement above was the reasoning behind Texaco's decision to dump billions of gallons of oil sludge into an Ecuadorian river. As we will see, oil exploration in the Third World out of the way places, practices are less than we'd expect here in the UK. or the US. An Environmental Case Study, 'Texaco's Oil Production in the Ecuadorian Rainforest,' by Kristi Jacques is given below.

This area encompasses around 200 square miles in the northern part of the Amazon region, one of the most fragile ecosystems in the world. It is inhabited by eight indigenous tribes who live mostly in small villages along the river courses and it holds five percent of all plant species on Earth and many of the 10,000 species of plants, fishes and birds are now endangered. It also contains enormous oil reserves, and in 1964, a subsidiary called Texaco Petroleum Company was invited by the government to explore for and produce oil in the region through a partnership with the government.

Texaco's role in the operation was to design the wells, build the pipeline that would transport the oil across the Andes Mountains to the Pacific Coast, and manage on behalf of a consortium that included Petroecuador, Ecuador's state-run oil company. Texaco's involvement in the project was governed by a 28-year concession agreement, by 1977 Petroecuador became the majority owner and Texaco Petroleum a minority owner. Finally, in 1992, Texaco's concession ended and Petroecuador became the full owner. Over their years in Ecuador, Texaco provided jobs for 840 employees and 2,000 contract workers. The amount of money generated by the consortium that was received by the country represented more than 50 percent of their Gross National Product (GNP) during that period.

Unfortunately, oil drilling was not completely beneficial to the country. Ecuador had no experience in the oil industry and relied heavily on Texaco to design and build the infrastructure for the extraction of oil and transportation to the market. The governmental leaders trusted Texaco would use at least the minimum of technological standards it used drilling in the United States and around the world. However, Texaco decided to dispose of the by-products of drilling, called production water, by dumping it into unlined pits dug out of topsoil next to each of the 300 wells. Production water is water trapped in the geological formation that is brought to the surface when oil is produced; Texaco's policy in other areas it operates is to reinject the wastewater into the ground, where it cannot endanger the environment. This wastewater was highly toxic and millions of gallons were dumped into the pits. The amount of savings Texaco achieved through this procedure totalled \$5 billion over the time of its operations in Ecuador. Texaco claims that its savings were much smaller and that they complied with the environmental laws of Ecuador and international petroleum industry standards. They also claim to have developed new industry standards for operating in sensitive environments. At the end of their concession, two audits were conducted to assess the impact of Texaco on the local environment. The result of these audits was \$40 million in remediation money given by Texaco in 1995. However, they failed to build water treatment plants, medical facilities, and reforestation projects promised as part of the clean-up agreement.

The waste pits used by Texaco are the approximate size of small ponds and when these pits filled up, oil workers would drain them into nearby streams and rivers. This water carried dangerous chemicals, such as Benzene, Toulene, Xylenes and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, chemicals known for their connections to cancer. Additional gallons of raw crude oil, more toxic than waste water, were also dumped or put into the pits. Over the years, these toxins leached into the ground and overflowed into the wetlands and rivers that flow into the Amazon River. To this day, around 4.3 million gallons of the wastewater reaches Amazon tributaries every day. Another hazardous activity performed by Texaco was the burning of excess crude oil and wastewater, resulting in the occurrence of what local people refer to as black rain. The waste was dumped into landfills and spread over dirt roads in order to maintain them and control dust. Texaco did not maintain the pipeline network properly and this resulted in further discharges of crude oil into the environment. It is claimed that more oil has been dumped into the rainforest than was spilled by the Exxon Valdez into Prince William Sound.

Among the consequences of Texaco's drilling in Ecuador is an ongoing and critical health crisis. Health workers have documented an increase in problems such as a rise in cancer rates, miscarriages and birth defects. A study conducted by the Ecuadorian Union of Popular Health Promoters of the Amazon (UPPSAE) found higher occurrences of spontaneous abortions, dermatitis, headaches and nausea. These serious health effects are attributed to the results of the oil producing operations conducted by Texaco. Another study, performed in 1993 by The Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), demonstrated that residents of the Ecuadorian Amazon are exposed to levels of oil-related contaminants that significantly exceed internationally recognized safety limits, and that dermatitis and other skin problems related to oil contamination were found in residents near oil facilities. Such levels of exposure, of course, suggest an increased risk of more serious health problems, including cancers.

The Department of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene of the University of London produced a study that documented dramatically increased rates of cancer among the populations in the areas where Texaco drilled. Specifically, the study provides evidence that residents in the oil zone experience suffer 30 times more larynx cancer, 18 times more bile duct cancer, 15 times more liver and skin cancer, and five times more stomach cancer. In February of 1999, a community of 500 people where Texaco had operated several wells reported 15 cases of cancer. In another, four women, all under 40, reported uterine cancer. It is rare to find a child in the region who does not have some type of skin rash due to exposure from toxic chemicals.

Perhaps the health effects can be better illustrated by the voices of the people from the region. Hugo Urena of Shushufindi believes that by drinking the local water he is risking his life. Everyone around here is dying, he says and reports the names of neighbours suffering from chronic skin lesions, head-aches and a wave of cancer, the fate suffered by his father. Dr. Miguel San Sebastian, who lives in the town of Coca, an hour south of Shushufindi, has been studying the health patterns in Oriente communities affected by oil development. He reported that the cancer rate is four times higher in San Carlos than for men of comparable age in Quito, the capital of Ecuador. Humberto Piyaguaje, a Secoya Indian from the Oriente, reported seeing his people suffer from strange maladies that their culture had never seen until oil moved into the region. There are times when they bathe in the river, their body gets full of rashes, and that never happened before. The people have a lot of problems, but they don't know 'the causes' because they don't have doctors. Especially the ones that have the most problems are the children, because they love to be in the river. Children in the region go barefoot as they walk along roads that have been topped with crude oil and most residents wash the sludge with gasoline-soaked rags provided by the Ecuadorian government.

Texaco's oil production in Ecuador has damaged the once relatively untouched rainforest through deforestation, soil erosion, and reduced biodiversity. Three indigenous tribes were almost eradicated, the Cofan who inhabit the first place Texaco drilled, the Secoya and the Siona. The cultures and traditions developed by these tribes are linked to the rainforest and its abundance of resources. The toxic waste dumped by Texaco has endangered their lives so seriously that extinction has become a real threat. The Cofan numbered approximately 15,000 when wells were first built on their land in 1971. Since then, their population has been reduced to a few hundred due to disease and forced migration to find work in the cities. The Secoya and the Siona have seen similar decreases in their populations. All of these tribes depend on the rivers for their food, hygiene, and transport. Due to the amount of pollution, the rivers now have been rendered useless for any of the above three activities. The pollution also flowed down the Amazon and affected the livelihood and health of the residents that live along the Napo River in Peru.

In 1993 a group of Amazon Indians and farmers representing 30,000 affected individuals took legal action in New York against Texaco, claiming that Texaco saw the extraction of more than 1 billion barrels of oil from the Oriente during its 20-year partnership with Petroecuador. At the same time, they alleged that Texaco also spilled half a million barrels of crude into the rainforest and dumped billions of gallons of wastewater into the rivers. They also created hundreds of unlined waste pits to hold the sludge instead of reinjecting it into the Earth, a more environmentally sound technology. They are asking for \$1.5 billion in damages.

Texaco has disputed these claims, but the plaintiffs have used an 18th century law in an effort to get the case tried in the United States instead of Ecuador. The case is preferred to be tried in the United States because Ecuador's judicial system does not even recognize the concept of a class-action lawsuit and has no history of any environmental litigation. The law being referred to is the Alien Claims Tort Act (ATCA) of 1770, which was enacted by Congress in part to prosecute pirates of the high seas who sought refuge on the shores of the United States. It was revived in the early 1980s to allow foreigners to go after human rights abusers that had fled from their home countries into the United States. If the decision were to be made in favour of Ecuador, it would encourage other foreigners to sue U.S. based multinational corporations here in the United States. The judge deciding the venue, Jed Rakoff, dismissed the cases in 1996 and 1997. The appeals court overturned his decision, and he reheard the case in February of 1999. Currently, he has not made a decision as to where the case will be tried. However, he cannot dismiss the case again; it either must be tried in the United States or in Ecuador.

Although the legal process is a lengthy and tedious one, the lawsuits that have been brought against Texaco have also helped to generate attention. The consequences of the precedence being set by the lawsuits are far-reaching, and this assists in creating awareness as well. Even if the lawsuits do not result in a judgement in favour of the Ecuadorians, they still have options open to them to draw negative attention to Texaco, including more media campaigns. Perhaps this negative attention will cause Texaco to rethink their operations in the future.

And if you thought that was it, let's now go over to Nigeria where the same's happening there too. A report, 'Nigeria, World Oil Pollution Capital,' by Caroline Duffield is given below:

Visitors to the Nigerian village of Kpor, deep in the Niger Delta, are greeted by strange sights. Silver frogs blink from gleaming puddles, sunlight bounces from an eerie black lake and dragonflies hover over cauldrons of tar. Environmentalists call the Delta the global capital of oil pollution, but unlike the Gulf of Mexico, there are no underwater robots, flotillas of scientists or oil booms here. On 12 May 2009, Shell's Bomo manifold blew up, leaking massive amounts of crude, local people say 39 hectares were contaminated and a second leak from a derelict oil tap had been spilling oil for years. Shell hired a local company to clean up but the area remains an oil slick. 'It kills our fish, destroys our skin, spoils our streams and we cannot drink,' says Saturday Pirri, a local palm wine tapper. His father taught him to make palm wine but today the trees yield only a quarter of what they once provided.

Kpor is a world away from the Gulf of Mexico. In the Niger Delta, there is little independent monitoring of spills and the companies themselves disclose virtually no data about their own pollution. But, according to the Nigerian government, there were more than 7,000 spills between 1970 and 2000. Environmentalists believe spills happen at a rate of 300 every year in both Bayelsa State and Ogoniland had happened months before and still not been cleaned up. In May an Exxon Mobil pipeline in Akwa Ibom sprang a leak one of several spills involving the company; environmentalists, journalists and local people described oil leaking for days in a massive spill. Exxon dispute that; they say the leak was less than 300 barrels and that it was isolated on the same day.

'The Gulf of Mexico has drawn the attention of the whole world,' says Erabanabari Kobah, a local environmentalist. 'Even the president of the United States must go there to see it. The people there get compensation, but here, you must go to court and you cannot win against the oil companies in court.' The oil industry is accused of a sharp double standard in its operations of taking advantage of Nigeria's lack of environment law and weak regulations, while observing higher standards of safety and maintenance overseas. 'It is a grave situation,' says Kingsley Ogundu Chinda, environment commissioner in Rivers State. 'I blame the owners of the facilities, they are economical with the truth and are not sincere in their practice.' He also says 'the government has failed to force companies to observe the law.' The joint ventures operating here are operating under Nigerian law. It is a dangerous and unpredictable business; oil workers and contractors are regularly kidnapped for ransom and heavily armed militants blow up pipelines, stealing oil in a process known as 'bunkering'. Shell says most of the spills are caused by sabotage and is therefore beyond their control; it is impossible to verify. 'We take every precaution that a spill as a result of our operation is kept to an absolute minimum,' says Mutiu Sunmonu, Shell's managing director in Nigeria. But oil industry insiders also speak of derelict infrastructure; they talk of decades old pipelines, rusting oil taps, corroding manifolds and historic underinvestment reaching back decades.

And so we decided to examine the flow stations and pipelines for ourselves. 'Getting close is not easy,' shouts Evangelist Ibinabobo Sanipe over the roar of the speedboat; he's travelling with us as national secretary of the Oil & Gas Host Communities Association. We bounce above the waves towards a column of dark smoke on the horizon and before long, a big military vessel warns us to pull over but with just a few handshakes the soldiers are smiling and joking. We continue our journey, having paid no bribe and shown no identification. 'It is very disturbing,' he says; 'if Shell is serious about stopping sabotage and oil spills, we would not have got so close.' In the past, spectacular attacks on oil facilities in Nigeria have threatened the country's energy security and delivered shocks to the global oil markets and it is the ease with which we reached the Awoba Flowstation that raises questions over the security of oil facilities.

It is clear that the desperate efforts to halt the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the US have prompted many Nigerians to look hard at their own environmental catastrophe. There is a sense of anger, even among those a long way from the Delta. Shell insists it is misplaced, 'I have no regrets,' insists Mutiu Sunmonu, Shell's managing director. 'I am convinced that the oil companies' business in Nigeria and their participation here is a force for good.'

Reasons Behind Those Main Decisions.

Species are disappearing all around us and in order to resolve much of this all that's needed is to bring land into ownership. We then need to exploit it, make provisions for everything living on that land and you can then end up with systems that create widespread habitat as well as untold wealth for those who own it. Simple enough you would think and in cold light of day realistic terms alone you would also assume they'd be queuing up around the block. I've unearthed so many other problems too, just about everywhere I care to look, conservationists being corporate led by the nose. There are multiples of organisations who are not only failing to campaign against the things that are destroying life on earth but are positively campaigning for them instead. We see them grovelling around for deals, acting with the most amazing appeasement, and all for a bit of government or corporate funding. We see them getting into bed with and being fucked over by industries to the point of making any sane normal person want to vomit. From pesticides to wind-farms and from palm oil to soya, every planet-destroying entity we can ever possibly imagine, there they all are in the forefront, campaigning for more and more of them and giving them far greater public acceptance than they'd otherwise ever 've have.

There's a positively rotten to the core bentness about them, politically infiltrated, pseudo-eco board members together with bosses at the top running things to suit themselves. All the way through putting this work together I have encountered and revealed the big names by the truckload and so let us now trawl through and take a close look at what's going on as well as precisely who's funding what.

The Millennium Seed Bank. Apart from saying what a great undertaking it so clearly is, there are two points I need to talk about.

First, there's the **£9.2million handed over by the Wellcome Trust**, and, don't get me wrong, very nice too if you can get it. But there it is again, and it doesn't matter what world-saving project it happens to be, a shadowy figure's involved somewhere within the process. **The Wellcome Trust is into, amongst many other things, interspecies embryonic studies, non-human primate neurological assessments (ape mutilation), empirical and normative biomedical ethics (whatever that is) and genome research.** And so, just what their not so hidden agendas might be would hardly be likely to have much bearing on saving the natural world, at least one would think. If this were a genuine, no strings attached gift, then fair enough, there's nothing wrong with well meaning sponsorship deals. But I've always thought it ironical that the German word 'Gift' means poison; let's hope this deal doesn't turn out to be 'zu giftig'.

And second, and this was perhaps to be expected, the continual government funding is running out, and an operation of this magnitude was never going to be cheap; -20C vaults, research, seed collecting expeditions and staffing etc. And as the world runs into the deepest recession ever, I'm thinking, it's going to be a tough old job to keep a thing like this up and running. An alternative and perhaps better solution, as and where feasible to do so, is to ensure that this is never needed. By buying up forests, looking at the pixel-sized areas on the map, each one with its own unique flora, turning these places into reserves with these botanical sites well catered for. What's wrong with that? Instead of storing these seeds in frozen vaults, we could be growing them within their appropriate locations in protected reserves. As always, this was never going to be the complete answer but it would go quite some way into making this whole 'ark mindset' a lot less urgently needed. But as a last resort, in an where all else has failed scenario (and we're pretty damn close to being there), it is, I would admit, very reassuring to have this kind of thing as backup.

The International Year of Forests 2011, organised by the UN, seemed to me to be the perfect opportunity for getting forests back onto the global political agenda once again. But where did all the promises go? There were events like this before, plenty of talking, the best intentions in the world from various eminent speakers, performances by tribal groups and everything else, and so what's all this, this time around, actually going to achieve? It seems **the UK. and Norway have provided some funding** for things to proceed, but money's tight, the economy's probably never been in a worse state in the history of the industrialised world, and again, what might they be wanting in return for these deals? And so, where the money's coming from must be the number one consideration.

Behind the scenes too and yet again and again, there are two particularly shady characters within their list of collaborators, the **World Bank** and the **International Tropical Timber Organisation**; shadowy figures ever lurking somewhere within the midst. In the past, along with the hamburger joints, and just as soya and current palm oil production creates problems today, these were all equally public enemy number ones so to speak, and presented at that time the biggest threat to the forests the world had ever seen, and I have to say that I have very serious reservations that things would have changed much at all. And so what exactly are they doing there? Public relations maybe, a bit of arm twisting; leopards, for some reason, come to mind. Don't trust any of the bastards is what I say.

Let us also not forget the **Roundtable** with their **'sustainable' palm oil** throughout S.E. Asia, **'responsible' soy** for Central S. America, and it won't stop there, 'desirable' bloody chick-peas for Western Central Africa will be the next thing. Oh! and then there's the **Rainforest Alliance** with that cute **'little green frog' logo that's recognised by consumers around the world.** All of this taking us further and further away from where we should be heading from the development of proper indigenous forests.

As I trawled further afield looking at organisations and whatever it was they might be into, I occasionally came across some real gems and one such delight was the International Wildlife Management Consortium. They state, amongst other things, that whaling and the 'taking', as is described, of other species is somehow beneficial to conservation, but then goes on to say, 'conservation cannot exist within a financial vacuum' and a way of overcoming this is to allow for the 'rational utilisation of wildlife'. Although we can fully despise 80% of that argument, we must, I think, fully endorse the remaining 20. Conservation, with all of its modern-day problems, is operating within a financial vacuum, very few seem to be challenging this and many, as we have seen, have completely sold out to the other side in order to make ends meet. We should of course completely bypass the first nonsensical part but then absolutely embrace the second. There really is no other more 'rational utilisation of wildlife' than for it to be both non-animal and non-endangered and yet still earning us a fast buck; you need only to look at Oil Palm to know just how profitable it is. Butchering wildlife per se never was and neither should it be within the remit of any sound conservational thinking although making as much money as we possibly can most certainly should. All of these lame 'non-profit making' sentiments we so often see; make as much money as we damn well can, spend it wisely, or use it to make even more and become a force to be reckoned with. We need to go forward into the reality of what this world is facing and adjust our tactics accordingly.

In writing all of this there is no doubt at all that I may've offended a good many but these are the only ideas I know that could ever really safeguard the rainforests on mass and for all time. How else do we do it other than by making a real green industry of it? If anyone can come up with other thoughts on this matter, I'd be only too willing to hear them, write about them and include them within this booklet. Only someone's crazy ideas will ever bring about real change. You can have all of the government goodwill in the world, and we've hardly got that, and even if that you had it, governments come and governments go, any advancements could easily be overturned and with any subsequent regime change and we'd be back to square one once again. We need to do this, for the species, the game reserves in E. Africa and for future famine victims a hundred or two hundred years from now. Please get in touch with any suggestions you might have and we will listen to anything.

Having previously asked for ideas, there wasn't to be honest, much by way of any great thoughts coming to us. There were ideas but nothing shall we say that was ever going to set the planet alight. And so this brings us back to the matter of how do we return these forests to anything like their original landmass? Commercialisation would work, and I know that because it's already out there and working. Oil Palm, entire forests of the stuff ever being grown and ever bringing in vast sums of money and Rubber plantations too. The troubles are, as I've so tirelessly pointed out, they're in the wrong place, grown in regimented monocultures and the wrong bastards are reaping the rewards instead of us. Unlike them, we would not seek to eradicate existing forests but would expand upon them, bringing those we have left into ownership and putting measures in place for keeping them intact. This is the only idea that would work on any meaningful scale.

There are so many twisted bastards out there ready to screw things over and they are to be encountered everywhere in all organisations. It has now been four years and counting since I wrote the original paper for this project in November 09, and that's four wasted years we could've been setting up reserves and putting real protection measures in place. At the time I had great but not overly optimistic hopes of getting through to some of those in charge of things. I thought it was as good an idea then as I do now but I also knew it wasn't going to be easy to get a radically new concept like this accepted. In all of this time the big organisations have been leading us ever nearer towards financial and ecological impoverishment and eventual ruination. So willingly, almost poodle like, licking up to the industries and governments that so clearly care not a jot for the natural world. The money they are getting from them of course must be very tempting indeed, and it might be they'd simply not be able to get things done were it not for that. But for them to have such a stranglehold over their policy making is the clearest possible message as to why it is no-one should ever make a pact with the devil.

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www.unilever.com > ... > Our targets > Working with suppliers

Unilever has been a founding member of the **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil** since 2004.

[Better Palm Oil » Sustainable Palm Oil News, Products ...](#)

www.betterpalmoil.org

Sustainable palm oil starts with you. Find out what actions you can do today to make **palm oil sustainable** around the world »

[FAQ: Palm oil, forests and climate change | Greenpeace UK](#)

www.greenpeace.org.uk/forests/faq-palm-oil-forests-and-climate-change

What is the **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil**? ... **Worse still, at present the RSPO itself is creating the illusion of sustainable palm oil.** ...

[New Britain Palm Oil Limited | Roundtable on Sustainable ...](#)

www.nbpol.com.pg/?page_id=277

All of our palm oil is certified against the **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)** standard. In 2008, our West New Britain (WNB) operations achieved **RSPO** ...

[Don't be fooled - 'sustainable' palm oil is a myth ...](#)

www.greenpeace.org.uk/.../the-myth-of-sustainable-palm-oil-20071128

28/11/2007 · The **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)** - the consortium of which **Asda** and **Sainsbury's** are members ...

[Cargill: Corporate Responsibility - Point of View - Palm ...](#)

www.cargill.com/corporate-responsibility/pov/palm-oil/rspo/index.jsp

The **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil**. Cargill fully supports the **RSPO** and its efforts to promote the growth and use of **sustainable palm oil** throughout the supply chain.

[Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil \(RSPO\) | ASI ...](#)

www.accreditation-services.com/programs/rspo

In response to the urgent and pressing global call for sustainably produced palm oil, the **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)** was formed in 2004 with the ...

[Sustainability Initiatives - Palm Oil - Roundtable for a ...](#)

www.roundtablecocoa.org/showpage.asp?commodity_palmoil

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Source: www.rspo.org About **Sustainable Palm Oil**. Introduction Vegetable oil production around the world totals 95 million ...

[Say No To Palm Oil | Whats The Issue](#)

www.saynotopalmoil.com/Whats_the_issue.php

Sustainable palm oil is an approach to **oil palm** agriculture that aims to produce **palm oil** without causing deforestation or harming people.

[Palm oil - Sustainable palm oil products and palm oil ...](#)

www.co-operativefood.co.uk/.../Sustainable-Palm-Oil

At The **Co-operative Food** we believe in supporting **sustainable palm oil** production and increase the number of **sustainable palm oil** products. All part of our Ethical Plan.

[Palm Oil | Industries | WWF - World Wildlife Fund](#)

worldwildlife.org > x **Sustainable Agriculture**

Recognizing their role in influencing more **sustainable** development of **palm oil**, **Johnson & Johnson** has publicly committed to source 100% of its ingredients derived ...

[RT10 - THANK YOU - Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil](#)

www.rt10.rspo.org

WELCOME MESSAGE BY **RSPO** SECRETARY GENERAL WELCOME TO RT10! Last year, the RT9 themed "**RSPO** Certified. Transforming the Market. Together." witnessed a record high in ...

[Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil - RSPO | Facebook](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/RSPO.org>

An improvement in communication channels will help to deliver the message and importance of **sustainable palm oil** to customers and consumers; and industry is beginning ...

[RSPO in Ghana - Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil](#)

www.rspo-in-ghana.org

RSPO approves National Interpretation of the Principles and Criteria for **sustainable palm oil** in Ghana

[Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil - TÜV Rheinland](#)

www.tuv.com/media/indonesia/brochure_2/forest_certification/rspo... · PDF file

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil Supply Chain Certification Report Report no.: SCCS_18502248 Assessment against **RSPO** Supply Chain Certification Systems 2011

[Roundtable On Sustainable Palm Oil Rspo](#)

wn.com/Roundtable_on_sustainable_palm_oil

How can **palm oil** be more sustainable? The **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil** and **WWF's role in it**, **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)**, **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil**, 2011 Pilot Study ...

[Sustainable palm oil-GreenPalm | A fresh approach to ...](#)

www.greenpalm.org/en/about-palm-oil/what-is-sustainable-palm-oil

Certified **sustainable palm oil** ... and found to comply with the globally agreed environmental standards devised by the **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil** ...

[Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil - BioenergyWiki](#)

www.bioenergywiki.net/Roundtable_on_Sustainable_Palm_Oil

Information Provided by the **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil** . Note: The following is reprinted from the **RSPO** Factsheet: Promoting The Growth And Use Of **Sustainable** ...

Related Searches for **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil**

What Is Sustainable Palm Oil
Sustainable Palm Oil Products
Mass Balance Palm Oil
Sustainability of Oil

Green Palm Certificates
Palm Oil Trading
Palm Oil
RSPO Certification

Here we see statements like, 'How can palm oil be more sustainable with WWF's role in it? And there are names like the International Supermarket News, Food Navigator, Unilever, TÜV Rheinland, New Britain Palm Oil Ltd., Cargill, Accreditation-services, GreenPalm, Asda and Sainsbury's, Co-operative Food, Johnson & Johnson; each and every one of them either deluded or knowingly bent. They talk about 'corporate responsibility' and 'sustainability' like they were scattering confetti; they are the words of those who want to soothe you into thinking everything's fine and not to worry about what's actually going on.

Alternatively, we read 'Don't be fooled - sustainable palm oil is a myth' and 'Worse still, at present the RSPO itself is creating the illusion of sustainable palm oil,' from Greenpeace. We've had our differences with Greenpeace in the past, notably with their non-active approach to whaling and with wind-turbines, but on this one I have to say we absolutely agree with their every word.

