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*The University of Montana*

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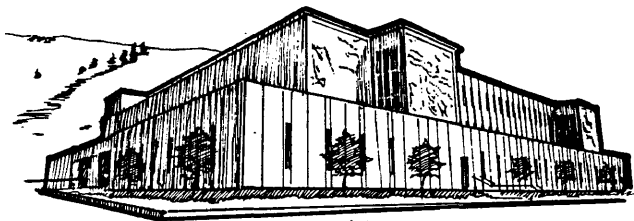
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University of  
**Montana**



**THE TROPICAL FORESTRY ACTION PLAN**

**An Assessment of NonGovernmental  
Organizations' Support**

**By**

**Jake F. Kreilick**

**B.A. Wittenberg University, 1984**

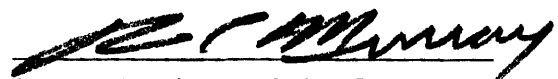
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of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Science  
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1990

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Objectives, Organization and Methodology	3
Chapter 1	5
Chapter 2	8
Chapter 3	27
Chapter 4	31
Chapter 5	57
Conclusion	67
Selected Bibliography	69
Appendix A	73
Appendix B	74
Figure #1	80
Table #1	36
Table #2	37
Table #3	38

## INTRODUCTION

In 1987, I completed a six month internship with the National Wildlife Federation's International Program in Washington, D.C. During my internship, I worked on a variety of environmental and development issues. My experiences there, and my interest in tropical forest ecosystems, led me to study the Tropical Forestry Action Plan. Written and promoted by the World Resources Institute, the World Bank, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Development Programme, this plan was the first, concerted attempt to draft a global strategy to halt tropical deforestation.

As I attended various meetings and studied the contents of the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP), I questioned how feasible and appropriate the Plan was in the context of the global deforestation crisis. This questioning prompted me to use NonGovernmental Organizations (NGOs) as a means to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the TFAP. In order to more accurately gauge the TFAP's prospects, I decided to survey NGOs' reactions to the Plan.

This professional paper summarizes the results of the survey, and offers insights based on NGO perspectives of the content and structure of the TFAP, assesses the Plan's chances for success or failure, and presents potential options to the Plan. The paper also gives a candid



testimony of NGOs' attitudes and approaches in solving the crisis of tropical deforestation.

## OBJECTIVES, ORGANIZATION AND METHODOLOGY

This professional paper has two objectives. The first objective is to determine whether the Tropical Forestry Action Plan's (TFAP's) five action programmes will lead to greater tropical deforestation and increasing rural poverty. In essence, the paper will attempt to show if the TFAP is saying one thing, but doing another. The second objective of this paper is to see if NonGovernmental Organizations (NGOs) have any useful advice regarding the TFAP.

The first Chapter recounts the history of the TFAP and describes the key groups responsible for its creation. In Chapter Two, I examine the contents of the Plan as well as how the TFAP proposes to implement their five action programmes. In Chapter Three, I summarize the results of my survey of NGO responses to the TFAP. In Chapter Four, I identify recurring criticisms and compliments voiced by NGOs toward the TFAP, and assess the validity of the Plan's objectives within the context of the NGO comments. In the final Chapter (Five), I explain why the TFAP, up to now, has ignored NGO recommendations, and I discuss the need to develop a mechanism which will allow NGOs to participate in local, national, and international decisions affecting tropical forests.

Most of the data for this paper comes from responses to a questionnaire that I sent to NGOs regarding the TFAP. In

addition, I used information obtained through secondary sources such as books, journals, and periodicals to reinforce certain points.

## CHAPTER 1

The TFAP emerged in the mid-1980s during a period of growing awareness and concern toward the fate of the Earth's tropical forests. As the decade progressed, national governments from both the North and the South, international governmental organizations like the United Nations, and NonGovernmental Organizations (NGOs), themselves, recognized the need for an international strategy to reverse tropical deforestation. In 1985, the first concerted attempt to draft a conservation and development strategy for tropical forests was released by the World Resources Institute (WRI), the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This event did not go unnoticed in the media.

Against a backdrop of worldwide concern over dwindling forests, an international consortium has unveiled a far-reaching strategy to halt tropical forest destruction in the Third World.<sup>1</sup>

The title of the report described above was, "Tropical Forests: A Call for Action." According to Bill Burley, director of the Forestry Programme for WRI, "The WRI report was developed by a task force of nine world leaders in forestry, land use, and natural resource planning."<sup>2</sup> (See Appendix A) The report contained a five-point plan of action, case studies demonstrating successful projects, and detailed, five-year investment profiles for 56 tropical

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<sup>1</sup> The Christian Science Monitor, October 23, 1985.

<sup>2</sup> Bill Burley, "Priorities Emerging," IUCN Bulletin 17 (January/March 1986) :19.

forest countries.

Shortly after WRI released the "Call for Action" report, the United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO), as part of its "International Year of the Forest," introduced the Tropical Forestry Action Plan. While the appearance of another plan to save tropical forest testified to the amount of attention the issue was generating, the emergence of FAO's effort created organizational problems for the international community grappling with a global solution to tropical deforestation. Throughout 1986 and part of 1987, the two independent plans were consolidated into one unified Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP). In short, both sides agreed to work together to prevent a duplication of efforts, and to muster as much political support as possible for their mission: to save tropical forests through sustainable development, e.g., take care of people as well as the forests and animals.

After numerous changes, and three regional workshops with NGOs, the revised plan was released in July, 1987 at a much publicized conference in Bellagio, Italy. Since then, the agencies and organizations responsible for preparing the TFAP have sought to achieve their goals through the strategies and objectives outlined in the Plan's action programmes.

The TFAP represents the first worldwide effort to develop an international conservation strategy focusing on

tropical deforestation. It is an attempt to create the political, economic, and social incentives necessary to meet both the development needs of tropical forest countries and the environmental needs of tropical forests. Consequently, the TFAP is as much a development strategy designed to foster economic growth in the South as it is a conservation strategy designed to save tropical forests; in this way the focus of the TFAP follows the goals of the World Conservation Strategy (WCS).<sup>3</sup>

The TFAP estimates that \$8 billion is needed to implement the Plan over the next five years. According to the TFAP, "About half of this investment will come from bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies and half from national governments, small farmers, and the private sector."<sup>4</sup> It is clear that in order for the TFAP to be successful, considerable money and effort will be needed to implement it.

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<sup>3</sup> World Conservation Strategy, March 5, 1980. Prepared by the International Union of Conservation & Nature (IUCN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

<sup>4</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan (Siena, Italy: Centrooffset, June, 1987), p. 12.

## CHAPTER TWO

As stated earlier, the TFAP is a conservation and development strategy designed to save tropical forests while also meeting the needs of local and national economies in the tropics. The TFAP's framework for action consists of five components:

1. Forestry in Land Use - Building blocks for food security
2. Forest-based Industries - Making forestwork for development
3. Fuelwood - The other energy crisis
4. Conservation - Forests as ecosystems
5. Reaching the People - The role of institutions

These priority areas were identified as the key components for developing an effective strategy to combat tropical deforestation and rural poverty. Can the TFAP components solve both problems? It's worth assessing each of these areas in detail to get a better perspective on whether or not the TFAP can meet both objectives.

The first component of the TFAP, Forestry in Land Use - Building blocks for food security, seeks to promote sustainable land use practices by integrating forestry, agriculture, and conservation into development projects. More specifically, the strategies behind this action programme focus on reclaiming wastelands by using agroforestry to intensify agricultural production;

increasing forestry's support to local agriculture and animal husbandry; and increasing forestry's contribution to conservation and desertification control.

The formulators of the TFAP believe that by fostering agro-silvi-pastoral development, tropical forest countries can conserve their resource base for crop and livestock production, and, simultaneously, conserve their remaining forest lands. The TFAP explains the merits of combining tree planting, farming, and grazing.

Agroforestry (combining forestry with crop or livestock production) and land-use practices that combine agriculture, forestry and pastoralism offer important opportunities for improving productivity while maintaining environmental stability.<sup>5</sup>

To accomplish their objective of integrating agriculture, forestry and pastoralism, the TFAP advocates managing forests and plantations for multiple use; introducing trees to farming systems, community lands, and plantations; and protecting fodder trees in rangelands. As an example, the TFAP cited a project in Nepal where grasses and multipurpose trees were planted to provide fodder for livestock. Consequently, the livestock produced enough additional manure to grow another grain crop each year.

Another important aspect of the "Forestry in Land Use" component aims at incorporating integrated watershed management into the development planning for tropical forest

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<sup>5</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan (Siena, Italy: Centroofset, June, 1987), p. 12.



countries. The TFAP Task Force recommended such measures as integrating land and water development planning, instigating cost-sharing with downstream beneficiaries, and diversifying the economies of upland communities.

This particular aspect draws on lessons gained from a massive reforestation program in Pakistan. Two reservoirs in the North-West Frontier Province were filling up with sediment from soil erosion caused by deforestation. To extend the lifespan of the reservoirs, barren slopes were planted with chir pine along with half a million hectares of fruit and nut trees intended to supplement the nutritional and monetary needs of local peoples. While the project was successful in slowing the rate of sedimentation, it illustrates how earlier watershed development neglected the impacts on surrounding forests and villages, creating the need for a costly reforestation project. Projects like these are prescribed in the TFAP as a band aid to remedy past development boondoggles; in essence, they are not enough in themselves.

Another focus of this component centers on expanding arid-zone forestry and desertification control. In this regard, the TFAP calls for increasing the use of windbreaks and shelterbelts to protect farmlands, increasing the use of shade and fodder trees to improve animal production, and regenerating degraded forests by planting drought-resistant trees for wood and fuel. For example, the TFAP points to

the largest soil conservation programme in Africa; a million people were organized to terrace slopes and to plant trees in the Ethiopian highlands.

From the standpoint of arresting soil erosion and creating greenbelts to halt desertification, the project could be measured as successful. However, these efforts will not reverse the fundamental land use problems created by the introduction of export-oriented agriculture into lands formerly used by nomadic pastoralists and subsistence farmers. As with the project in Pakistan, this soil conservation programme in Ethiopia will solve neither the people's nor the forest's long-term problems.

The last area of concern within this component deals with the broader question of developing comprehensive land use plans based on detailed assessments of tropical forest resources. The TFAP urges countries with tropical forests to determine their land use criteria, to carry out land assessments and forest resource inventories, and to enlarge and improve their forest management systems. No specific examples were given in the TFAP but national conservation strategies, modelled after IUCN's World Conservation Strategy, are slowly gaining influence as more countries prepare them. Tragically, most countries in the South cannot afford to prepare conservation strategies let alone implement them.

The justification for action in this priority area

rests on the TFAP's concept that tropical deforestation can be diminished by intensifying agricultural production through agroforestry. Equally vital to this area are the ever-increasing, local demands for food, as population increases. In the long-term, food demands in the tropics can be met only by restoring soil and water qualities, maintaining climatic stability, and retaining a semblance of ecological integrity. The task of the TFAP is to create the incentives necessary to garner widespread public support for tree planting---a step which TFAP advocates claim will bring about fundamental changes in land-use practices, which in the past have degraded both the local economy and the local ecology.

The second component identified in the TFAP is Forest-based Industries - Making forests work for development. This component seeks to expand forest-based industries in tropical forest countries, "To make fuller use of the opportunities offered by these natural resources, converting them into more valuable products for exports and domestic consumption."<sup>6</sup> The TFAP presents three strategies for building forest-based industries in tropical forests. The first strategy involves generating jobs and income to motivate sustainable production and protection. Secondly, forest-based industrial development will focus on encouraging and satisfying domestic demand for forest

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<sup>6</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan., p. 13.

products, while also increasing and diversifying exports of forest products. The last strategy emphasizes involving the rural population in extracting and processing forest products.

The action programme for Forest-based Industrial Development contains a five-point approach directly linked to the strategies described above. The first element of the programme hinges on intensifying forest management and development. To meet this objective, the TFAP's authors urge tropical forest countries to develop management and silvicultural systems for natural forests. They suggest that by improving forest use agreements, the process of developing timber programs will become easier. In addition, enlarging and improving industrial plantations will help to intensify forest-based industrial development. The TFAP illustrates the value of such development by citing how Brazil's pulp and paper industry, through the establishment of six million hectares of eucalyptus and pine plantations, now earns US\$ 635 million a year from exports.

The second part of the Forest-based Industries' action programme addresses the development of appropriate harvesting systems. To do so, the TFAP recommends applying better planning and sounder methods towards timber harvesting and transport; creating regional research and training centres for timber harvesting; and providing special training on road engineering. To cite a success

story, the TFAP commends Zambia for establishing 45,000 hectares of timber plantations which have enabled the country to meet its industrial timber needs.

The third element of the TFAP's Forest-based Industrial Development action programme advises establishing appropriate forest industries. The TFAP offers several specific suggestions to facilitate this process. They include teaching and training foresters in the tropics to become better managers; ensuring sound project design, evaluation, monitoring, and funding for tropical forestry; converting existing industries to changing market conditions; securing institutional support for industrial operations; and involving rural people in forest-based enterprises.

An example of an appropriate forest industry used by the TFAP is the emergence of small tree farms in the Philippines. The Paper Industries Corporation and the Asian Development Bank provided financial and technical assistance to small farmers to grow wood for a pulp and paper mill, demonstrating that rural people can be involved in appropriate forest-based enterprises.

A fourth objective of the Forest-based Industries' action programme is to reduce waste. The architects of the TFAP advocate promoting those industries that use forest residues, particularly local cottage industries like cane furniture. Besides this, they urge research and development

into the use of forest residues for energy development, as well as providing more practical information to forest communities on ways to use residues after logging. According to the TFAP, a good example of a country striving to reduce wastes is Honduras where the Honduran Corporation of Forestry Development, in cooperation with farmers, have developed a successful cane furniture cottage industry. The TFAP claims cottage industries provide local peoples with direct incentives to participate in soil conservation and forest management.

The fifth point in this action programme centers on developing marketing capabilities in tropical forest countries and communities. The TFAP's recommendations vary from encouraging an increased awareness of what marketing is and how it's used in setting up market research services for small-scale forest enterprises, to cultivating better standards for processing forest products.

The thrust of this priority area centers on heightening forest management and development in tropical forest countries. It is the TFAP's contention that, "Considerable potential exists to increase timber yields in most tropical developing countries."<sup>7</sup> The TFAP is careful to mention that investment in this component does not preclude small-scale community-oriented, forest-based development. However, the Plan does stress that local people must become more involved

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<sup>7</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan., p. 16.

in forest management and must receive more control over how and where forest products are marketed. Unfortunately, this action programme makes no reference to how local peoples can be more involved, or exert more control over forest-based development.

The third component of the TFAP is Fuelwood - The other energy crisis. The gist of this priority area lies in finding consistent sources of fuelwood for the millions of forest dwellers who depend on it for their household energy needs. The TFAP speaks of how the rural poor in the tropics are caught in a vicious cycle of deforestation, fuelwood scarcity, poverty, and malnutrition. To reverse this destructive cycle, the TFAP's action strategy calls for decreasing the fuelwood demand, while at the same time increasing fuelwood production and access.

The TFAP selected three systems which give direction to the Fuelwood action programme. The first is to improve the efficiency in fuelwood use. By introducing more efficient stoves, the TFAP believes households will make better use of the available fuelwood. For example, they cite a project in Senegal sponsored by the Centre for Study and Research on Renewable Energy where a wood stove made of a clay and sand mixture has helped local communities save fuel. Another way to improve the efficiency of fuelwood use mentioned in the TFAP is finding ways to reduce waste in charcoal production.

The second system outlined in this action programme

targets existing woodlands for increased production of fuelwood and charcoal. In this regard, the TFAP stresses the need to regenerate and manage more woodlands for fuelwood products. In addition, they advocate salvaging the remaining wood for fuel from those forests which have been logged or cleared for other uses. The TFAP uses the case of a forest reserve in Ghana to show how degraded forests can be made productive again. The thrust behind this project focused on replacing the traditional management activities--burning and weeding--with sawmilling, charcoal-making, and agricultural use before and during the process of reforestation. According to the TFAP, the costs of converting the forest to fast-growing species were far surpassed by the profits generated from selling sawn timber, charcoal, fuelwood, and crops.

The last goal within the Fuelwood action programme pushes for the creation of additional fuelwood resources. To accomplish this task, the designers of the TFAP suggest the following ideas: rural people need to grow multi-purpose trees (fuel, fodder, food, and fertilizer) for personal use; technical assistance and incentives for planting and managing multi-purpose trees need to be provided to rural farmers; governments need to facilitate the establishment of communal forest lands for the purpose of growing multi-purpose trees; and, finally, private tree-growing efforts must be rewarded by ensuring profitable



fuelwood markets.

In Peru, the Peruvian Forestry Service is fostering community forestry through the creation of more than 150 community nurseries. These nurseries grow c'olle, a native, drought-resistant tree, as a source of fuelwood and timber. The TFAP points to such an approach as a way to involve rural people in increasing production and access to fuelwood.

If there is a common theme that echoes through this aspect of the TFAP, it is the need to develop strong community or social forestry approaches. However, just like the previous action programme, the TFAP stresses that political, economic, and legal obstacles must be removed for rural peoples in the South to have community-wide access to forest lands without addressing ways to overcome these obstacles. Simply improving the efficiency of fuelwood use, increasing fuelwood production, and creating new fuelwood reserves will not change existing land-use conflicts or decentralize control over forest resources.

The fourth component of the TFAP, Conservation-Forests as Ecosystems, addresses the need to conserve the wild genetic resources found throughout tropical forests. This priority area also highlights the unmatched biodiversity of tropical rainforests, as well as their connection to the Earth's climate.

The TFAP identifies three main strategies for conserving tropical forest ecosystems. The first strategy focuses on improving and expanding forest management for sustainable production. The second strategy stresses protecting special areas for wildlife, ecosystems, and genetic resource values. The last action strategy calls for ensuring partnerships with local peoples. Taken together, these strategies represent an attempt to safeguard tropical forest ecosystems from internal and external pressures.

The action programme for conserving tropical forest ecosystems contains four aspects which define the scope of this component. First, the TFAP advocates strengthening the forest management capabilities of tropical forest countries. To do this, the authors recommend expanding silvicultural research; conducting comprehensive forest resource inventories; providing professional and technical training; and building effective forestry agencies and organizations.

One particular programme singled out in this area by the TFAP is the Commonwealth Forestry Institute's (CFI) research involving the tropical pines, (Pinus caribaea and P. oocarpa.) The institute, "...has promoted the worldwide distribution and use of Central American tropical pines."<sup>8</sup> Specifically, CFI has collected seeds from the two species throughout their natural range, conducted trials in 50 tropical forest countries, and established a data bank which

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<sup>8</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan., p. 22.

matches genetic material to site-specific growing conditions. According to CFI, tapping the species' genetic diversity has resulted in increased plantation yields.

Another aspect of this component is to develop a system of national and regional protected areas. The TFAP believes that this necessitates carrying out regional and national conservation surveys in unprotected forest ecosystems which can be incorporated into the development of national conservation strategies. The TFAP uses the example of the Cuna Indians in Panama. Working in cooperation with government and development assistance agencies, they are developing a management plan for a 60,000 hectare protected area. The plan delineates multiple use areas and defines what uses are appropriate through an environmental education programme.

The third section outlined in the conservation of the Tropical Forest Ecosystem's action programme involves improvements in the planning and management of protected areas. Three suggestions offered by the TFAP are (1) integrating protected areas into national land use planning; (2) increasing the training of scientists and specialists; and (3) managing protected and adjacent areas to contribute to rural development. At the Parcs National des Volcans in Rwanda, the TFAP states that much progress has been made towards involving local people in activities which benefit the community and the Park. Farmers are rewarded with

multiple harvests due to higher water yields stemming from the protected forests inside the Park, while other local people benefit from the increase in tourism.

The last emphasis in this priority area is to conserve genetic resources. To satisfy this objective, TFAP's formulators advise conducting surveys of plant diversity and distribution; developing methods to protect biodiversity; establishing conservation data banks; educating people to the values of genetic conservation; and increasing research on species with potential economic value. For instance, the TFAP describes a project in Papua, New Guinea where wildlife, in this case crocodiles, is providing a source of income to local peoples.

In summary, the thrust behind this fourth component (conserving tropical forest ecosystems) centers on developing sustainable management systems capable of meeting the needs of local peoples and safeguarding genetic diversity. Governments and agencies in both the North and the South must recognize the need to merge conservation and development into all aspects of project planning, according to the TFAP. Otherwise, economic development will continue to take a high toll on this richest but most fragile ecosystem on the planet---tropical forests.

The last component of the TFAP concentrates on Reaching the People - The role of institutions. This aspect is essential to the successful implementation of the Plan.

Without strong institutional support, qualified staff, and better research, the TFAP will fail. According to the TFAP, forestry institutions must receive more administrative and financial support from national and international policy-makers; however, they also have to develop better relationships with agricultural, wildlife, and indigenous peoples' agencies. In addition, the TFAP emphasizes that forestry institutions must learn that NGOs can offer effective local extension programmes.

Within the realm of institutions, the TFAP proposes three strategies designed to effect the above change. The first strategy focuses on integrating forestry into national development by strengthening public forestry agencies. The second strategy seeks to improve training, education, research, and extension programmes for forestry institutions. The final strategy in this component calls for increasing support to local and private organizations.

The framework created to advance the above strategies has, itself, five objectives. The first objective is to instill a public and political commitment to forestry for development and conservation. The TFAP offers three ideas which may facilitate action toward this objective. They include introducing forestry into school curricula; implementing public information programmes; and revising past laws and policies so that forestry and development assistance can become an integral part of national planning.

One example cited in the TFAP of a country that has achieved public and political support for forestry development is Nepal. Through a combination of wide-ranging extension programmes and educational promotions from the mass media, community forestry has become an essential part of Nepal's overall development strategy.

Developing better organizational structures and recruiting and retraining qualified staff is another objective of the action programme for institutions. To meet this objective, the TFAP's authors recommend fortifying the links which forestry institutions have with other agencies of national governments; applying updated organizational and managerial techniques; improving career opportunities for forestry personnel; and providing adequate training and pay to forestry staffs. The TFAP describes how China has developed a training infrastructure in forestry that not only provides newcomers with valuable instruction, but offers retraining for existing staff.

Another objective of this action programme is to enhance research capabilities. Specific measures mentioned within the TFAP include recruiting and training qualified research staff; building satisfactory facilities which network with other research facilities on a national and regional level; and, lastly, prioritizing research topics. The TFAP illustrates the benefits which tropical forest countries can accrue from forestry research in explaining

how a Brazilian pulp and paper company, Aracruz Florestal, has doubled the yields on its eucalyptus plantations. By investing in research oriented towards developing genetically superior trees, the company has increased production through more intensive management.

The fourth objective of the institution's action programme is to improve training and extension programmes in tropical forest countries. To accomplish such an objective, the TFAP recommends taking the following steps: foresters and development assistance specialists must assess current training and extension needs; curricula at forestry schools must be updated on all levels; training centres need to be expanded and improved; forestry extension capabilities need to be developed; and forestry agencies need to establish closer ties with agricultural extension services.

It is the TFAP's contention that if tropical forest countries are to be successful in organization, training, and extension for forestry, more schools in the tropics must create forestry departments. For example, the TFAP commends the Department of Forest Resource Management at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria for offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in forestry policy, law, management, use, and technology.

The final objective in this priority area is to improve institutional support to private and local sectors. Specifically, the TFAP asks forestry agencies to create a

special mechanism to support local programmes; increase support to NGOs; and channel forestry inputs and assistance to local organizations. The TFAP touts the work of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Training Centre (CATIE) in Central America and the Caribbean.

CATIE has trained more than 275 master's degree-level students and provided specialized short-term training to more than 1,000 professionals from the region. Its research programmes have helped improve the quality of national research and strengthened regional cooperation. The centre's in-service training courses up-date skills and provide short-term training in areas not yet well developed in technical schools and universities.<sup>9</sup>

CATIE acts as a middleman between NGOs and national governments, and provides an excellent example of a regional approach to solving interdisciplinary resource problems.

The success or failure of the TFAP lies in its ability to convince national governments, international governmental organizations, NGOs, private companies, and the public at large, that the substance of the Plan, embodied in the five components discussed above, will save tropical forests while improving the quality of life for the rural peoples who depend on them. The strategies and objectives outlined in the TFAP are varied, but are founded on the premise that the commercial market economy, with the help of science and technology, can solve tropical deforestation and corresponding environmental degradation. Whether the TFAP is referring to increasing food production, to improving

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<sup>9</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan., p. 26.



methods of shifting cultivation via agroforestry, to institutionalizing sustainable forest management, to bolstering fuelwood supplies, to developing gene pool "banks", or to encouraging forest-based industries, the Plan attempts to blend conservation measures and economic incentives through political and local cooperation.

### CHAPTER THREE

NGOs played a major role in the transition from the Tropical Forests: A Call for Action report to the TFAP. Having staunchly criticized the earlier WRI/World Bank/UNDP initiative, NGOs, particularly in those countries where tropical deforestation is increasing, demanded that they be allowed to participate in the TFAP's formal planning and decision-making process. Despite three regional workshops organized by WRI, the Environment Liaison Centre, and the Asociacion Nacional para la Conservacion de la Naturaleza on expanding the role of NGOs in the TFAP and in national forestry programs, many NGOs remained unconvinced that the TFAP sincerely responded to their concerns. For example, one NGO located in the North commented, "NGO involvement is being used to 'win' the critics over. There is no legal requirement for public participation, which is essential."<sup>10</sup>

Given NGOs uncertain sentiments towards the TFAP, I decided to query a broad sample of NGOs to see how they viewed the Plan. The survey focused primarily on determining the amount of NGO support for the TFAP; beyond that, the survey focused on specific criticisms and compliments NGOs had towards the contents, structure, and process under which the TFAP was formulated. Based on NGO

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<sup>10</sup> Jake Kreilick, "Surveying NGO Responses to the Tropical Forestry Action Plan," January, 1988, Questionnaire #93.

responses to the questionnaire (See Appendix 2), I was able to look at the TFAP through the eyes of private, voluntary groups, many of whose perspectives varied greatly from those presented by the TFAP Task Force. Consequently, the NGOs' perspectives provided invaluable evidence to support both of this paper's objectives.

This chapter presents a summary of the results, based on my survey of NGO responses to the TFAP. My sample size was 253 questionnaires which I sent in 1988 to NGOs working on all types of issues related to tropical deforestation. The list of NGOs that received questionnaires included many types of environmental groups (wildlife, ecological, rainforest, policy, etc.), development assistance organizations, indigenous peoples' associations, and population groups, as well as NGOs engaged in agricultural extension programmes. All of the questionnaires were printed in English, so I'm sure some NGOs had problems translating them, or were unable to respond altogether.

Geographically, NGOs from six continents (Asia, Africa, North/Central America, South America, Europe, and Australia) were represented in the survey. (See Figure 1) Proportionally, less questionnaires were sent to NGOs in the South than to NGOs in the North (42% vs 58%); however, this should not reflect a regional or cultural sample bias, so much as an indication of the proliferation of NGOs in the

North, particularly in Washington, D.C., where much of the TFAP concept originated.

I received 39 completed questionnaires out of the total of 253 mailed; nine questionnaires were returned to sender due to incorrect mailing addresses. My rate of response was 16%. The results of the survey, as well as the distribution of NGOs' responses, are shown in Figure #1. From a geopolitical standpoint, two interesting trends emerged between NGOs operating in tropical forest countries (South) and NGOs operating in temperate forest countries (North). First, all four NGOs that endorsed the TFAP are based in the North, and thus are far removed from tropical forests. Those NGOs operate in or near the major political and economic centers of power in the U.S. and Europe, where the bulk of development decisions affecting tropical forests are made. Secondly, not one NGO from the South endorsed the TFAP in the survey. This is an indication that the TFAP has yet to find grassroots support in the tropics. The reasons behind this lack of support for the TFAP in the South will be discussed in the following chapter.

The seven NGO respondents that opposed the TFAP were in complete solidarity, and demonstrated this in their respective questionnaires by stating they've launched a campaign to stop the TFAP. It is significant that the NGOs opposed to the TFAP represent a much more equitable balance

between North and South than the NGOs that endorsed the TFAP.

Of the 39 NGOs who returned questionnaires, 16 operate in the South. Besides the four NGO adversaries, six NGOs from the South are staying neutral towards the TFAP. The other six NGOs from the South didn't know enough about the TFAP to make a decision or even form an opinion. Overall, more than one-third of the NGO respondents took a "wait and see" attitude towards the TFAP, preferring to see how the Plan unfolds before either signing on or voicing opposition. Thirty three percent of the NGO responses indicated little familiarity or no association to the TFAP; even though all but two are involved in one way or another with tropical forest issues.

## CHAPTER FOUR

The intent of this chapter is to elaborate on NGO's comments to the TFAP, specifically how they relate to the Plan's five objectives. By identifying recurring criticisms and compliments, and probing issues of uncertainty, I intend to use the NGO responses to show that the TFAP will, contrary to its mission, increase tropical deforestation and rural poverty.

The most basic difference between the NGO respondents who support the TFAP, and those NGOs who oppose the TFAP, centers on their divergent perspectives towards the root causes of tropical deforestation. Within the survey, as well as within the broader international community involved in solving tropical deforestation, the sides are drawn between a) those international development institutions, government agencies and NGOs who believe rural poverty and overpopulation are the fundamental causes of tropical deforestation, and b) those NGOs who argue that it is the post-colonial development model, and its adherence to the pressures of international markets, which underlies the crisis.

The post-colonial development model refers to the economic approach used by the northern industrialized countries to foster jobs, commerce and growth in the multitude of countries who achieved independence in the

South following World War II. Typically, Multilateral Development Banks, like the World Bank, private banks, and international governmental organizations such as the UNDP would provide aid, generally in the form of loans, for large transportation, irrigation, or agricultural projects designed to provide tropical countries with access to and exports for global markets. In addition, Multinational Corporations (MNCs) frequently took advantage of economic opportunities in newly independent countries for cheap labor, tax incentives and new markets.

While such development provided some jobs for local peoples and generated revenues for fledgling governments, more times than not these massive projects concentrated wealth and resources into the hands of the few, severely impacted the quality of the environment, and created the debt crisis currently facing both the North and South. The socio-economic reality (i.e. purchasing power) for most people living in tropical forest countries now is grim. Much of the reason for this situation can be attributed to the post-colonial development model which has not provided for the basic human needs of most forest dwellers.

According to Dr. Vandana Shiva, "The truth is that commercialization of forests is the primary cause for most large-scale, rapid deforestation."<sup>11</sup> She believes rural

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<sup>11</sup> Vandana Shiva, "Forestry Myths and the World Bank," The Ecologist, 17 (July/Nov 1987) :149.

peoples and local forest dwellers have borne the brunt of the blame for tropical forest destruction in the TFAP. An NGO in the South, working with small farmers, verified Shiva's assertion.

It is also my opinion, that it is not the small farmer who is causing large-scale deforestation nor is it his responsibility to do large-scale reforestation. My experience in Guatemala and Panama has been that government agencies too often try to pass this load onto small rural farmers.<sup>12</sup>

On the other side of the spectrum, the four NGOs who endorsed the TFAP, along with the TFAP Task Force and numerous governmental agencies in the North and the South, maintain that landless, impoverished farmers are the primary agents of tropical deforestation.

Nearly half the forests cleared in the tropics each year make way for shifting cultivation by landless farmers. As the number of subsistence farmers grows and arable land decreases, more and more new land is cleared.<sup>13</sup>

For the layperson, the "Peasants or Profits" dichotomy simplistically describes the philosophical impasse between the TFAP Task Force and their NGO proponents and those NGO respondents who oppose the Plan.

Some of the more candid NGOs illustrated in the survey how the TFAP appears on the surface to be a fresh, novel solution to tropical forest destruction and rural poverty. In reality, however, very little has changed from past

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<sup>12</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #238.

<sup>13</sup> Tropical Forestry Action Plan., p.5



resource management and development assistance. For example, one neutral NGO from the North stated in the survey, "The TFAP Task Force basically wrote the TFAP incorporating existing institutions, culture, attitudes, activities, priorities, and perceptions. Thus not a new approach, but a repackaging."<sup>14</sup>

Another NGO alluded that despite more awareness of the problem, increased funding and improved donor coordination, no systemic changes have occurred within the national and international institutions entrusted with protecting tropical forests. In short, the TFAP's development model is the same model which is responsible for causing much of the environmental destruction. One of the NGO's who eventually endorsed the TFAP expressed the following frustration with the "establishment's" reaction to the tropical forest crisis:

The "establishment" response to the critical threat to tropical forests, as it is embodied in these two plans, is that development assistance aid to the forestry sector should be doubled. At present, this aid makes up only one percent of all aid given by the OECD countries to the developing world. Is simply increasing this to two percent really an adequate response to the gravity of the situation? And is it really just a problem for foresters?<sup>15</sup>

Essentially, the thrust of what several NGOs said in the survey was that the objectives proposed by the TFAP to

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<sup>14</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #8.

<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey Sayer, "Blending Global Efforts: Promise in Paris," IUCN Bulletin 17 (January/March, 1986), p.17.

meet their five goals do not address those goals adequately, nor (thereby) the underlying causes of tropical deforestation, and thus will only increase tropical deforestation and corresponding rural poverty. NGO criticisms of the TFAP far outweighed NGO compliments with the Plan (See Tables #1/#2/#3). The tables provide a statistical analysis of NGO's specific criticisms and compliments to the TFAP.

TABLE #1

<u>Substantive NGO Criticisms of the TFAP</u>	<u># of NGOs</u>	<u>%</u>
1. Concentrates on industrial and plantation forestry at the exclusion of natural forest management.	8	30.7
2. Does not deal with consumption patterns in developed countries (North).	6	23.1
3. Does not understand biological diversity.	6	23.1
4. Does not concentrate on the preservation of the remaining tropical moist forests.	6	23.1
5. Gives little attention to indigenous peoples' problems and doesn't respect their expertise.	6	23.1
6. Too great a reliance on exotic species like pine and eucalyptus.	5	19.2
7. Supposed success stories in TFAP are not small-scale, sustainable or appropriate models.	5	19.2
8. Does not admit that massive development projects are responsible for much of the tropical forest destruction.	5	19.2
9. Treats the symptoms and not the causes of tropical forest destruction.	4	15.4
10. Current development strategies/policies promoted in the TFAP are incompatible with "sustainable development."	3	11.5
11. Contains ecologically disastrous recommendations.	3	11.5
12. TFAP blames the poor for deforestation.	3	11.5
13. Does not deal with patterns of inequitable land tenure.	2	7.7
14. Does not acknowledge debt crisis and will actually increase debt in tropical countries.	2	7.7
15. Too apologetic about parks and reserves.	1	3.8
16. Does not see the role of environmental education.	1	3.8

TABLE #2

<u>Structural/Process NGO Criticisms of the TFAP</u>	<u># of NGOs</u>	<u>%</u>
1. NGOs were not sufficiently included in the process.	10	38.5
2. TFAP Task Force people are too much associated with World Bank and FAO.	6	23.1
3. Tendency to operate in a typical top-down international field-mission style.	5	19.2
4. Too tied to existing structures and vested interests.	4	15.4
5. Lacks adequate mechanisms to translate TFAP into action at country/community levels.	2	7.7
6. Too academic; over-reliance on workshops, seminars, and meetings.	2	7.7
7. Needs a better way of connecting TFAP program plans to sources of funding.	1	3.8
8. Conservation component lagging behind in implementation/missions.	1	3.8
9. Not sharing money and facilities with non-academic experts (Indigenous peoples).	1	3.8
10. TFAP was poorly studied and documented.	1	3.8
11. No attention was paid to finding means of ensuring that local peoples have a decisive voice in planning and implementing projects.	1	3.8

TABLE #3

<u>NGO Compliments of the TFAP</u>	<u># of NGOs</u>	<u>%</u>
1. It stimulated increased awareness towards tropical deforestation.	7	26.9
2. The identification of five priority areas gives a definite plan with clear funding goals.	4	15.4
3. Gets the World Bank and other donors involved.	4	15.4
4. Provides additional money for research.	3	11.5
5. Conservation is given a role in the TFAP, on paper at least.	2	7.7
6. Educates various participants involved in the management of tropical forests.	2	7.7
7. Has set the stage for wider participation by previously excluded participants.	2	7.7
8. Provides examples of successful projects in the South.	1	3.8
9. TFAP now admits the need to include social factors.	1	3.8
10. Attempts to involve NGOs.	1	3.8
11. Provides a plan.	1	3.8
12. Creates more data.	1	3.8

The percentages were derived from the number of NGOs who mentioned the issue, divided by 26. The 13 NGOs that were unfamiliar with the TFAP were not included in the tables. The three tables were compiled from NGO comments in the questionnaire and illuminate areas of contention and agreement with the TFAP. As shown in Table #1, the issue that provoked the most response among NGOs was the TFAP's concentration on industrial and plantation forestry.

Eight NGOs concluded that the TFAP not only concentrates too heavily on industrial and plantation forestry to the exclusion of natural forest management, but that such approaches will further widen the gap between rich and poor in communities dependent on tropical forests. The NGOs pointed out that the objective most often selected to achieve the goals outlined in the TFAP's action programmes relies on using industrial/plantation forestry to manage tropical forests. According to one of these NGOs, continued reliance on industrial forestry, like the use of plantation monocultures is a prescription for environmental and social disaster in the tropics.

The plan can be further criticized for being less concerned with the preservation of natural forests than with the setting up of commercial plantations of fast-growing species, such as eucalyptus, which not only fail to fulfil most of the ecological functions of natural forests but which also have a serious adverse impact on the environment. In addition, the type of commercial plantations advocated by the WRI have already proven deeply divisive, both economically and socially.

Although the wood is primarily intended for use by the poor, experience shows that it almost always ends up being used by industry.<sup>16</sup>

Five NGOs spoke of the TFAP's preoccupation with exotic, fast-growing species, like eucalyptus and Caribbean pine, to meet industrial and fuelwood needs, restore cover to barren slopes, and generally improve forest productivity. Those NGOs pointed out, however, that such species not only disrupt local ecological patterns between forests, wildlife, soils, and water, but also serve to privatize forestry, preventing local peoples from access to formerly communal lands. As one NGO stated, "Not all tree planting helps to rebuild nature's economy. Some plantations cause major dislocation in nature's processes like other 'development' activities."<sup>17</sup> The TFAP seems to view all tree planting, particularly involving fast-growing, exotics, as good, despite numerous examples (India and Brazil) where large-scale plantation forestry has failed to accomplish the stated objectives. In summary, the five NGOs stressed that plantation management, using exotic species, reinforces the false assumption that monocultures will provide forest users with more benefits than natural forests.

Another focal point of NGO criticisms revolved around the TFAP's neglect to mention the roles consumptive patterns in the North have on deforestation in the South. One of the

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<sup>16</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #125.

<sup>17</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #175.

six NGOs that expressed concern over this glaring oversight noted, (there is) "No discussion on limiting consumption/waste -- only on increasing production. Both are necessary, but the former is more sound (efficient and conservative)."<sup>18</sup> The NGOs acknowledged that none of the TFAP's objectives, or action programmes, call for changes or sacrifices on the part of consumers in the North.

A related criticism brought up by four NGOs in the survey accused the TFAP of treating symptoms, and not the causes of tropical forest destruction. One of the NGOs summed up the TFAP's reluctance to interfere with the status quo. "Most of the pressures on tropical forests originate outside the tropical forest region, yet TFAP proposes remedies without addressing the root causes of deforestation."<sup>19</sup> Those four NGOs pointed out further that if tropical forests are to be truly protected, consumers in the North must learn to live without products that damage rainforest ecosystems. For example, the United States consumes more than 70% of all tropical plywood and veneer in world trade according to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). This statistic demonstrates how countries like the United States contribute to tropical deforestation.

Just under a quarter of those NGOs that expressed a position towards the TFAP said the Plan does not understand

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #8.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #126.



the role of biodiversity, nor does it concentrate on the preservation of intact tropical forests. This NGO segment was disappointed that even within the conservation component, the TFAP's primary aim is to extract genetic resources for product development, agricultural research and medicinal cures. Ian Peter, with the Rainforest Information Centre, sums up the feelings of these NGOs towards the TFAP's conservation component:

A mere eight percent of the plan's expenditure is earmarked for conservation of natural areas, and even under this heading we find large international programs researching genetic possibilities for pine plantations.<sup>20</sup>

A European NGO adds, "The people planning the TFAP's implementation do not really understand biological conservation needs because it is too tied to existing structures and vested interests."<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, this large groups of NGOs doubted that any of the TFAP's objectives will protect the biological diversity of tropical forest ecosystems. The basic reason why the TFAP Task Force pays lip service to biodiversity, according to these NGOs, stems from organizational and scientific assumptions that have proved profitable in temperate forests. However, the NGOs believe that commercial forest management practiced in the temperate zones cannot be

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<sup>20</sup> Ian Peter, "Debt for Conservation....At Last," World Rainforest Report, (Issue No. 9. p.6-7.)

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #145.

duplicated in tropical forests because of the ecological peculiarities found in tropical ecosystems. Harold Sioli, director of the Max Planck Institute for Limnology, states, "Deforestation interrupts the tightly closed recycling of nutrients within the ecosystem."<sup>22</sup> In short, the NGOs feel that the TFAP is prescribing a solution arrived at relative to environments and economies far removed from the tropics.

The fact that the TFAP does not understand biological diversity is also reflected in the Plan's investment profiles. One NGO from the South was appalled that 92% of the TFAP's funding will end up bankrolling agro-forestry, industrial and plantation forestry and forestry institutions, while only eight percent is allocated for conservation.

The bulk of the money will be spent on more industrial development and on strengthening government departments, which until now have not even been interested in protecting nature.<sup>23</sup>

This NGO asserts that the majority of the money (one billion dollars a year for the next five years) will go to finance loans for agro-forestry projects, forest-based industrial developments, fuelwood and pulp plantations, and building up forestry institutions. A closer look at the TFAP's projected expenditures by objective and by region confirms

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<sup>22</sup> Harald Sioli, "The Effects of Deforestation in Amazonia," The Ecologist, 17 (June/Nov 1987) :136.

<sup>23</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #247.

the above assertion. In Africa, 72% of the money invested will go towards Forestry and Land Use, Forest-based Industries, and Fuelwood and Energy. In Asia, 74% will be spent for those three objectives; in Latin America, 68% will be allocated towards them. Such figures provide a perspective on the TFAP's slant towards commercial development, rather than protection of tropical forest ecosystems.

Another issue of concern to several NGOs centered on the lack of attention to indigenous peoples within the TFAP. An NGO from the North observed that there has been, "No participation of indigenous peoples' organizations, and insufficient respect for indigenous peoples and the expertise they have."<sup>24</sup> Another NGO who is "...trying to give indigenous peoples of tropical forests a place in the TFAP,"<sup>25</sup> voiced skepticism that the TFAP has the political guts to include the rights of indigenous peoples. That NGO complained that the TFAP made no attempt to consider how the Plan will affect the cultural integrity of indigenous peoples; neither did the TFAP's objectives make any mention of the impacts its activities will have on tropical forests wherein indigenous peoples derive their livelihoods. Regretfully, that NGO also surmised that the TFAP will

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #121.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #121.

further remove the rights and entitlement of indigenous peoples to tropical forests.

Five NGO respondents to the TFAP survey indicated that past developmental approaches have relied on massive projects to foster economic development in the South, almost always at the expense of the local environment and social fabric. One of the five NGOs commented, "The TFAP makes no more than passing reference to the massive destruction caused by the logging industry, by large-scale dams, by ranching and plantation schemes, by colonization programmes and by road building projects."<sup>26</sup> Catherine Caufield, in her book In the Rainforest, speaks of the disastrous consequences associated with gigantic development projects:

The permanent, widely-distributed benefits of the intact forest---the protection of wildlife, water catchments, and soil and the provision of food, medicines and building materials---are turned into immediate, short-term profits for a small group of investors and consumers.<sup>27</sup>

This group of NGOs pointed to the record of the World Bank and its propensity for funding large-scale, capital-intensive projects which are environmentally destructive and socially disruptive. The Sierra Club published an informative citizen's guide to the World Bank and other MDBs entitled Bankrolling Disasters which underscores Bank-

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<sup>26</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #125.

<sup>27</sup> Catherine Caufield, In the Rainforest: A Report from a Strange, Beautiful, Imperiled World, (New York: Alfred Knopf Press, 1985)

financed rainforest destruction in Brazil (the Polonoroeste Project), India (the Narmada Valley Dam Project), Indonesia (Transmigration/Resettlement Project), and Botswana (Beef Export Project).

Despite improvements and changes in environmental and social analysis arising from the campaign to reform the World Bank and other MDBs, some NGOs in the survey remained suspicious that the World Bank and similar institutions were not really redirecting their loans towards smaller, environmentally sound projects.

Five NGOs criticized the TFAP for touting the success of projects that were not small-scale, sustainable, or appropriate models. As illustrated by Dr. Shiva in her critique of the World Bank, the TFAP is nothing more than a cruel mirage:

There is no organizational or ecological difference in the successful case studies of "farm and community forestry" in India and industrial forestry in the Philippines. Only the names are different. Whilst the World Bank has financed production of industrial pulpwood by farmers as "social forestry" projects in Karnataka, India, it calls the same project "industrial forestry" in Mindanao in the Philippines.<sup>28</sup>

Indeed, throughout the "Lessons Learned" section in the TFAP, instances of projects that have harmed the environment and deprived local peoples of access to basic needs are common, according to the five NGOs. Shiva stresses that

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<sup>28</sup> Shiva, "Forest Myths and the World Bank," p.148.

many of these so-called success stories are gauged from a commercial perspective and not from the standpoint of improving the health or stability of rural peoples:

Commercial forestry cannot provide justice to the 70% of peasants and forest dwellers in India who depend on rights and entitlement, not on purchasing power, to satisfy their basic sustenance needs.<sup>29</sup>

Other substantive criticisms to the TFAP that were identified by three or fewer NGOs included the TFAP's inability to deal with patterns of inequitable land tenure, refusal to acknowledge debt problems in tropical forest countries, exclusion of environmental education programmes, and its promotion of ecologically disastrous recommendations. Regarding the debt issue and its relationship to the TFAP, one NGO operating in Latin America commented, "It is too big to be controlled and it will add significantly to our already unbearable foreign debt."<sup>30</sup> An African NGO, responding to the TFAP's omission of a coordinated educational component stated, "The TFAP will not solve the problem of deforestation unless a global education campaign is launched to raise awareness at all levels."<sup>31</sup>

Besides objecting to much of the contents of the TFAP, NGO respondents also criticized the structure and process used to draft the Plan (See Table #2). The primary

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<sup>29</sup> Shiva, "Forestry Myths and the World Bank," p. 146.

<sup>30</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #247.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #201.

criticism voiced by NGOs centered on the lack of meaningful NGO involvement in planning, writing, and implementing the TFAP. Just under 40% of NGOs raised this issue in the survey, the highest percentage of NGOs in any of the tables. Overall, the NGOs felt that consultation with them was superficial; consequently, the TFAP ignored local, grass roots insights and resolutions.

One NGO opponent of the TFAP described this account of an NGO's relationship to the TFAP process:

NGO's were asked to be involved after they went public with their criticisms of the Plan. Now they will be given money to become joint partners with the TFAP Task Force.<sup>32</sup>

Another NGO who rejected the TFAP asserted that, "We welcome NGO participation, but it must be at all levels of planning and implementation to correct major deficiencies, flaws, and problems of perspective inherent in the Plan."<sup>33</sup>

As evidenced by the above quotes, several NGOs concluded that most of the TFAP was formulated after WRI agreed to allow broader NGO participation. Surprisingly enough, one of the NGOs that endorsed the TFAP was upset at WRI for not being more helpful in furnishing information, specifically, and not facilitating more cooperation in general. This NGO describes the following course of events:

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<sup>32</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #93.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #90.

Letters from us have not been answered or responded to by sending out a standard booklet which should have been obvious that we already had. This despite two albeit brief and very informal personal meetings in Washington with a senior WRI forester heavily with TFAP. Perhaps the participation of a small First World NGO is not considered important by WRI, whatever the reason we are disappointed in this.<sup>34</sup>

In sum, despite assurances from the TFAP Task Force following the regional NGO workshops that the rift between NGOs and them is over, it's obvious from the survey that many NGOs still harbor resentment towards the way the TFAP was conceived and designed.

About 20% of the NGO respondents said that the TFAP will operate in a typical top-down, international, field-mission style. According to one of these NGOs, "The TFAP is a top-down mega-plan that imposes the wishes of experts on local people, with scarce input from the locals who have to live with the consequences of the TFAP."<sup>35</sup> Another NGO stated the TFAP "...started out as little more than a U.S. \$7 billion shopping list from governments wanting to develop forest areas."<sup>36</sup> Other NGOs pointed out that the TFAP is comparable to other grandiose international plans emanating from the North like the Green Revolution. According to those NGOs, pumping large amounts of money and technology into the South by way of loans further serves to foster the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #154.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #93.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire 126.



economic dependence of the South on the North. One southern NGO involved in agricultural development with small farmers echoed these sentiments:

In reading the TFAP I was led to believe that focus areas and proposed financial need was primarily based on a country's past and present natural resources, activities and projects. It's given me the "rich get richer, the poor get poorer" shivers.<sup>37</sup>

Four NGOs conveyed in the survey that the TFAP is too tied to existing structures and vested interests. These NGOs alluded to the irony of relying on the structures (World Bank, FAO, etc.) and commercial interests (forestry establishment and multinational corporations) that are the primary agents of tropical deforestation, to solve the aforementioned problem. One NGO succinctly stated, "The TFAP Task Force has a vested interest in promoting mega-plans, because they are the institutions which implement and finance mega-plans. They have written out their own job descriptions by creating the TFAP."<sup>38</sup>

Six NGOs denounced the TFAP Task Force because it was too associated with the World Bank, UNDP, and the FAO. One NGO expressed that the involvement of these development institutions compromised the substance and the structure of the TFAP. "We feel that WRI lost freedom of action in

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #238.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #93.

having to collaborate with FAO and UNDP in working out the content; it was a much weaker document as a result."<sup>39</sup>

An African NGO who attended the regional NGO workshop in Nairobi had this to say about the Task Force:

I don't think very much of the Task Force. Funds are already being disbursed for the TFAP, but none so far to NGOs. It appears to me it is just lip service to NGOs. It is like shutting the stable door after the horse had gone.<sup>40</sup>

An NGO involved with indigenous peoples presented a slightly more favorable interpretation of the TFAP Task Force:

Some positive change can be noticed. Generally speaking, the TFAP Task Force still does not recognize the expertise of indigenous peoples living in tropical forests. If they would do so, the TFAP will be cheaper and more efficient. Indigenous peoples organizations and groups like us (human rights advocates) don't get any financial or technical support to help the TFAP work.<sup>41</sup>

Another NGO critic of the Task Force expressed a more cynical attitude:

This plan is about forestry, rather than forests. Task Force is attempting to placate environmental community while not tackling major problems because it is unable to do so. Perspective of many participants is continuation of business as usual.<sup>42</sup> (Emphasis added)

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #44.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #209.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #121.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #90.

Perhaps the keenest criticism leveled at the Task Force was embodied in this commentary:

What Task Force? The workshop coordinators and/or facilitators? I have received numerous newsletters (NGO Networker) and other correspondence regarding follow-up to the TFAP. This is good work in networking. But I understand a task force to be the spearhead unit that initiates action on "the front lines." To me that means we (NGO's, government agencies, etc.) need "task forces" in the region - on the ground floor - coordinating and motivating national and regional efforts towards action follow through. If this is happening, we are unaware of it. Obviously we have not been contacted to participate. That's the role of a task force; to make sure all interested parties are invited to participate and then facilitate that participation until a local entity can take the ball and run with it. If the task force does not function as such, the TFAP's of the world will once again get hung up in the upper echelons of governmental bureaucracy; i.e., very little impact at the grass roots level nor at the "big picture" level.<sup>43</sup>

NGO allegations that the TFAP Task Force is not performing the work of an impartial, balanced task force could be explained by the fact that the World Bank's and FAO's traditional constituents are large industrial conglomerates, and are part of the repressive governments which cater to them. Val Plumwood and Richard Routley, writing in The Ecologist, explain the link between the development institutions described above and corporate developers in the tropics:

Supporters of the harmlessness of corporate development have received a good deal of support from western technocratic organizations such as FAO, which has worked closely with the forest industries and which has been strongly concerned to foster western-style

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #238.

development and industry based on tropical forests.<sup>44</sup> The FAO and World Bank apologists, according to one NGO, have succeeded in convincing people, through the formulation of the TFAP, that they sponsor and finance activities such as logging and export agriculture, which cause little damage to tropical forests compared to shifting cultivators.

Other NGO structural/process criticisms worth mentioning include the lack of a mechanism to translate the TFAP's programmes into action at country/community levels; the notion that the TFAP's process was too academic; the need for better coordination between TFAP's program staff and sources of funding; and the absence of a method to ensure that local peoples have power in planning and implementing TFAP projects. Regarding the first assertion, one NGO expressed doubts that the TFAP will get off the ground, saying:

There appears to be no leading institution available or willing to assume the "dirty work" of coordinating NGO efforts on a macro or micro level. The TFAP is a possible vehicle, but it does not appear at this stage to be utilized, for this purpose.<sup>45</sup>

In terms of the contention that the TFAP represents an academic approach to solving tropical deforestation, an Asian NGO remarked that the pace of the problem demands immediate action:

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<sup>44</sup> Val Plumwood and Richard Routley, "World Rainforest Destruction---The Social Factors," The Ecologist 12, (Jan/Feb 1982) :15.

<sup>45</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #238.

It has kindled much hope of action, but so far they are bogged down by a series of seminars which probably is a necessary first exercise. But as per their own forecasts that all tropical forests will disappear by 2000 A.D. and therefore we must get down to real work at the grass root level.<sup>46</sup> (Emphasis added)

Lastly, an NGO who endorsed the TFAP alluded to the problem of linking money with action programmes:

There must be a better way of connecting program plans within the TFAP, to sources of funding and carrying out of the program. This calls for closer involvement of donor groups (World Bank, IDB, AID, national governments, etc.).<sup>47</sup>

The compilation of NGO compliments to the TFAP is listed in Table #3. The main issue brought up by NGOs focused on how the TFAP has increased awareness towards tropical deforestation. Four NGOs approved of how the TFAP got the World Bank and other donors involved in reversing tropical deforestation. Cited one NGO endorsee, "Getting World Bank and other donors involved---when these institutions have been responsible for large-scale projects leading to deforestation."<sup>48</sup> Another compliment of the TFAP that attracted four NGOs centered on the TFAP's identification of five priority areas to guide funding. One NGO had the following praise for the TFAP's components:

The focus areas of the TFAP are good; tight enough to guide action, but loose enough to provide for innovative design, planning and management. The intention of integrating government and NGO effort at

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #190.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #39.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #4.

the international and national level is a step in the right direction.<sup>49</sup>

Another facet of the TFAP that three NGOs commended was the added research money created by the Plan. One NGO opposed to the TFAP said, "Money for research is always welcome..."<sup>50</sup> Other compliments voiced by various NGOs included the perception that the TFAP has set the stage for wider participation by previously excluded participants; the fact that conservation was given a role in the TFAP; and the probability that the TFAP will educate some of the people involved in managing tropical forests. Concerning the latter development, one NGO surmised that, "The effort of the TFAP in educating various elements involved in the management of tropical forests by organizing regional workshops and meetings, and issue of literature can be considered as a positive development."<sup>51</sup> In terms of the TFAP enabling widespread participation, an NGO involved in development issues stated that the, "Huge amount of publicity has raised awareness, and set the stage for wider participation by previously excluded actors."<sup>52</sup>

In conclusion, the majority of the NGOs who participated in the survey either rejected or expressed

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #238.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #93.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #179.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., Questionnaire #69.

strong reservations towards the TFAP's five action programmes to indicate that the international NGO community does not believe the Plan will save tropical forests nor decrease rural poverty. Furthermore, several NGOs stated that the TFAP real agenda runs contrary to the above goals; in effect, the Plan is saying one thing and doing the opposite. In addition, many NGOs in the survey voiced considerable criticism towards the process by which the TFAP was formed. NGO's concerns about the TFAP's goals and the TFAP Task Force suggest that NGO perspectives about and solutions for tropical deforestation vary sharply from those promoted in the TFAP.

## CHAPTER FIVE

The intent of this chapter is to examine the reasons why the TFAP ignored the bulk of NGO's recommendations, and to propose potential measures which will allow NGOs to participate in all phases of decision-making (local, national, international) affecting tropical forests. Until the 1970s, NGOs working in the South were few. Norman Myers, tropical forest researcher and advocate, in his timely article, "Environmental Challenges: More Government or Better Governance?" illustrates the outgrowth of NGOs:

Until a couple of decades ago, NGOs were largely a First World phenomenon. Fortunately, there has been an outburst of NGOs in the Third World too. In Asia alone their number grew by 54 percent between 1966 and 1977, and by a further 57 percent between 1977 and 1982. Those in Africa grew by 60 percent in both periods together, to total 280 today. The Environment Liaison Centre in Nairobi maintains a network of 7000 environmental NGOs around the world.<sup>53</sup>

Throughout the past two decades, and particularly since the advent of the tropical deforestation crisis, NGOs have shown that they have many useful things to say regarding how to proceed with development, without degrading the environment. But have international development institutions and national governments really listened to NGOs? And have they developed a satisfactory method to allow consistent NGO involvement in programme planning and

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<sup>53</sup> Norman Myers, "Environmental Challenges: More Government or Better Governance?", Ambio 17 No. 6, 1988. p. 412.



project implementation? If the TFAP is any indication, they have not.

NGOs have ardently promoted the concept of sustainable development or eco-development during the 1980s, and it has attracted considerable attention in international environment and development circles. Nicholas Hildyard, writing in The Ecologist, underscores this phenomenon:

In the last few years, 'eco-development' has become something of a catch-phrase amongst those concerned with the problems of the Third World. To be sure, it is not an idea which has been generally practiced: nonetheless, the very fact that Third World governments feel obliged to pay lip-service to it is an encouraging departure from the days when 'West' was indubitably 'Best', and development was seen almost exclusively in terms of importing the necessary technology to build a competitive industrial base.<sup>54</sup>

Indeed, the language contained in the TFAP is full of the need to link environmental and developmental agendas. According to Peter Hazelwood of the WRI, sustainable development has become a prevalent part of national and international governmental forestry programmes:

Since the late 1970s, the focus of national government and aid agency forestry programs has been changing. The traditional emphasis on commercial and industrial forestry is shifting increasingly towards forest management and reforestation activities to meet people's basic needs for food, fuel, fodder, building poles, income, and other necessities.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Nicholas Hildyard, "Development---No Cure within the Market?", The Ecologist, Vol. 12, (Jan/Feb 1982), p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Peter Hazelwood, "Expanding the Role of NonGovernmental Organizations in National Forestry Programs," (Draft copy of the report of three regional NGO workshops in Africa, Asia and Latin America), Washington, D.C., 1987. (Mimeographed.)

However, many NGOs in the survey disputed Hazelwood's assessment. They countered that while the TFAP speaks of incorporating principles of sustainable development into development assistance and forestry programmes, its action programmes contradict those principles by encompassing many unsustainable activities.

There are several possible explanations why the TFAP Task Force chose to ignore the insights of NGOs. The first reason centers on the TFAP's imposition of the market economy on forest resources and forest users. From an economic standpoint, many NGOs expressed distrust towards a commercial system which places monetary values on what they consider to be indispensable resources. This is borne out in the following quote:

TFAP has been able to generate some interest in various quarters in the conservation of tropical forests, and the ecosystem as a whole in the region. However, it is a fact that the relevant governments and the business interests which are involved in the exploitation of tropical forests do not show requisite interest, much less a commitment to that end. It is understandable because restrictions that requirements of conservancy will impose inevitably curtail their operations or change their methods. Profits of business community and revenues of the state will be adversely affected.<sup>56</sup>

It appears to this NGO that the TFAP, while being a step in the right direction, is unable to curtail resource-extractive, export-oriented growth due to the nature of the commercial market economy. Other more outspoken NGOs claim the TFAP is trying to accommodate entrenched international

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<sup>56</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #179.

economic sectors (forest products, mining, agricultural), while ignoring NGO pleas to base development on community control over tropical forest resources.

Another possible reason why the TFAP disregarded NGO ideas is reflected in the international political power structure. The traditional balance of power between East and West (Cold War system) is changing because of Mikhail Gorbachev's initiatives, and because of emerging political forces in the South such as the Group of 77, a collection of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that have joined together to better represent the concerns of post-colonial nations. To an extent, NGOs in the South, and some in the North, embody the belief that the world needs a more equitable political structure to solve global environmental problems like tropical deforestation and economic problems like the debt crisis. Noam Chomsky, an outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy, gives this grim analysis of the likelihood of a more egalitarian global power structure:

Such Soviet moves might be beneficial if accompanied by comparable steps in Washington, or better yet, by support for democracy and social reform and constructive aid programs geared to the real needs of the people of the Third World. These are dreams, however. Scarcely concealed behind a thin rhetorical cover is the fact that U.S. elites want to see the third world turned over to Washington's whims, not liberated to pursue independent goals.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Noam Chomsky, "The Tasks Ahead II: The Global System," Zeta Magazine, 2 No. 7-8. 1989. p. 22.

The TFAP reinforced the notion in many NGOs that political forces in the North once again dictated the course of action for under-represented peoples in the South. While it would be hard for me to prove that the TFAP is a political conspiracy designed to maintain the orderly flow of resources (i.e. profits) to American, European, and Japanese banks and companies, the Plan, for all intents and purposes, prevented NGOs from wielding any real political influence.

Yet another likely answer to why NGO suggestions were tossed aside lies in the social allegiances of the TFAP's promoters. Certain NGOs alluded to the contradiction of the TFAP Task Force, made up of socially-privileged men, bestowing social justice upon millions of rural poor in the tropics via money and technology. On a deeper level, the prevailing philosophy of the TFAP embodies the traditional western (northern) attitude of human domination over Nature, which not only views natural ecosystems as valueless, but also most often creates even greater inequality in society. According to Plumwood and Routley, this 'domination of nature' philosophy is especially prevalent in the motivation to develop tropical forests.

These attitudes of nature-domination, expressed usually by the official or technocratic westernized elite, not infrequently contrast strongly with those of the non-westernized indigenous peoples, usually at the bottom of the social power-scale, who are closely associated with the forests and whose society, culture and relation with the natural world is increasingly disrupted or destroyed by the aggressive, proselytizing

ideology of development, conquest of nature and technocratic 'modernization'.<sup>58</sup>

While there are no doubt other reasons why the TFAP ignored most NGO recommendations, the important thing, at least according to several of the groups surveyed, was that NGOs were not listened to. Indeed, throughout my research, I discovered that NGOs had many useful alternatives and ideas to cope with tropical deforestation.

NGOs presented numerous alternatives to the TFAP's continued reliance on the international economic system, such as creation of people's forests where access and entitlement are predicated on basic needs; promotion of "extractive reserves" where local communities can extract sustainable resources like wildlife, rubber, and Brazil nuts; recognition of the values (nutritional, fodder, nitrogen fixing and medicinal) in using indigenous tree species to make rural villages self-sufficient; launching consumer campaigns to reduce demands for tropical forest products; preservation of indigenous cultures through land-titling and the development of environmentally sound forest crops; and development of, "People's nurseries, run by marginal farmers, as a permanent rural institution to serve as the kingpin of a year-by-year, massive tree planting."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Plumwood and Routley, "World Rainforest Destruction--The Social Factors," p. 20.

<sup>59</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #190.

Alternatives such as these were either ignored outright or were given superficial consideration, prompting many NGOs to lament their ability to effect change in the "big picture." Nevertheless, NGOs are not as effective working on international and national levels compared to the work they carry out on local levels. NGOs, particularly in the South, seemed better suited to administer national and international policies and programmes on the ground level than were their governmental counterparts. This is due in large part to their decentralized, flexible approach to problem-solving, which allows them to become "partners" with people and communities. Evidence of this is apparent in the following quote from an NGO in the survey:

NGOs in general have the capability of mobilizing resources more quickly and more directly to the need (the proverbial grassroots advantage). In many cases we have a broader base of supporters and participants; we generally can go anywhere with anyone for project implementation.<sup>60</sup>

This is not to insinuate that NGOs feel like they could tackle the problem of tropical deforestation by themselves. On the contrary, NGO's responses indicated that all sectors of government and society need to contribute, if a global dilemma of this magnitude is to be successfully reversed. An example of the type of cooperation envisioned by NGOs came out of the Conference of the NonGovernmental Organizations and Voluntary Bodies of the Asia-Pacific

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<sup>60</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #238.

Region, which met in New Delhi in October, 1987. At the conference, the following resolution was passed:

An effective and meaningful Tropical Forestry Action Plan cannot be developed in isolation at the metropolitan centers. The integration of a large number of microplans made by independent community organizations in collaboration with the local NGOs and GOs must be central to such a strategy.<sup>61</sup>

What is desperately needed from the World Bank, FAO, and national forestry departments is the realization that NGOs can do a better job of establishing practical, direct links with rural farmers, forest dwellers, indigenous tribes, etc., than can the aforementioned governmental organizations. Conversely, NGOs need to understand that their efforts are often scattered and disjointed, and thus of limited impact on the "big picture." In addition, "NGOs have a tendency to be self-protective and specific with regard to their activities. An 'us vs them' (NGO vs government) attitude runs through our minds. This makes coordination of efforts and collective capabilities difficult."<sup>62</sup> In the future, two levels of cooperation need to be instituted. First, among NGOs, so that local, national, regional, and international roles and responsibilities are established. Second, between NGOs and governmental bodies in order to link the "catalyst

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<sup>61</sup> Resolutions from the Conference of the NonGovernmental Organizations and Voluntary Bodies of the Asia-Pacific Region. (October 23-25, 1987), Resolution #2.

<sup>62</sup> Kreilick., Questionnaire #238.

properties" of the former with the financial and political properties of the latter. Unfortunately, in the context of the TFAP, there is no Task Force or mechanism to facilitate such connections. Thus many NGOs and GOs are still locked in an adversarial relationship, where the NGOs must act as watchdogs over GOs, and the GOs decide to ignore the insights of NGOs.

At present, there appears to be little hope of using the TFAP to halt ever-increasing tropical forest destruction. In its place, I believe that NGOs should create a series of local and regional networks which focus on developing their own approaches to protecting their respective peoples and forests. As stated earlier, NGOs cannot "go it alone"; but I think they can initiate action which will prompt international institutions like the World Bank and the United Nations to get involved. In this vein, NGOs should be able to appeal directly to bilateral and multi-lateral funding bodies for material, informational, and logistical assistance.

In short, we need to give NGOs the lead in planning and implementing sustainable policies and smaller projects in tropical forests. The reason why we need to do so is because the NGOs represent the crucial link between governments and local people. NGOs can take the development assistance model beyond the era of massive development projects, when tropical forests were routinely decimated and



forest peoples were regularly displaced. In its place, NGOs can advocate a shifting model of development predicated on specific ecological conditions and past land use activities, cultural differences and sensitivities, planting crops and trees which provide community self-sufficiency, and a respect for the diversity of tropical forest ecosystems.

In addition, debt relief and conservation/debt swaps are good alternatives to pursue while new development strategies are evolving. Finally, I propose that NGOs in the North and the South create environmental exchange programs where local citizens and activists can experience different cultural and ecological perspectives. Ultimately, people in both tropical and temperate forests must together take responsibility for saving the earth's richest, most diverse ecosystem.

## CONCLUSION

As we approach the 1990s, the health of our planet is in question. Environmental issues are in the forefront of the media, politicians are recognizing how the environment will affect future decision-making, and the general public is noticeably alarmed. It appears that the Earth and the human race is at an ecological and social crossroads.

However, despite these signals of an awakening environmental consciousness, within most governmental and corporate institutions, the song remains the same. The Tropical Forestry Action Plan is a classic example of this. The TFAP claims it will protect tropical forests and improve local economies, but as pointed out by numerous NGOs, many of the proposals in the five action programmes will further fragment ecosystems while also disrupting the livelihoods of forest dwellers.

In short, rather than addressing the root causes of tropical deforestation, the TFAP makes a vain attempt to incorporate conservation into the international market economy. Despite the long list of destructive lessons from past development approaches, the TFAP makes the same mistakes which led to the current crisis. Thus the TFAP, while providing a point to start from, fails to approach solving tropical deforestation from an ecological perspective. As pointed out in the NGO survey by many

different respondents, local groups and communities in the tropics understand the ecological complexities of tropical forests; however, the TFAP ignored the knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples, rubber tappers as well as a wide cross-section of NGOs.

Saving tropical forests, and the people who depend on them to survive, is a battle which will determine the fate of our species. For to protect tropical forest ecosystems and communities will require humans to execute a basic paradigm shift -- towards societies and economies that value the natural world as more than just resources to be exploited, commodities to be sold or wastelands lacking any productive use.

I trust that my survey of NGO's responses to the TFAP, and the evidence and observations that came from it, will help to guide NGOs, governmental organizations, and individuals towards finding ways to stop the destruction of tropical forests and their human beneficiaries.

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## APPENDIX A

### TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Paulo Nogueira-Neto  
Secretary of the Environment  
Brazil

T.N. Khoshoo  
Former Secretary of the Environment  
India

Khubchand G. Tejwani  
Land Use Consultants, International  
India

Sir Charles Pereira  
Former Chief Scientist  
Ministry of Agriculture  
United Kingdom

Pedro M. Picornell  
Executive Vice President, Planning  
Paper Industries Corporation  
of the Philippines

Michael Apsey  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Council of Forest Industries  
of British Columbia  
Canada

Salleh Mohamed Nor  
Director, Forest Research Institute  
Malaysia

John Spears  
Senior Forestry Adviser  
The World Bank  
Washington, D.C.

Robert Buckman  
Deputy Chief for Forestry Research  
United States Forest Service  
Washington, D.C.



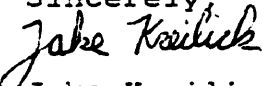
## APPENDIX B

This questionnaire is part of a survey I'm conducting to determine the amount of nongovernmental support for the Tropical Forest Action Plan (TFAP). The survey will attempt to gauge how receptive Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) are to the TFAP; define the role of NGOs in the Plan; and probe NGO's perceptions and feelings towards their role and the role of the TFAP Task Force in the TFAP process. After compiling the survey, I intend to write a professional paper to meet my thesis requirement for an M.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana.

As a service to NGOs, I've vowed not to let my work become just another lost report in the file cabinets of academia. To this end, I plan on following up on my research by circulating copies of my paper to NGOs as well as interested governmental agencies and multilateral development institutions. Through these efforts I hope to generate ways to more effectively involve NGOs in policies and activities that conserve tropical forests.

I'd appreciate as prompt and candid a response as possible. To ensure confidentiality in the survey each organization will be given a number and a letter that will correspond to a continent and a role (lobbying, education, direct action, combination, etc...) No names of organizations will be used in either the survey or the professional paper. Please feel free to respond on another piece of paper if you need more room. If you have any specific questions regarding the questionnaire, the survey or my background, Don't hesitate to call me at (406) 243-6273 or write me at:

Environmental Studies Program  
Jeannette Rankin Hall  
University of Montana  
Missoula, MT 59812

Sincerely,  
  
Jake Kreilick

Questionnaire #: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Founded: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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1. Are you familiar with the Tropical Forest Action Plan (TFAP)?  
If so, how and when did you find out about the TFAP? If not,  
answer question # 7 and # 8 and return the questionnaire.

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2. To what extent is your organization involved with the TFAP?  
(Very involved, somewhat involved, not involved; please explain.)

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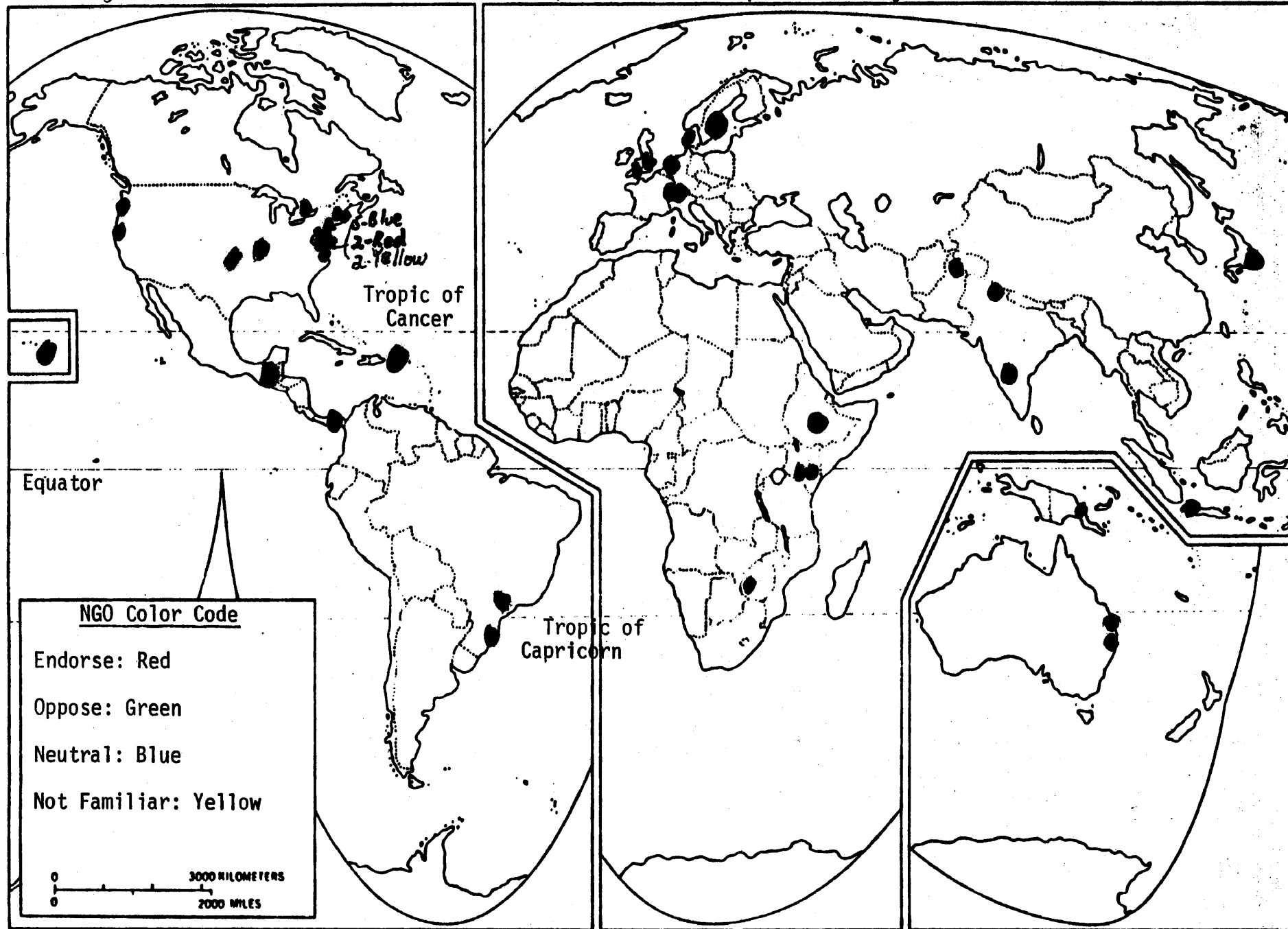








Figure 1: Distribution of NGO's Responses to the Tropical Forestry Action Plan



	Africa	Asia	Australia	S. America	C. America	N. America	Europe	Total
Endorse						2	2	4
Oppose	1	1	1	1		1	2	7
Neutral	1	3			2	7	2	15
Not Familiar	2	2	1	1		6	1	13