

Bringing Wildcrafters to the International Policy Table:

Reflections on the Nontimber Forest Products Side Event at the 12th World Forestry Congress, Quebec City 2003

Final Report

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Executive Summary

In September 2003, The Ford Foundation's Institute for International Education provided the Institute for Culture and Ecology (IFCAE) with a \$10,000 grant to support the participation of two harvesters and one policy mentor at the NTFP side event of the World Forestry Congress (WFC). Additional in-kind contributions allowed us to put together a team of six participants – two harvesters, two primary policy mentors, and two secondary policy mentors – to assist with this NTFP harvester empowerment project. The project built upon previous efforts by the Institute for Culture and Ecology, National Network of Forest Practitioners, Rural Action, and The Jefferson Center to ensure broad-based participation of rural residents in forest management.

Although NTFPs are important elements in many rural peoples' lives, NTFPs hold a marginal place within the WFC, as evidenced by their relative obscurity within the official framework. The consequence of this obscurity is that in the WFC's conclusions and recommendations, NTFPs are treated as side notes, rather than put forward as a major area of focus. The side event was an attempt by scientists and forest managers to enhance the visibility of NTFPs in the WFC's deliberations. Unfortunately, of the fifty-four people who participated in the NTFP side event, only two -- the harvesters sponsored through this project -- were actively involved in NTFP harvesting, buying or processing.

To facilitate harvester participation, we first identified the main barriers to effective harvester participation – i.e. cultural differences between scientists/forest managers and harvesters, financial constraints and logistical constraints – and then developed workable solutions to overcoming those barriers. As a way of sharing Penny Frazier and Janet Janzen's, the participating harvesters, experiences with others, we conducted pre and post side event reflection sessions in which Penny and Janet described the challenges they faced in attending the side event, as well as their thoughts as to whether their input will have any impact and how they would prepare for similar policy events in the future. We've included a verbatim text of these discussions in the spirit of letting harvesters speak for themselves.

The project team members are unanimous in their belief that the harvester empowerment project was a success, in the sense that without it, harvesters' voices would have been absent from the NTFP side event. Additionally, participating in the project provided both harvesters a much stronger sense of the need for harvesters and buyers to become engaged in such policy events if they wish to have a voice in the future of their livelihoods. We lay out a series of lessons learned and recommendations at the end of this report that can serve as guidelines for future efforts to facilitate long-term and effective harvester participation in policy framing and policy making events at a variety of geographic and administrative scales.

Chief among our recommendations are that The Ford Foundation consider earmarking a portion of the funds that it currently uses to support the involvement of community based forestry practitioners in international policy discussion toward the empowerment of NTFP harvesters and small-scale buyers in those same events. The National Network of Forest Practitioners' Nontimber Forest Product Working Group provides an already existing structure that could potentially carry out such a mandate within the framework of the Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management.

List of Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IFCAE	Institute for Culture and Ecology
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organizations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNFP	National Network of Forest Practitioners
NTFP	Nontimber Forest Products
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
WFC	World Forestry Congress

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Project Background

Nontimber forest products (NTFPs), such as boughs, cones, berries, and mushrooms, provide income, food, medicines, and craft-making material for many U.S. residents. Product supply lines and markets encompass North America, the Far East, Africa, Latin America, and Europe. Yet while annual retail sales of NTFPs harvested in the United States surpass the billion-dollar mark, many harvesters earn incomes far below the national poverty level.¹ In the 1990s, global trade in NTFPs expanded rapidly. Many forest managers started to limit access to these resources or prohibited harvesting altogether. Because of their often marginal economic status and, in some cases, their ethnic minority status, NTFP harvesters to-date have had limited input in new regulations and policies. In particular, they have had little voice in international policymaking even though they are part of a global workforce.

The absence of harvesters in global forest policy debates has two negative consequences. First, harvesters have no voice in establishing the principles underlying global forest, labor, and trade policies, all of which affect the ability of harvesters to derive their livelihoods or maintain cultural traditions. Second, their absence in international policymaking means that the emerging principles for fostering sustainable forest management may fall wide of the mark due to the absence of critical pieces of local NTFP knowledge that only harvesters possess.

To expand the capacity of NTFP harvesters to have a voice in international forest policy, Ford Foundation's Institute for International Education provided funds for the Institute for Culture and Ecology to organize the participation of two NTFP harvesters from the U.S. in the 12th WFC. The project built upon previous efforts by the Institute for Culture and Ecology, the National Network of Forest Practitioners, Rural Action, and the Alliance for Forest Workers and Harvesters to ensure broad-based participation of rural residents in forest management.

The WFC, which meets every seven years, is one of the most influential international forest policy gatherings. Participants include mid and high-level forest administrators, politicians, scientists, and forest practitioners. The WFC took place in Quebec City from September 21-28, 2003. The 12th WFC was especially significant for NTFP harvesters because it included a daylong workshop, known as a "side event," devoted exclusively to NTFPs. The side event brought together fifty-four participants from around the world for the purpose of creating an NTFP Declaration for inclusion in the WFC's formal proceedings.

Project Goals

The project's primary goal was to ensure that NTFP harvesters and small-scale buyers from North America had a voice in the discussions that took place during the NTFP side event. A divide exists between developed and developing country forest policy stakeholders on whether NTFP policy is important to consider in developed world settings. The international development community tends to see demands for NTFP access in developed countries as linked

¹ *Nontimber Forest Products in the United States* (published in 2002 and edited by Eric T. Jones, Rebecca McLain, and James Weigand) provides an overview of NTFP harvesting and management issues across the United States.

to a lifestyle choice, rather than an issue of life and death, as it sometimes is in developing countries. Our intention with bringing U.S. harvesters and small-scale buyers to the NTFP side event was to illustrate that developed countries need to support NTFP livelihoods, and include NTFP harvesters in forest policy debates, since much of the ecological knowledge required to manage ecosystem biodiversity exists only within harvester communities.

We achieved this through facilitating active participation of two teams consisting of one harvester-buyer and one policy mentor each in the side event discussions, and through participation of one harvester-buyer in the development of the formal summary statement on NTFPs submitted to the WFC organizers. Although we recognize that the two harvester-buyers could not possibly speak for all NTFP harvesters, or even a large percentage of harvesters in the U.S., they likely had a better grasp of many harvesters' concerns and greater knowledge of NTFPs than many of the scientists, land managers, and policy makers who participated in the NTFP side event and WFC. Additionally, we selected harvesters who could represent a broad range of issues and benefit personally from the experience.

Our second goal was to find out whether and how government forest managers, community forestry organizations, and fire management scientists incorporate NTFP concerns into their everyday management and planning activities. We accomplished this by attending the formal WFC presentations and plenary sessions, as well as through participation in community forestry and indigenous people's side event discussions.

Our third goal was to provide other participants with a better understanding of on-the-ground concerns of NTFP harvesters and buyers. We addressed this objective by having team members provide comments during the NTFP side event, other side events, the formal WFC sessions, and by maintaining a regular presence at IFCAE's poster on a recently completed project on NTFP management and biodiversity conservation (<http://www.ifcae.org/projects/ncssf1/index.html>).

Project Approach

The project took place in three phases: 1) preparations for the NTFP side event at the WFC, 2) participation in the side event, and 3) follow-up activities in the weeks and months following the WFC. The project team consisted of two harvester-buyers (Janet Janzen and Penny Frazier) and two policy mentors (Rebecca McLain and Marla Emery). We also benefited from the volunteer services of two colleagues (Alison Dyke and Susan Alexander) who participated in the side event independently of this project, as well as from the volunteer efforts of another colleague (Rebecca Richards) in designing the project and developing a funding proposal. Eric Jones and Kathryn Lynch, IFCAE scientists, provided technical advice on participant selection criteria.

Phase I: Pre-side event preparations

During phase I, the policy mentors and volunteers identified and selected two harvester-buyers, made travel arrangements, and provided background materials to all team members. Initially we had hoped to bring 6-9 harvesters to the side event, on the theory that having a critical mass of

alternative voices is often a key element in making more powerful stakeholders take them seriously. Additionally, if we had had the means to bring a larger number of harvesters and buyers to the side event, the diversity of NTFP sub-cultures and their divergent interests would have been more evident to other side event participants. However, insufficient funds and the logistical difficulties of organizing the participation of a larger number of harvesters in such a short time period with a volunteer workforce, forced us to limit the number of harvester-buyer participants to two.

Phase II: NTFP side event and the WFC

Phase II consisted of participation at the NTFP side event by two harvester-policy mentor teams, and in other side events and WFC sessions by one harvester-policy mentor team. To prepare the teams for the NTFP side event, we conducted a two-hour reflection and strategizing session the night before the session. We held a second reflection session on the morning immediately following the side event. Due to scheduling constraints, only one harvester-policy mentor team (Penny and Rebecca) and the two backup policy mentors (Susan and Alison) could participate in the WFC sessions and other side events.

Phase III: Follow-up

During Phase III, the project team drafted a letter of thanks, including a project briefing note, to the Ford Foundation and the Institute for International Education. The harvester-buyer team members also shared their experiences with their fellow community members in a variety of ways, including presentations to local and state industry associations, newspaper articles, and discussions at the annual National Network of Forest Practitioners meeting. We will post a copy of this final report on IFCAE's website (www.ifcae.org) in April 2004.

Project Team Composition

Cumulatively, the project team members brought to the NTFP side event several decades of experience in NTFP harvesting and buying. They also brought with them knowledge of NTFP harvesting and buying in diverse and geographically widespread forest ecosystems, including forests in New England, the Mid-Atlantic states, the northern and central Appalachians, the Great Lakes, the Ozarks, the northern Rockies, the Sierra Nevada, and the central Cascades and Olympic and Oregon coast ranges. Additionally, the policy mentors and technical advisors had extensive knowledge of and experience in how to facilitate participatory processes in policy-making and scientific research settings.

Harvester-buyers

Janet Janzen: Janet learned to gather medicinal plants as a child and has been a medicinal plants dealer and fur buyer in the Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia for many years. She is

active in local and national fur trapper associations, and is one of three certified ginseng root graders for the state of West Virginia. In addition to buying and selling a variety of raw and processed NTFPs, Janet also harvests NTFPs for subsistence purposes and informal exchange.

Penny Frazier: Penny entered the NTFP world as a buyer and seller of pine nuts during the mid-1990s on behalf of several Shoshone tribal members in Nevada. Her primary motivation for getting involved in the pine nut industry was to demonstrate to federal land managers in the western United States that there are economic, as well as ecological reasons to protect pinyon pine habitat. Penny has recently helped found a medicinal-herbal plants grower cooperative in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri. Penny relies on a variety of NTFPs for subsistence in addition to buying and selling a variety of products on the market.

Primary policy mentors

Marla R. Emery: Marla began looking at NTFPs in 1995, as a grounded way to explore relationships between people and forests that escape the industrial-forest-production-or-recreation paradigm. Once she began studying the role of NTFPs in the lives and livelihoods of gatherers in Michigan's Upper Peninsula she was hooked. She has since studied subsistence and commercial harvesting in the Appalachian mountain range from New England to North Carolina. Recently, she has extended the cultural and ecological range of her work to include Scotland and tropical Mexico. A Research Geographer with the U.S. Forest Service, Marla is a founding member of the National Network of Forest Practitioners NTFP working group and serves as a technical advisor to community forestry organizations in the eastern United States.

Rebecca J. McLain: Rebecca brought to the team two decades of research on how state, national, and international forest policy-making processes function. She became interested in studying NTFP policy during the 1980s while working in West Africa, where NTFPs remain highly visible and valued components of subsistence and commercial rural economies. She brought her interest in NTFP policy to the Pacific Northwest in the 1990s, where she has since conducted studies on wild mushroom and floral greens policy in Oregon, Washington, and Montana. As part of her dissertation research she spent two seasons working as a wild mushroom buyer, and continues to gather wild mushrooms for personal use.

Secondary policy mentors

Alison Dyke: Alison is a researcher and practitioner on NTFPs in a European context. She began working on NTFP issues while doing baseline studies on the wild mushroom industry in Scotland at a time when calls were being made for regulation to prevent ecological damage with no knowledge of the actual impacts of harvesting. This study became the focus for Alison's work in taking a pre-emptive stance to regulation by coordinating harvesters, buyers, landowners, and scientists to form a code of good practice. Subsequently as Scotland's access law was revised Alison coordinated a process for harvesters and buyers to respond to official consultations and attempt to influence both the form of the law and the way in which it is applied. Alison has also completed wider studies on the utilization and development of NTFPs in Scotland, and on the impacts of policy on NTFP use in Finland.

Susan J. Alexander: Susan has gathered NTFPs for family consumption and gifts from childhood, and has gathered and sold wild mushrooms and berries, and honey. She worked for several years for land management agencies in the US Departments of Agriculture and Interior, in timber sales, logging engineering, silviculture, and education. She also worked as a timber cruiser for private industry. For the past decade, she has been a research scientist for the USFS, and has lectured and written about NTFP markets, harvest, and policy, from local to international scales. Her knowledge of NTFPs and interest in NTFP market structure, and the impacts of policies on harvesters and landowners, has resulted in her being asked to serve on the North American Forest Commission, and as adjunct faculty in Canada at the Royal Roads University Centre for Nontimber Resources. She recently took a position as the Regional Economist for the USFS in Alaska. She still gathers, and cans, and keeps bees.

Technical advisors

Rebecca Richards: Rebecca Richards, professor of sociology at the University of Montana, played a key role in developing the project proposal. She has conducted field research on wild mushroom in Northern California and on huckleberry pickers in Montana. Due to insufficient funding, she was unable to participate in the WFC.

Eric T. Jones and Kathryn Lynch: Eric and Katie, senior anthropologists with the Institute for Culture and Ecology, provided key input on the selection criteria used for identifying potential harvester-buyer participants. Katie and Eric both had previously organized participatory workshops and meetings involving harvesters, scientists, and land managers. Both had conducted ethnographic research on NTFP harvesting and buying in the Pacific Northwest, the Rocky Mountains, the Southeast, the Northeast, and the Great Lakes region (see the following website for details: www.ifcae.org/projects/ncssf1/publications). Due to insufficient funds and time, they were unable to participate in the WFC.

Anticipated Barriers to Participation and Solutions for Overcoming Them

In designing the project, we identified three key barriers – cultural, financial, and logistical -- likely to inhibit effective participation of harvesters in the NTFP side event at the WFC. We arrived at this list by reviewing our previous experiences with efforts to facilitate harvester and buyer participation in local, regional, and national policy workshops. A brief discussion of these three barriers and the solutions we took to overcome them are provided below.

1a) Cultural Barriers

Substantial sub-cultural differences exist between the science-policy world in which events such as the NTFP side event take place and the world that makes up the every day life of harvester-buyers. Harvester-buyers tend to be rural-based, often come from blue-collar family environments where their friends and relatives work in factories or outdoors, and frequently do not have post-secondary school training in scientific fields. In contrast, many scientists and

policy makers come from urban or suburban backgrounds and work in white collar, office environments. Most also have one or more college degrees in the social or natural sciences.

Additionally, scientists and policy-makers often dismiss the importance of experiential knowledge as an element of forest policy and management. As a result of these cultural differences and the disdain with which many policy makers and scientists treat experiential knowledge, many harvesters hesitate to speak up in forums dominated by scientists and policy-makers.

1b) Solutions to Cultural Barriers

Selection of knowledgeable and politically engaged harvester-buyers: Operating on the philosophy that harvesters not only needed to be present at the NTFP side event, but that they also needed to be knowledgeable and willing to push to make themselves heard, we used the following criteria to select harvester-buyer participants: a) five or more years of full-time or near full-time involvement in an NTFP industry; b) active engagement in community or industry groups; c) experience in commercial and non-commercial NTFP harvesting; and d) willingness to speak in public.

Use of policy mentors: To help harvesters navigate through the unfamiliar world of international science and policy, we teamed each harvester with a policy mentor. We also arranged for back-up mentors who could fill in at times when the primary policy mentors were absent. The policy mentors and their back-ups consisted of social scientists with experiential knowledge of forest policy-making processes and applied knowledge of NTFP harvesting, buying, and management. By coincidence, three of the policy mentors spoke French, the primary language of the conference site, and three spoke Spanish, a language spoken by many of the participants. Consequently, the policy mentors also served as conventional language translators.

Advance preparation for the side event: To facilitate effective participation of the harvester-policy mentor teams, we provided all team members with background material about the WFC and the NTFP side event objectives and process. Unfortunately, due to initial uncertainties over funding, we did not identify the harvester-buyers in time for us to participate as teams in the e-discussions organized by the side event sponsors in the months preceding the side event. However, due to encouragement from IFCAE scientists, one of the harvester-buyers had taken part in the e-discussions. Two of the policy mentors also took part in the e-discussions. We arranged to have the harvester-buyers and primary policy mentors arrive on-site two days prior to the side event. This provided us a day to get to know each other and to familiarize ourselves with on-site logistics.

Pre-side event reflection session: On the evening before the side event, the policy mentors organized a reflection session where the harvester-buyers could organize their thoughts on what they would like to express during the meeting and any

concerns or fears that they had about the process and their roles in it. During this session, the team also explored ideas on how the policy mentors could facilitate the process of making certain that spaces would be created for harvesters to inject their viewpoints on key issues.

Ensuring buyer-harvester involvement during the side event: We opted to pair policy mentors and their back-ups with each of the harvesters so that harvesters could ask questions on content and process if need be during the side event discussions. In addition, the policy mentors occasionally ran interference during the small and large group discussions at times when it appeared harvesters and their input would not be recognized.

Post-side event reflection session: On the morning following the side event, we held another reflection session to give the harvesters an opportunity to process their experiences, share their thoughts on their participation and their views of how effective it might have been, and to identify ways for improving similar participation processes in the future.

2a) Financial Barriers

Few harvesters and small-scale buyers can afford the cost of travel, lodging, meals, and registration fees associated with participating in international policy events. In the case of the WFC, just the costs directly associated with getting to and being at the WFC amounted to approximately \$2,500 per person, an amount that represents a substantial percentage of many U.S. harvesters' annual incomes. In addition, since few harvesters or buyers work on salary, the time they spend at such events is time for which they are unpaid. Unless they have someone reliable to take over the business during their absence, they also may be unable to earn income through product sales while they are on the road.

2b) Solutions to Financial Barriers

Provision of travel expenses: To minimize the costs to harvester-buyers of participating in the NTFP side event, we covered all travel related expenses, as well as communication expenses prior to and after the side event.

Provision of a participation fellowship: In addition, we included a budget line item for a \$1,000 policy participation fellowship to help defray the loss of income harvester-buyers incurred as a result of participating in the side event.

3a) Logistical Barriers

Many harvesters and small-scale buyers have little or no experience traveling in areas outside the United States. For this side event, the logistical difficulties of international travel were further complicated because the side event took place in a city where the dominant language is French.

3b) Solutions to Logistical Barriers

Travel arrangements handled by sponsoring organization: To keep preparation costs for harvester-buyers to a minimum, IFCAE handled travel and lodging arrangements.

Development of a mini-guide to air travel procedures: One of the policy mentors provided the two harvester-buyers with a step-by-step informal guide to domestic and international air travel procedures.

Provision of language books and site guides: IFCAE provided team members with French language phrasebooks, maps, and guides to Quebec City.

The WFC: Structure and Process

Many WFC participants view the WFC and associated side events as a non-political forum because the delegates come up with suggestions for and ideas about forest management, rather than developing specific and enforceable rules, policies, or legislation governing forest management behavior. From a policy analyst's standpoint, however, the WFC is highly political in that the official sessions and side events constitute important sites for stakeholders to influence what things governments, industry, and other stakeholders identify as forest policy problems, as well as the definitions of those problems and the potential solutions to them. Additionally, the language and ideas contained in the WFC's Final Statement and Conclusions and Recommendations historically have played a strong role in shaping national level forest policy, particularly in developing countries.

The function of the WFC -- Framing issues and defining problems

In the language of policy makers, the WFC and the NTFP side event are best described as issues framing or problem definition events (Kingdon 1984; McLain 2000). Issue framing and problem definition events consist of meetings, workshops, discussions in the media, and virtually any other form of social interaction where people strive to persuade others that a particular condition or situation constitutes a problem that warrants a public intervention, often in the form of rules, regulations, and laws established and enforced by a governing entity. Framing events play a crucial role in shaping what decisions administrative and elected officials eventually make regarding rules, laws, policies, and regulations. Thus, from the standpoint of political empowerment, ensuring widespread participation in issues framing and problem definition events is just as important, if not more important, than ensuring broad-based formal political representation.

WFC format

The 12th World Forestry Congress followed a highly formalized protocol consisting of a combination of official sessions, three official side-events (Indigenous People's Forum, Youth Forum, and Small Woodland Owners Forum), and a number of unofficial side events (WFC 2003a). The NTFP side event was one of the unofficial side events. Approximately 4,900 people attended the 12th WFC (WFC 2003b: 2).

The official sessions and official side-events served as venues for developing text intended for inclusion in the WFC's Final Statement and Conclusions and Recommendations documents (WFC 2003b). The official sessions included plenary introductory sessions; concurrent theme sessions, concurrent ecoregional sessions, general sessions consisting of conclusions and recommendations from the themes and ecoregional discussions, and open fora sessions. The WFC's three themes consisted of: *Forests for the Planet*, *Forests for People and People and Forests in Harmony*. On the surface, it would seem that an official sub-theme session devoted to NTFP issues should have been a part of each theme. However, only the first theme, *Forests for the Planet*, included a session focusing specifically on NTFPs.

Organizers of the official sessions adopted an academic presentation format, scheduling a series of speakers to present information to an audience and then allowing a limited amount of time for members of the audience to ask questions of the speakers or make comments. The only official sessions with fully interactive formats were the ecoregional sessions, which took the form of roundtables, and some of the open fora sessions, which tended to use a more interactive dialogue format. In short, the official sessions provided few opportunities for the majority of participants to play a significant role in issues framing and problem definition.

The unofficial side events and ad hoc stakeholder discussions tended to be much more interactive in format, and served as key spaces for stakeholders to work out agendas for inserting into the official WFC process. However, the extent to which unofficial side event concerns and issues entered the final WFC documents appeared to be a function of the side event organizers' visibility, their access to WFC delegates and Working Group members, and their ability to insert their agendas directly into the official sessions and side events.

Marginalization of NTFPs in the WFC

Historically, the WFC sessions have focused on timber and fuel wood production as drivers of economic development in countries around the globe. In the 1980s and 1990s, the WFC organizers gradually began to broaden their notion of forest management to include sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and community-based forest management. The official program for the 12th WFC, however, included only one official sub-theme session on NTFPs. Several other sub-theme and open fora sessions, such as sessions on the maintenance of

biodiversity, agroforestry systems, local communities and institutions, traditional knowledge, and participatory decision-making and management, also included presentations relevant to NTFP management issues and concerns.

NTFPs hold a marginal place within the WFC, as evidenced by their relative obscurity within the official framework of the WFC (i.e. only one stand-alone theme session, and not a major feature in any of the WFC's themes, or the focus of an official side event). The consequence of this obscurity is that in the conclusions and recommendations, NTFPs are treated as side notes, rather than put forward as a major area of focus.

The formal academic structure of the official sessions provided no opportunity for the interactive stakeholder dialogue needed to develop a list of the broad-ranging issues and concerns emerging in NTFP management and policy debates around the world. Recognizing the need for such a dialogue, staff members of three international forestry organizations – IUFRO (Group 5.11, Non Wood Forest Products), CIFOR, and FAO (Non Wood Forest Products Programme) –organized an NTFP side event with the objective of providing a more suitable forum for a broader-based framing of NTFP policy issues and defining of NTFP policy problems and potential solutions to those problems. Unfortunately, the NTFP side event process was unable to successfully insert NTFP issues and concerns prominently into the official agenda.

The NTFP side event – An interactive discussion venue

Beginning in summer 2002, the NTFP side event organizers invited a variety of stakeholders, including scientists, government agency employees, NGO staff members, and others, to participate in the planning and implementation of the side event. Although the workshop itself was free to all participants, the costs of getting to and staying at the workshop site were prohibitive for most harvesters and buyers. A group of social scientists from IFCAE, the U.S. Forest Service, and the University of Montana, decided to demonstrate that it was possible to facilitate harvester-buyer participation in such events. This NTFP side event harvester empowerment project developed on a shoestring budget and with the help of a largely volunteer workforce, was the result of those efforts.

NTFP Side Event: Structure and Process

As indicated by the objectives stated in the NTFP Declaration (see Appendix A) that emerged from the side event (www.sfp.forprod.vt.edu/discussion/Quebec%20Declaration.htm), the NTFP side event organizers clearly viewed the side event as an important issues framing process, one that they hoped would generate more governmental support for NTFP research and management activities:

“The objectives of the meeting were to identify and prioritize emerging issues for the development of the NTFP sector; and to draw the attention of the WFC and forest resource decision makers on key policy and research recommendations for the years ahead.”

Specifically, the side event served as a venue for developing an NTFP Declaration the organizers hoped to see included as part of the WFC' Final Statement and Conclusions and Recommendations. The reason for including an NTFP Declaration into these documents was strategic: Many government forestry agencies and political leaders refer to WFC documents when formulating national level policy and policy research priorities. Participants in the side event thus saw the workshop as a potential opportunity to further an NTFP agenda within the framework of the WFC.

The NTFP side event took place in three phases: 1) A preliminary issues framing stage, in the form of three simultaneous e-discussions and the development of preliminary draft summaries distributed to side event participants immediately prior to the actual event; 2) a day-long workshop composed of formal presentations, small group sessions to identify key issues and concerns, and small group sessions to develop the elements of an NTFP Declaration for inclusion in the WFC's Final Statement and Conclusions and Recommendations; and 3) a post side event meeting of self-selected participants to draft the text of the NTFP Declaration.

Phase I -- NTFP e-discussion

Phase I consisted of three email discussions, or e-consultations, conducted via the Virginia Polytechnic Institute's NTFP website (www.sfp.forprod.vt.edu). The discussions covered three topics: Commercialization, Linking Management and Livelihood, and Institutional and Policy Development. The organizers viewed the e-consultations as a means to "...identify the main obstacles, critical gaps, lessons learned and recommend actions that can be taken to strengthen global partnerships to advance sustainable development of non-wood forest products (www.sfp.forprod.vt.edu/discussion/E-Consultation.htm#Discussion%20Groups).” The organizers also viewed the e-consultations as a mechanism by which “a dynamic global network of stakeholders will be created (www.sfp.forprod.vt.edu/discussion/E-Consultation.htm#Discussion%20Groups).”

Government scientists and land managers, along with a scattering of NGO staff members and independent consultants, were the primary participants in the e-consultations. Thus while helpful at expanding exchange between some stakeholders, the e-consultations lacked input from harvesters and buyers.

Phase II – On-site workshop (side event)

Fifty-four people participated in the side event workshop. As indicated in Table 1, government and UN-affiliated employees made up just over half of the participants. Participants from non-governmental organizations (18.5%) and universities (13%) combined accounted for roughly 31% of the group. Only two harvesters (3.7% of the participants) -- the harvesters sponsored through this project -- took part in the NTFP side-event.

The on-site NTFP side event took the form of an initial set of formal academic-style presentations followed by two sets of small-group, interactive dialogue sessions. The side event began with formal presentations of the e-discussion summaries by the organizers from IUFRO, CIFOR, and FAO. Scientists and managers from government forestry agencies from Canada, the U.S., and India then provided case examples on NTFP management issues in their countries, such as co-management of NTFPs in India and subsistence harvesting in North America.

After the formal presentations and a question and answer session, the group divided into three smaller groups. Each group identified key issues and concerns related to NTFP management in their countries. The organizers also posted a key issues flip chart, where participants could mark down any additional issues and concerns that occurred to them as the meeting continued. The final list of key issues and concerns is provided in Appendix B of this report.

During the last few hours of the workshop, the group divided up once again into smaller groups. These groups put together a list of elements that participants felt needed to be included in the NTFP Declaration for the WFC official proceedings. The organizers assigned moderators to each small group to regulate the flow of discussion. Some of the moderators were more effective than others at ensuring that all participants had a chance to provide their viewpoints.

Table 1: Participants in the NTFP Side Event*

Category	Number Present	% of All Participants
Government Employees	18	33.3
UN or UN-Affiliated	10	18.5
Quasi-Governmental	3	5.6
Non Governmental Organizations	10	18.5
Private Consultants	4	7.4
NTFP Harvesters/Buyers	2	3.7
Universities	7	13.0
All Participants	54	100.0

* Data obtained from <http://www.sfp.forprod.vt.edu/discussion/Participants.htm>

Phase III -- Development and refinement of the NTFP declaration

Phase III of the NTFP side event consisted of the organizers and several self-selected participants putting together an NTFP Declaration for inclusion in the Final Statement, and developing two issues briefs for the WFC's two official working groups: Forests for People and Forests for the Planet. Due to scheduling conflicts, Marla and Janet did not have time to participate in either of these processes. Rebecca and Penny both commented on the draft declaration, as did the two

back-up policy mentors, Susan and Alison. Penny and Susan also provided figures and text for the working group issues briefs.

It is unclear to us whether or how the WFC' Working Groups made use of the issues briefs. It is equally unclear whether and how the NTFP Declaration entered into the hands of the groups that drafted the Final Statement and Conclusions and Recommendations. The Final Statement and Conclusions and Recommendations include several references to non-wood forest resources² but disappointingly do not specifically mention the importance of NTFPs as a stand-alone issue.

Harvester Reflections on the NTFP Side Event

To document Penny and Janet's concerns, experiences, and thoughts about the NTFP side event, we interviewed them the evening before the workshop and again on the morning after. In keeping with our conviction that harvesters and buyers ought to have a direct voice in NTFP policy discussions, we have chosen to put their voices center-stage in this discussion of why harvesters need to be at such events, the challenges they face in terms of participating effectively in science-policy discussions in international arenas, and what people interested in empowering harvesters can do to improve the effectiveness of their participation in policy-framing events. The following section thus presents Penny and Janet's observations in their own words.³

Pre-Workshop Discussion

1. Why did you come to the side event?

Janet -- Well, the people that are digging back home -- and when I say back home I'm including West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio -- are real rural people. These are people that do not have a voice anywhere. *Anywhere*. For the most part they're very low income. They're lucky to get out of their county. They've never been to their state capital, let alone another state, let alone a foreign country. The policies are being made to affect these people, and these people have never had a say in it. They never *will* have a say in it.

And going with you, I felt that there might be some way that I could bridge the gap, so to speak, and make somebody out there that makes the policy realize that we're watching them.... I mean we're *real* upset about it. It really upsets us when there's somebody behind a desk making the

² See Final Statement: "All societies are dependent on forests and trees, and have responsibilities for biodiversity, climate regulation, clean air, soil and water conservation, food security, wood and *non wood products*, energy services, medicines, cultural values (p.1)." "To realize this vision, Congress participants highlight the following prerequisites: management of forests and trees at local and regional scales, interfacing with human settlements, agroforestry systems, *non-wood forest resources* and other natural resource systems (p. 2)."

³ We excerpted the comments included here from a longer set of interview transcripts that included additional discussions not specifically related to the NTFP side event. Researchers interested in obtaining the full transcripts can contact Rebecca McLain at mclain@ifcae.org. The text of the interview excerpts included here has been slightly edited to remove linguistic markers, such as "uh huhs, and hmmmms", as well as occasional side comments, that are not essential to understanding the text.

policies and regulations, decisions for people who are out there doing it, and these people that are making the decisions have never had their hands dirty, have never had their shoes dirty, and they're not about to go out and *dig* with a mattock or a sang⁴ hoe all day long on the side of a hillside for three dollars. They're not gonna do it. They make more than that in fifteen *minutes*. So *that's* why I'm here.

Penny -- Opportunity. I never once imagined I could have the opportunity to address policymakers and explain some of the issues that I see in the field, some of the *answers*, because I believe there are *answers* out there -- if people have the chance to consider a broader point of view. Also, as a result of Katie and Eric's visit there's a lot of local dialogue that we had at the community, our neighbors up and down the street, about changes in our Ozark forest and ways of stopping the cattle raising and the deforestation by giving people other alternatives -- ways of using the land wiser and better and still being able to have a regional income diversification, biodiversity.

There's just a laundry list of reasons and things I want to learn about- -- information I want to take back to my community and our growers' cooperative -- and just kind of explore different ideas with people as well as talk about the problems that I see in current land management practices, and how important it is that we get some policies changed really quickly before we no longer have the biodiversity in our country. That our ability to sustain life is connected with biodiversity.

2. What input do you think you'll have?

Janet -- The only input that I can give is to make sure that people know that there *are* people that are out there that are unlike anybody that you know, that are unlike your neighbors, your friends, anybody that you're in touch with, these people that do this for a living. People whose annual income might be three thousand dollars a year and they're making it. I'd venture to guess...that you don't know people like that. You don't know people that live like that. It's real foreign to most people. And if I can bring a glimpse of that into the conference so that people know that there *is* another world out there that they're not a part of.....We're out there and we're real.

Penny -- That's difficult to say. I have participated in the e-discussions in the papers that are being presented, I guess that's what you'd call them, the issue outlines. I went through them. I've made notes. I've got things to say. I'm sure I'll have the opportunity to present my comments on those three documents. I do think I will participate, and that in of itself is a good end.

3. What concerns do you have about participating in the side event?

Janet -- The only background that can prepare me for this is college, because as far as going into a conference like this, my actual hands-on knowledge is not going to prepare me for this, I don't feel like. It's like we were talking the other night, or last night. The more education you have, the more out of touch you become with the actual workings of a real life and yeah, it concerns

⁴ Hoe for digging ginseng.

me that I might not be able to walk the walk and talk the talk to get them to pay attention to me. I'm gonna put my good clothes on, and I'm gonna lose the accent, not worry about what I'm saying. I envision that if I go act like some backwoods Ozark or Appalachian person, they're not going to pay a bit of attention to me. I really believe that. I mean, if they had been paying attention to people like that before, we wouldn't have to be here right now.

Penny -- I think the academic community is like Janet said. They've lost touch with the natural world and the natural laws. And I think science has corrupted a lot of people -- applied science, let me clarify that -- and a lot of policy is built on applied science. And I don't know how scientists, how carefully they'll listen to something that isn't in accordance with their training...I think there's a lot of erroneous science out there, and how do you get people to re-evaluate what they've known and whether it's true or not unless you go out and have somebody like Janet or my next-door neighbor, and they say, "Well, you know if you don't have this dripline you don't have this plant." So the connection between the land and the academics and the local knowledge, that bridge needs to be built, and I don't know if that's possible, because so many academics think they already know it all -- what can they *possibly* learn from somebody who is living with the land?

4. Will your input have an effect? If so, what effect?

Janet -- I hope so, but I don't see *how*, to be honest with you. We're not the inner circle. I don't see what I have to say meaning a whole lot. I honestly feel that their minds are made up without having to talk to us. We're figuring people will say, "Oh yes, we had some diggers present. You can see that we don't listen to them but they were there." We were there for the numbers, but my honest opinion is that I don't feel that what we have to say is going to make a bit of difference. I really don't. Because we do not have the influence nor the money that they have. And it's not just in this industry. It's in every industry. Money talks. It influences. It's a big thing. And it's going to determine what those people think is politically correct and so what we're going to be allowed to do in the future.

Penny -- World change. Nothing less! You know, I'm not thinking about any limitation whatsoever..... I've got a different approach to humanity. I think our relationship to the land has been that the land is to serve humanity, and *that* at this point has to *change*. We as a *species* have to serve creation. We have to step forward to the plate and say, "It's our job not to consume and create personal wealth, but our job now as each individual is to care for creation." And I think that that's what humanity needs to redefine -- it's role on this planet -- and I'll do anything I *can* to help that shift occur.

4. What arrangements did you have to make in your everyday life to come here?

Janet -- First I had to order a *birth* certificate. Ah gee, it was a *lot* of juggling. Because this is the weekend of our Annual State Trapper's Convention, and I'm in charge of the Young Trapper's Education Program, which coordinates trapper education for kids that are under 17 in the state. And, so I had to quickly find *somebody* that I could tell all that to, so they could take care of all those kids that are ready to learn how to trap this weekend. So, that was taken care of.

And, in the meantime, I'm also the state root grader, and our root auction was Saturday at 4. So there was roots from all over the state to be graded, and there's only three graders. And so I had to find people that were going to be there to grade. Normally all the grading's done on my scales. But my husband was gonna keep my business open so he needed scales, so I had to finagle more scales for his business, to keep it open. And then scales that were gonna go to the convention to grade roots....

Then with the kids, I made three lists, you know -- Get up at five thirty, make sure kids have this that and everything, make sure kids are out the door at six thirty to walk to the bus on time and all. And lots of lists. And then, oh gee, through the weekend I had a babysitter for the kids. The kids are going to church Sunday night, and then somebody's gonna call when the kids get to the end of the holler, and John will have to go and pick them up. And then make sure that they're at the holler at six thirty tomorrow morning to catch the bus to go to school or whatever.

And then, in the meantime, John's not real familiar with my business---so I had to write down every thing: This is #1 Copper, this is #2 Copper. And then, with the roots, I'm just hoping that anybody that comes in is gonna be real honest and say, "I got a poke root," instead of having ten pounds of poke root and saying, "It's *all* ginseng."..... Because John's not quite accepted into the fold yet. He's not quite accepted. So they're gonna push him. You know, test him out and stuff before they accept him.

Oh, let's see. I do have a truck, so I didn't have anybody take me to the airport. The airport is two and half hours from my house so I dropped the kids off at the bus stop, then I went to the airport. Well, actually I didn't go to the airport, I went to my cousin's house, who lives in Charleston, and left my truck in her parking lot. She had to teach Thursday morning. So her retired boyfriend comes over to drive me to the airport. So I didn't have to pay thirty bucks, or whatever, in long-term parking....

Yeah, it takes a lot. This is not the normal course of business. Before, I came? I've been steady cannin' tomatoes and beans to make sure everything's already canned before I had to come here. And then the night before I left I was out in the garden thinking, "Okay, what's gonna rot, what's gonna spoil?" And I went through trying to figure out, "Do I need to can tonight? And, can the apples wait?" I'm looking at cannin' apples just as soon as I get back home so that right there's a biggie. 'Cuz I can't let my food rot. So, yeah, I've been steady cannin' for the last couple weeks getting ready so I could leave.

Penny -- Well, the first thing I had to do—it's the middle of our harvest season—and I've got calls coming in, I've got clients to deal with. I'm in the middle of contract negotiations with Forest Service, and following up on that. So I had to set all of that, you know, rearrange all of that. The airport is two and a half hours away, so my husband had to take a day off from work. And, we had to make childcare arrangements you know, in case he couldn't get back. So, every morning before he can go to work he's doing the childcare—dropping our son off, and we made alternative childcare arrangements. And then, to pick me up, he's got to take another day off work, and then drive that two and a [half hours]. So that's the main thing. Then the cooperative work, with our grower's cooperative. That's just kind of set aside, but that's really about it.

Post Workshop Discussion

1. What are your impressions of the side event?

Penny -- The first thing that struck me about the workshop was the utter arrogance. The *presumption* of those presenters and the limitations with which they approached their task. And it was almost as if they had predetermined outcomes as to things about their *topic*. And it was very narrow.... What I saw in those applications were people who were incredibly elitist, and they were invested in furthering their own knowledge, and proving how much they already know, without thinking in terms of *broader* issues, and having open minds to explore all different dynamics of a topic.

And also the poor people thing *really* gets to me—because that’s almost an extension of imperialism. You know, “We’re gonna help these poor people, which is going to be a part of our agenda, but we’re not *helping* them at all, because we don’t want to *hear* from them. We don’t want them participating in our proceedings. We don’t *really* want to know what’s going on the ground with them, or what their *lives* are about, but we’re gonna *help* them. And, what are we gonna do to help them? Give them more plastic CDs, give them a disposable income.” And that got me a little bit riled.

And, so I got to thinking about my own participation and where I feel like I might have fallen down. And the first thing that hit me is, “My gosh, Penny, you work with wild foods!” When they asked me for, when they said, “Well, give us some facts.” And, in that strange environment I just couldn’t spit out a bunch of facts that I knew. But in the quiet of my room this morning I could say, “Well, eighty percent of the world’s calories come from twenty crops. Of those twenty crops, seventy five percent of the seed stock is controlled by three corporations.” So I had that information in my head, but I could not plug it into the process.....

But it [the workshop] was such a new process to me, that I feel like, you know, if somebody hits you and says, “Well, come up with some facts!” -- I’m just kind of dumbfounded. Even taking the information that I know and presenting it, to learned people who -- and I want to be really calm here (laughs) -- I just think it would have been nice for that workshop, if we had started with the informal groups, developed the intimacy and then had a freer exchange of ideas. And I think that would have been a better way to use all that expertise that was in that room. Because I don’t think we did, even the tiniest bit of the service that was there.

Janet -- The first thing that struck me was how much money had been expended to get everybody to that board. How much their clothes cost, how much the conference room was, how much everybody was paying to get there, how much their plane tickets cost, how much money they were buying in food while they were here. I mean, just there you could feed a whole third world country for years, I’m sure. But yes, money. Money talks.

The one thing that I noticed [is that] we spent quite a long time watching presentations and things like that. I’m not sure what the time frame was. Let’s see -- five hours we listened to things, and then they put us into groups, and said, “Okay, you have *three* minutes to decide the world’s future—right now!. We need these issues! We need these points! Hurry up! Hurry up!

And the lady that was writing them down -- she's writing *really* fast, and she's looking at her watch, and I'm thinking, "What the *hell*?" We were all relaxed watching this slide show and everything but now we're in a real rush. The group that you were in? After we were watching the end thing? What they had was one recommendation out of like pages and pages of stuff. And then it was something *I* didn't understand! I just thought that was pretty ironic. That was pretty funny, actually. And, I guess this is how they deal with that.

2. What observations do you have on who was there and who wasn't there?

Penny -- It's hard because I never participated in an event like this. So, I don't have a model to look at there, with comments made. It was exceptional that there were so many people represented from Western countries. Getting back again to them being -- this is documentation that's going to go to policymakers through a scientific venue. And I think that science is a very narrow way in which to feed information into a big system. So it is *critical* that you continue to bring harvesters and people that understand the land. It is so, so important. And when that was suggested, I watched a few people take a breath, and kind of hold themselves up, and throw their heads back just a tad bit. But it was *so* apparent that it was very *necessary*. And that's where I drew a lot of my conclusions about elitism. And then, as we talked as a group, how much information was not *known*. And the people that could *give* them the information, were the people that worked with the products....The people who weren't in the room. Except for Janet and I.

Janet -- [The people who were there] they were all people that were in charge. People with money. That's probably it in a nutshell. [The people who weren't there were] the people that actually work. I mean, I'm not saying you don't work. Don't get me wrong. I'm talking about the backbreaking work. They weren't there. The pharmaceutical companies weren't there.

3. Did you feel comfortable?

Penny -- Yeah. You know, it was kind of like a Las Vegas showroom. But, comfortable enough, yeah.

Janet -- Did I feel comfortable? In the beginning of the workshop I did. I felt real comfortable because I was in a good spot. I was between Rebecca and Marla. And that's a pretty safe place to be. I mean, when you look around and you see all these stuffed shirts that we were in the room with, I was sitting in a pretty safe spot, I felt. And then, when we got into and did the little groups, and we came back -- I wished that I was walking on the ridge back home. No doubt.

4. What do you think will result from your input?

Penny -- I think it's gonna be bogged down in administrative processes. Which I'm not sure is a *bad* thing. You know? I think there's great changes that need to be made with the current institutions that make decisions about policy for there to be any real headway. Because everything is still based on industrialization, and industrialization does nothing but consume natural resources. The direction I see things going in is that continuation of the industrialization and consumption model. And that's *not* a good thing.

Janet -- I think it might have affected one or two [people]. Only because my words will haunt them. Other than that -- no, I don't feel that it was effective. No I don't feel that they really want us there. I'm speaking as diggers. I don't really think they want us there. It's so hard to explain the way I see this.

I see people with a lot of money and they want to make decisions for this group of people down here that they don't actually want to touch.....They would rather talk about us as a *group*. But when one of that group shows up in real life, they don't *plan* for that. They don't want us there. They might say, "We've extended the offer to the diggers. Too bad those people that make less than \$5,000 a year didn't have enough money to come. But we did extend the offer." It's a token thing. I don't think they really want us there.

I think they do say that they do: "We want them represented, but not physically. We want people like [Marla] to talk for 'em. We want people like you to talk for 'em, because *you* know how to talk, you know how to present yourself." When [Marla] got up there and spoke, those people were all represented out there. Every digger was represented that she had ever talked to, or come in contact with. You can't tell me that that's what they didn't think: "Yeah, that one right there - she's representing them all. They're here."

I've given this a lot of thought because my mind was wandering during some of these presentations that I couldn't quite understand. And it reminded me of the Kennedy Administration and the VISTA programs. Appalachia pretty much took care of itself until the Kennedy Administration. I mean, this is what I understand, okay? I'm not old enough to grasp that. But we all took care of ourselves. I mean, there was *extreme* poverty, there was *some* poverty, and then there were those that had money.

And, then the VISTA workers came down and so forth, all with their hearts in the right *place*. They told everyone they were poor. And, until that point, everybody was just like their neighbor, nobody thought anything about it. "We're no poorer than the neighbor is, than the people down the holler." And nobody thought a thing about it until the officials came down and said, "You're poor. And *we* need to help you." So, at that point they brought in the free food, and the commodities, and the food stamps, and the welfare, and all that and things haven't been the same since.

Their intentions were in the right place. "We're going to help you help yourselves, because you just don't have enough tools to help yourselves." I mean, these are people that have been supporting themselves on their *land* for generations! *But*, somebody from the city looked down and saw these people in their raggedy clothes and their kids with rotten teeth and stuff. And they needed *help*. Based on *their* standards. Based on the standards of the people from the city.

And [now] the poor people are worse off than they've *ever* been. Because when a group of people is used to working--whether for money or not -- money is an issue -- there was a very *small* amount of it, okay? But these people knew if they worked hard in the garden all week or whatever they're gonna eat all winter. But when the officials come down and say, "You don't need to be doing that—here's food stamps, here's commodities, here's this, here's that." After a

while you get out of working. And, that's hard to do anymore. You don't *want* to go back to *digging* and *hoeing* and all that when you're used to getting free rice, butter, and peanut butter.

So, I kind of see this as the same thing happening. You know, *we're* all doing fine. And, I'll be perfectly honest with you, I had *no* idea that anybody out there even knew what we were doing, until Katie and Eric came by. I swear to God, I had *no* idea. I knew our things were sold on the open market. But, when these people from Oregon came by --and they were *great* people, they were *so* nice -- but it just like struck me, "What do they *want* from us? *Why* are they focusing on *us*? We've been doing this for *years*! Leave us alone! Nobody wants to talk, leave us alone!"

But that was the first time that it had ever clicked in my head, that not only are people interested in what we're doing, they want to take it away from us. They want to regulate. They want to take it away from us. And, *why*? We weren't hurting anybody. We weren't bothering anybody. What the people down in the holler do? For me -- it's not my business. So it sure as *hell* shouldn't be theirs. It's a way of life. And they're gonna destroy it if they're not careful. I can see that happening when you're describing the mushrooms and stuff. They're gonna take away a way of life that people have had for generations and generations. And because they think they're doing the right thing, they're gonna destroy it all. And we're gonna have nothing left. That's what I feel.

5. Would you go to another event like this? Are these important for harvesters?

Penny -- Yes. And I would be better prepared. And now I have a better understanding of how these things *work*. And I would draft up my own little ideas and agendas, and have them written and prepared. And then I would just slip them right in there. Make it easy for people to say yes, to make things go in the direction I'd like to see them go. But that doesn't necessarily mean it'd happen. I would try..... I'm sorry, it's just those people are -- I mean they don't have a *clue*. And the more I listened to them, all the more I could see they're caught in their own fallacies, and in supporting their own intellectualism, without really having a desire to understand, to really understand. And, as smart as men and humanity thinks it is, you've got cycles. It's natural laws. And those people think they understand now, and that they can bend the natural laws to their whims.

You've got a double-edged sword here. Yeah. And that's the thing with the local knowledge, too, because as soon as they get the local knowledge, they want to apply it into their industrialized system. So, there's something to be said for people who understand these things. I didn't see real motivation for those people to keep it to themselves, because once these people come in and start dissecting, "Well, how much are you harvesting here, and what are you doing here?" Then they're going to want to regulate it and control it.

So, in good conscience, I don't know how many people -- I'm gonna have to reserve comment on that. I just see it as being a jump. Because, it's important for these people to understand, to have the knowledge, but then what they *do* with it isn't necessarily terribly good for the industry....I go back to that double edged sword. But, I still think the harvesters need to participate, but they need to understand what's done with their information, what the overall agenda's going to be. They need to be a little more politically sophisticated in order to be able to

participate in the system, you know, having information inputted in a way that will *benefit* them, rather than hurt them.

Janet -- It's real possible. If the funding were there for me to go. There's no way I'm gonna spend my own money doing something like this. *I can't*. I can't do it. And there wasn't anybody there in that room yesterday that was doing it either! So I don't see why I should be the one!

Would I go again? First and foremost, I'm an Appalachian. I'm a hill person. And, that's inside of me from the moment I wake up to the moment I go to sleep. The only reason that I would be here is because, unlike most of the people that I deal with everyday, I got an education. My dad took me on trips. I got out. *I got out*. And that was it. Granted I didn't get very far, but I got out. I got out enough to see what the world is like. And no wonder people stay home!

But I feel like -- because I have that edge over the people that I deal with on a daily basis -- if I don't speak for them, nobody will. I'm all that they *have*. I know that there are people who are much more influential than I am that are in my state--but they don't care. They really don't care. I mean, these are my people. I've watched them come to my shop. I've watched their kids grow up. I know when their kids don't have shoes. Yeah. I'd be here.

6. How could we improve our assistance to you in future events? What would you do differently?

Penny -- The event that we participated in was flexible. The organizers didn't really have an agenda. Or there wasn't a lot of structure. So, it wouldn't have been possible for you to communicate, [or] anyone to communicate to us so we had thoughts in mind. And that's the only way I could see being better prepared -- [that is] understanding the processes and ways so that we're prepared to contribute in better ways. It has just been a *wonderful* trip. And I'm so excited to have the opportunity --there's so many different *ideas* that have come from participating in this. And, there's many more doors that are going to open while I'm here.

Janet --I would bring what they want. I'd bring numbers. I'd bring a sheaf of papers in a nice folder. I know that I have to play the game. That if I come here, I have to play the game. Even though the game doesn't really mean much to me. Because I see it for what it is. *It is a game*. I know that it's your all's job, it's your livelihoods and so forth, but, boy, it's a vicious *game*.

A game to me is something that doesn't have to do with life and death. It's kind of like chess, checkers, and whatever. "You just put the people this way, and we'll see what this outcome is, and we'll invest a couple more thousand dollars in clothing and grants and so forth, and we'll put them over here, and see how this goes." It's a game. It's a game. It's a really *expensive* game. A *real* expensive game. And games that cost money aren't played back home.

As a general rule, hill people do not play the game. It's a matter of pride. It's a matter of honor. It's a matter of integrity. *Do not play the game*. Unfortunately that gets us nowhere. So, *somebody* has got to play the game. But, in order to play the game and do it successfully, you have to know it's a game....

Myself -- I wouldn't know how [to change the rules of the game]. Wouldn't know how to *start*. Not on this level. I've played the game in other arenas—and been able to move things over. To be able to get our voice heard. But the arenas that I've played in are *way* out of this league. I mean, this is a league that I've never been in. And I don't *care* to be in. I've never seen such materialism and *superficial* stuff in my whole life. It might be what my kids think is really great, but it's not for me. Whew! Scary thought! Scary thought that those people are deciding my future. Real scary.

I don't mean to sound like a bigot. But I keep feeling like a token black. Yes, I feel that the congress is better because I was here because somebody in that room is gonna take some of those words I said home with them. Because I *know* I rubbed them the wrong way, and they're not gonna get over that tonight. They're gonna think about that next week when something pops up on TV. And they're gonna remember. I mean, it's like, you saw "Deliverance" one time, and you *never* forgot the tune of those banjos. It'll come back to mind, you know? But I would be more prepared. Yeah, more prepared.

My opinion is we need more people like Marla and like you. That's what's gonna get our word out. Because we do not talk the talk, and we don't walk the walk, and you *can't* make us! We don't *bend* that way.....But, people like you -- y'all can represent us, unlike we can represent ourselves, because we can't do it. We can't do it. It's too *close* to us. It's too close to us. Because, what they might decide next week, is gonna decide whether some folks back home can make it through the winter or not.

That's close to us. *That's real* close to us. That makes it become an emotional issue. And when things become an emotional issue, we all lose all objectivity. It's like that girl that was sittin' next to me yesterday with the goldenseal thing -- she's got no objectivity left. She's *passionate*, "This is endangered!" She read that somewhere in a book.

But, we gotta be real careful about that. Where you can speak -- and you still have the emotion -- but you swallow it.⁵ You swallow and you take a breath, and you go [breathes in deeply], and then you start again. And then, on with the presentation! But, what you said in your presentation, which was great, you spoke for, what? Two hundred people that would otherwise have no voice!

Because, even if those people were in that room, do you *really* think anybody would have listened to them? *Really?* *No*. They would have stood there with their hands up until the blood drained down their arm! It was like in the little session. I tried to be nice. And after a while my arm started going numb. But we were raised different than that. We were raised to wait our turn. And it didn't seem right to butt in against people that were so much more *educated*, and knew the deal better than us. We don't do things that way.

In your own way, I believe that you both were very forceful, because if what I was saying got drowned out or tapered off, one of y'all picked it right up. And you were like, "You will listen

⁵ The next few paragraphs refer to the presentation Marla gave at the workshop.

to me, because *I* am Marla. I was up here with a slideshow!” There were token people in there yesterday that people stopped and listened to. I mean they could have been talking about what they could have for dinner, for anybody cared, but everybody would have stopped and listened.

7. Will you share your experiences with your community?

Penny -- Well, of course I’m gonna report to our cooperative members about everything that has taken place. And, I’ve considered writing an article for the local papers because we have rural community. And I’ll probably go ahead and write an article for the paper. I think that the ideas will just be applied generally throughout my work. And then they’ll probably, because I have a website a lot of things will probably wind up being shared or posted on my website. So that’s a broader audience. But at this point in time, I can’t say what that’ll be.

Janet -- I am obligated to talk about this when I get home. The first organization that wants to hear the outcome of this is the National Trapper’s Association. Then, on down to the state and county trapper associations because most of those people are also harvesters. And, they’re anxiously awaiting the outcome. They *want* to know what’s happening. Unfortunately, basically all I’m gonna be able to tell them is to look ‘em in the eye and say, “Man, you’re in a world of hurt!”

Seriously, I think that what I have learned is that I have really, *really* got to keep in touch with what is happening now. It was *so* much easier just to be left alone. It really was. It was so much easier *not* to know what was happening out there. It’s easier being ignorant sometimes. And that’s why *my* diggers know I’m not gonna tell them. They all know that I came up here. And all I’ll have to say is, “Well, you know how *they* are—all they want to do is get their hand in the pot,” and they’ll all understand and go on their way. And that’s all I’ll have to say.

Because, I’m not gonna tell ‘em, “Golly, yeah, they might make some regulations and things that are gonna affect you and your kids.” All that’s gonna do is make them worry for a long time for nothin’ and I’m not gonna do it. I’m not gonna do it. It’s bad enough, I don’t know if *I* want that knowledge now. Sometimes a little bit of knowledge is a *dangerous* thing. You read that all the time. And sometimes a whole lot of knowledge can be a lot worse.

Immediate and Long-Term Project Benefits

This NTFP harvester empowerment project had several immediate benefits, and will yield additional benefits over the long-term. Three key immediate benefits are summarized below.

Inclusion of critical experiential knowledge

Penny and Janet were the only harvester-buyers among the 50 participants in the NTFP side event, which was dominated by university researchers, public forest administrators, and international development organization staff members. They thus provided critical input based

on their extensive on-the-ground knowledge of forest ecologies, market conditions, and regulatory impacts that otherwise would have been absent from the conversation.

Two-way learning opportunities

Penny and Janet's participation in the WFC serves as evidence that it is feasible and desirable to invest time and energy in including harvesters and buyers in international policy discussions. Some examples of the kinds of two-way learning opportunities that occurred as a result of this project are noted below:

- Penny provided marketing information from a US perspective on wild food products and organic seed resources in the breakout NTFP side event discussion. Janet gave her perspective on how suggested regulations might affect harvesters in the Appalachians.
- Penny met people from The Southern Federation of Cooperatives, as well as board members from National Network of Forest Practitioners, two organizations that can help her with developing NTFP cooperative seed sourcing in the Ozarks.
- On learning that the Center for Non Timber Resources in British Columbia is interested in a creating a training program for trappers, Janet provided suggestions for people that the Center's staff could contact within the trapper associations.

Sharing knowledge with others back home

The NTFP Harvester Empowerment team is dedicated to ensuring that information about the NTFP side event and the WFC is widely distributed among harvesters, buyers, NTFP trade associations, small woodland owners, extension specialists, and social scientists. The team is also committed to ensuring that harvesters and buyers continue to have a voice in upcoming policy venues that have the potential to affect the livelihoods of NTFP harvesters and buyers. The following list indicates the range of dissemination and participation activities that the team members have been and continue to be involved with:

- As a result of contacts she made during community forestry sessions at the WFC, Penny obtained funding to participate in the National Network of Forest Practitioners (NNFP) annual meeting in October 2003. She is now taking an active role in the NNFP's NTFP Working Group.
- A chapter of the National Trappers Association partially funded Janet's participation at the WFC. She has shared information about the WFC and the ways in which it can affect trappers at subsequent association meetings.
- Through connections she established at the side event, Penny is seeking support for a sustainable yield demonstration project on pinon pine nut harvesting in Nevada and a sustainable medicinal plants harvesting project in Missouri.

- Penny has begun a letter writing campaign questioning the credibility of the U.S. Forest Service's proposed Healthy Forests Initiative. She initiated this campaign after observing that Initiative proponents in several WFC sessions failed to provide adequate information on the relationships between fuel loads and forest health.
- Penny, Marla, Rebecca, and Eric are all currently active members of the NNFP's NTFP working group, and plan to use their membership in that group as a mechanism for facilitating greater harvester and buyer participation in international and national policy events, including the next WFC.

Key Lessons Learned and Recommendations

As an experiment in how to involve harvesters and small-scale buyers in international forest policy events, the WFC NTFP harvester empowerment project was very successful. A brief discussion of the key lessons learned by the various team members is provided below.

Lesson 1: Importance of a team approach

The team approach of pairing one harvester with one or more policy mentors proved highly successful. As Janet and Penny indicate in their reflections about the side event, the policy mentors played several important support roles. In addition to organizing all the travel and lodging arrangements, they provided information that would otherwise have been difficult or impossible for Penny and Janet to obtain prior to the WFC. They also made certain that the moderators called on the harvesters during group discussions and validated harvester concerns. The policy mentors also functioned as network expanders, introducing Penny and Janet to a variety of other participants likely to have common interests.

Recommendation: We strongly recommend the use of harvester-policy mentor pairs in future harvester empowerment projects. In an event as large and complex as the WFC, we also recommend using policy mentor back-ups.

Lesson 2: Develop links with allies and insiders beforehand

Over the course of the WFC, Penny, Rebecca, and Alison became actively involved with several other stakeholder groups, including the Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management and the Indigenous People's Network. Both groups had invested considerable time and resources in figuring out how the WFC process really worked, and thus were able to ensure that their concerns remained highly visible throughout the WFC and figured prominently in the Final Statement. Both groups had the added advantage of having connections with members of the WFC's two official Working Groups, which the NTFP group did not have.

Recommendation: Future NTFP harvester empowerment efforts should establish links with the Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management and the Indigenous People’s Network (or their equivalents) at future policy events. Potential additional allies in the next WFC also include the agroforestry and small woodland owners’ groups. Additionally, organizers of future NTFP harvester empowerment projects should identify and make contacts with official event delegates prior to the policy event to improve the chances that NTFP concerns will figure prominently on the Final Statement.

Lesson 3: Select harvesters and buyers for leadership and diversity

The policy mentors and technical advisors debated at length on the best criteria to use for selecting harvesters to go to the WFC. With funds to support only two harvesters, we could not possibly hope to encompass the range of diversity that exists within the U.S. NTFP harvester and buyer population. Given that a key reason for doing the project was to empower harvesters, we thus opted to select the participants primarily on the basis of their demonstrated leadership capacity within their respective communities. This strategy worked very well. Penny and Janet quickly grasped the political dynamics of the WFC and the NTFP side event, and were able to insert their views forcefully, but at the same time, diplomatically. Because of their leadership positions within their communities, they have also been able to share their experiences with a broad range of harvesters, buyers, and land managers.

A second consideration in our selection of harvesters was the geographic mix we wished to have for the entire team, including policy mentors. NTFP issues and concerns differ significantly by geographic regions in the United States, particularly with respect to the western regions, which are dominated by public land ownership and the eastern regions, which are dominated by private land ownership. In addition, NTFP issues of the Pacific Northwest have received much greater media and forest policy attention than those in other regions of the U.S. We thus selected harvesters with an eye toward maximizing the number of regions covered by all of the team members. Given the strong background of the policy mentors in the Northeast and Pacific Northwest, we opted to select harvesters with experience in the Southwest, Ozarks, and the Appalachians to round out the team’s combined knowledge.

Recommendation: We recommend that future NTFP harvester empowerment efforts adopt selection criteria similar to those that worked so well for this project. Above all, the harvesters selected need to have the capacity to function effectively in a politically charged environment where their views are in the minority, and where other group members are likely to look down on their abilities and background. In our experience, people who can speak forcefully, but without alienating those who disagree with them, are the most likely to be effective in changing their opponents’ worldviews. Additionally, the harvesters also need to be open-minded, and bring with them a broad range of experiences with respect to NTFP harvesting and an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of views within their own communities.

Lesson 4: Numbers make a difference

Nearly 5,000 people attended the WFC in 2003. The 54 participants at the NTFP side event made up roughly 1% of the total number of participants. It is likely that additional NTFP harvesters from developing and developed countries participated in the WFC sessions through the indigenous peoples' movement. For future events, it is important to make sure that the NTFP message comes from those groups, as well as at specific side-events.

In trying to figure out how to enhance the audibility and visibility of NTFP harvesters in future international policy events, Penny, Rebecca, and Alison identified the community based forestry management (CBFM) and indigenous peoples movements as possible models. Both of these groups had large numbers of participants present. The indigenous peoples' movement had managed to obtain an official side event for its discussions. The community forestry group enhanced its visibility and credibility by organizing a large number of related unofficial side events that were impossible for other WFC participants to overlook. Importantly, both the community forestry and indigenous peoples' movements also donned special attire (traditional dress for the indigenous peoples and specially made T-shirts for the community forestry stakeholders) so that they would stand out in the crowd.

Recommendation: We recommend that future harvester empowerment efforts seek to obtain support for sufficient numbers of NTFP harvester participants to form a critical mass of voices and a physical presence that the event organizers will find politically difficult to sideline or ignore. We suggest a three-pronged strategy.

- First, expand the number of harvesters included in a project aimed specifically at encouraging harvester participation, with the goal of having perhaps 10-15 harvesters at the next WFC.
- Second, if a funded position can be created for organizing an NTFP empowerment project, the organizer can be charged with establishing links with groups such as the Indigenous People's Network, the Global Caucus on Community Forest Management, the Small Woodland Owners, and the agroforestry networks, to identify any harvesters and buyers participating as part of those groups.
- Third, the project organizer can also facilitate the development of a side event organized in collaboration with harvesters and buyers (with participation open to all, of course) to discuss issues specific to them.

Lesson 5: Who coordinates matters

The success of the community forestry and indigenous peoples movement in getting their issues onto the official agenda appeared to be closely linked to the independence of those groups from

the United Nations and affiliated institutions, and thus the willingness of the groups' leaders to put forth controversial statements and propose new ways of doing things.

Recommendation: Getting a real seat at the WFC table (or any other international forest policy process) requires coordinators who are well-versed in the process, and who are willing to rock the boat to ensure that NTFP issues figure prominently in official sessions and proceedings. Coordinators who come from independent groups are less likely to feel that their jobs are at stake if they need to subvert the official process to get NTFP stakeholder voices heard.

Lesson 5: Effective empowerment requires adequate resources

Although we were very pleased with the outcome of this NTFP Harvester Empowerment project, the in-kind costs (mostly in the form of volunteer time by policy mentors and technical advisors) amounted to approximately \$30,000 over a 12-month period. This amount is far more than most individuals or non-profit organizations can afford to contribute on a regular and sustained basis.

Recommendation: Developing an effective long-term harvester empowerment effort requires obtaining substantial long term funding to cover the following items:

- a) The costs of getting from 10-15 harvesters and buyers to and from key policy events, as well as lodging, meals, and other associated fees;
- b) Dedicated funding for a person to develop funding proposals and handle organizational logistics; and
- c) Funding to cover the costs of policy mentors to participate alongside harvesters and buyers.

We suggest that The Ford Foundation consider earmarking a portion of the funds that it currently uses to support the involvement of community based forestry practitioners in international policy discussion toward the empowerment of NTFP harvesters and buyers in those same events. The NNFP's NTFP Working Group provides a structure that could potentially carry out such a mandate within the framework of the Global Caucus on Community Based Forest Management.

Conclusion

The Ford Foundation's support of NTFP harvesters and policy mentors at the XIIth WFC has provided numerous benefits to the individuals and organizations involved in the short run. Our hope is that by sharing the information we've acquired with fellow harvesters, buyers, scientists, and policy makers, and by working to encourage greater harvester-buyer participation in future international and national policy discussions, that we will support the development of forest management practices and policies that foster sustainable livelihoods for the many and diverse people who depend upon nontimber forest products for income, sustenance, recreation, and the maintenance of long-standing cultural traditions.

“I don’t think it’s important that everybody know what plants are what. But I do think it’s important that policymakers have *some* idea, I mean *real* idea (Janet).”

“I would like to be able to thank the Ford Foundation for doing this....not in a million years would I have had the opportunity to do something like this....There’s immediate application for so many things that I’m taking away from here. Thank you very much. And on behalf of my community members, and my cooperative members, thank you very much (Penny).”

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Appendix A -- NTFP Quebec Declaration

Quebec Declaration on:

Strengthening Global Partnerships to Advance Sustainable Development
of Non-Wood Forest Products

World Forestry Congress, Side Event, 20 September 2003

The full-day side event was organized by the International Union of Forestry Research Organization (IUFRO, Group 5.11 Non Wood Forest Products), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N. (FAO Non- Wood Forest Products Programme) and was attended by approximately 50 people from around the world. The objectives of the meeting were to identify and prioritize emerging issues for the development of the NWFP sector; and to draw the attention of the WFC and forest resources decision makers on key policy and research recommendations for the years ahead.

Background documents were prepared based on the outcome of a pre-Congress global e-consultation process along the themes: Commercialization: A reality check; Linking NWFP Management with Livelihood Development; and Institutional and Policy Dimensions. The 3 background papers and participant contributions were presented and discussed in plenary that was followed by group discussions along the WFC themes: Forests for the Planet; and Forests for People.

Rationale

- NWFP's are of growing importance in both the North and the South. There is increasing evidence of this importance in the North.
- NWFPs are harvested from wild to intensively managed systems.
- NWFP uses, users and production approaches change over time, and are significant at all levels of society, from local to global.
- There are important opportunities to manage forests for multiple purposes and products that will increase forest values.

Issue 1: There is a profound lack of information necessary to realize the full benefits of NWFPs for individual, community and national well-being; decision-makers, forest managers and resource users alike lack

information about economic, ecological and social characteristics of NWFPs and their uses.

Recommendation 1a: The participants of the side event on NWFPs of the WFC recommend that government efforts be strengthened to conduct research and generate, compile and disseminate information and statistics to key stakeholders on NWFP resources and their socioeconomic and ecological values.

Recommendation 1b: The participants recommend that governments and development agencies support education and public awareness programs for NWFP conservation and sustainable use.

Issue 2: Lack of protected rights to access and benefit from NWFP resources can adversely affect their conservation and sustainable use and discourage investment in the resource.

Recommendation 2a: The participants recommend that governments, with assistance from concerned agencies and organizations, develop and implement policies and legislation to provide secure access and benefits to the people whose livelihoods are dependent on or supplemented by non-wood forest products.

Recommendation 2b: The participants recommend that governments, with assistance from concerned agencies and organizations, ensure that stakeholders, particularly collectors, growers and traders are provided incentives to sustainably manage NWFP resources.

Issue 3: Individuals, communities and institutions generally lack the technical, financial, political and social capacity to influence policies and generate information necessary to manage and monitor NWFP resources effectively.

Recommendation 3a: The participants recommend that governments, with assistance from concerned agencies and organizations, support programs and projects to build individual, institutional, and community-based capacity to manage NWFPs through multi-stakeholder participation.

Recommendation 3b: The participants recommend that governments and research agencies give priority to research and the development and dissemination of management practices to be integrated into multi-purpose forest and agroforest resource management.

Appendix B – NTFP Side Event, Issues and Concerns

NON-WOOD FOREST PRODUCTS SIDE EVENT

20 September 2003

WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS, QUEBEC CITY, CANADA CONCERNS & ISSUES RAISED

During the side event, participants were encouraged to post concerns and issues for further consideration. Due to time constraints, these were not discussed during the event. Although they were not part of the formal discussions, they are deemed important enough to warrant inclusion on the website. We hope that by posting these to the website, more discussion will ensue. The concerns and issues are not presented in any particular order.

- Establishing credibility in industry and government is one of the major barriers to having more research (biological/ecological on specific NTFP, determining what else might be causing scarcity of certain NTFPs, etc.) conducted and in having a larger emphasis on NTFPs and their value to rural economies.
- Important for WFC organizers and organizers of other international policy forum to build funding and internal organizational capacity to ensure that harvesters, buyers, processors, retailers/wholesalers are included in these discussions (including from N. America, Europe, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand).
- If you broaden NWFP to include services like biodiversity conservation, carbon storage, or water, it might be wise to reconsider the definition.
- Full value of NTFPs often/usually doesn't go to harvesters.
- Use existing policy frameworks (CBD, WCSD, Millennium goals) to get political support for key issues. Formulate issues concisely.
- Agroforestry systems and practices are proven sustainable land uses approaches. NTFPS can be integrated into agroforestry systems to enhance profitability and environmental benefits to producers and communities. Policies, research and extension efforts need to foster this integration.
- Need to develop marketing intelligence systems for commercialization
- Need to prioritize key sub-sectors of NTFP industry in-light of different agro-regions

- Develop a tool that allows/provides government, harvesters, etc. the means to assess the opportunities of the NTFP, according to their objectives. It needs to be simple and worldwide useable.
- We have to bring the message across: What are NTFPs? How can they make a difference? Why put any effort into promoting them?
- It is important to understand all the factors that contribute to declines in NTFP species availability
- Recognize that often it is other land uses and not NTFP “overharvesting” that are the main contributors to resource depletion.
- There is a need to research harvester demographics in order to fully understand the socio-economic value of NTFPs
- How to provide market information to all the players in the commercialization.
- The challenge for commercialization is how to level the playing field so that all NTFP stakeholders can participate in the process.
- Credibility requires objective information; identification of significant products; assessment of their social and economic importance and their geographical location.
- What is poor? Need another word.
- We [harvesters] may be poor, but we are not stupid! Include harvesters in this discussion
- NTFPs are about people, harvester who do have ecological knowledge on management. An action should be for forest managers to involve harvesters at all stages of management planning.
- NTFP development for poverty alleviation means empowerment to the poor
- Tension between cultivation, commercialization, livelihood values to economically disadvantaged, and capture of NTFP value by the elite.
- Production chain development for NTFP should focus on better access/control for poor and marginalized people
- NTFPs are not just “a poor man’s” issue
- Wealth of traditional ecological knowledge on many NTFPs not studied by formal science. Attendant intellectual property rights concerns.