



Pro-Natura

Member of IUCN, The World Conservation Union

Innovation for Participatory Community Development 'helping people to help themselves'

Pro-Natura was started in Brazil in 1985 and by 1992 had become one of the very first 'Southern' NGO to be internationalized following the Rio Conference, **Pro-Natura International** based in Paris.

Pro-Natura's mission is closely aligned to the objectives of the United Nations conventions on **biodiversity**, **climate change** and **combating desertification**. Its efforts are focused on the social, economic and environmental problems facing rural communities in the Tropics. Twenty years of working with rural communities to these ends has allowed Pro-Natura to adapt **innovative, poverty-reducing solutions** towards the other sustainable development goals of environmental protection and restoration.

Pro-Natura offers viable economic alternatives to people struggling to make a living from these imperilled environments. This Pro-Natura synergy is achieved by linking the preservation and restoration of natural resources to the (re) establishment of participative local governance.

In order to ensure the highest degree of effectiveness, our development programs are:

- **Participatory:** Decisions are made by the members of the communities, encouraging transparency and individual accountability
 - **Multisectorial:** All aspects of community life — economic growth, natural resources management, culture, education and health — are taken into consideration
- This 'bottom-up' approach has led **many private corporations to support Pro-Natura's innovative and replicable** local development models.

Pro-Natura is offering the following services

- Community and local government development
- Training programmes to promote, facilitate and strengthen participatory community development
- Promoting sustainable farming, agroforestry & sustainable forestry
- Fostering of small & medium sized enterprises and markets
- Cross-border conservation areas planning and implementation
- Environmental, social and human impact assessments of investments
- Exploration of forest canopies & biodiversity preservation
- Biomass energy assessment and projects (green-charcoal machine)

Innovate... Sustainable farming and Agroforestry



Wilfrid Pineau manages the Agroforestry training projects in Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast. On his left, Babatunde Akinsinde from Leventis Foundation..

During the past 30 years, more than half of the world's tropical forests have been destroyed. These forests represent a rich source of biodiversity as well as a means of mitigating climate change.

Unsustainable farming practices are a major cause of deforestation and global warming. To reduce these effects of farming on tropical forests, we must break the vicious circle that drives impoverished people to destroy the environment.

Agroforestry solutions build upon traditional farming practices, combining tree farms, farming and/or animal husbandry. Agroforestry technologies allow farmers in heavily populated tropical regions to meet their basic needs and **increase agricultural income, while preserving the fertility of their soil.** Pro-Natura has extended and adapted its agroforestry model, developed in **South America, to tropical Africa and Asia.**

The aims of these programmes are to:

- Ensure the local food supply and rural income growth, while protecting tropical forests
- Design pertinent educational tools for agroforestry and environmental management training
- Promote information sharing between southern countries ■

In January 2003, Pro-Natura created the **Niger Delta Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD)**. The Institute brings together the lessons learned in community development and is designed to improve the management skills and training of local people.

The ISD takes the processes and lessons learned 'in the field', and develops training programmes designed to promote, facilitate and strengthen participatory community development. Training covers the vast field of sustainable participatory development theories, practices and methodologies for:

- Individuals, including Chiefs, 'Leaders of Thought' amongst the 'elites', women and youth, as well as trained and professional people in retirement
- Community Based Organisations, NGOs, other associations and churches
- The oil industry and other private sector industries
- Donor agencies
- Local, State and Federal Government legislators and extension staff
- University students, graduates and researchers

With many years of experience in industrial and infrastructure projects in developing countries, Pro-Natura has created a unique methodology for the implementation of environmental, social and human impact assessments of industrial projects. ■

Innovate... through Management Training and Institution Building

Chief Bill Knight,
Director Strategic Development and Capacity
Building, Pro-Natura International (Nigeria)





The Canopy-Glider created by Dany Cleyet-Marrel.

Nelson Mandela
Patron Emeritus of
the «Peace Parks» Foundation.

IUCN, (The World Conservation Union) has developed the concept of cross-border conservation areas. The South African '**Peace Parks' Foundation** is the first organization to systematically implement this concept. Nelson Mandela, in support of the Peace Parks, stated that: 'I don't know of any political movement, philosophy or ideology which would not agree with the development of the Peace Parks concept'. Pro-Natura has been asked to expand the Peace Parks concept to South America as a means of enriching it with its participatory sustainable development experience.

Innovate... to Preserve Biodiversity

The vast majority of the world's Biodiversity is found in tropical forests. Tropical deforestation threatens the planet's genetic heritage. Aside from protecting ecosystems, forest conservation protects watersheds, reduces soil erosion and promotes economic development. Due to the fact that around 20% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from tropical deforestation, forest conservation also plays an important role in preventing global warming.

The **Canopy-Raft**, operated by Pro-Natura since 1996, has been both a media and scientific success in Africa and South America. The Raft enabled participation in tropical canopy (tree top) **expeditions** that promoted Biodiversity research and defined a Biodiversity conservation strategy for these previously inaccessible areas. Inspired by the success of the Canopy-Raft, Pro-Natura, in co-operation with the company 'Green Ocean', developed the **Canopy-Glider**. This innovative technology, launched in 2005, further improves access to the rainforest canopy. ■

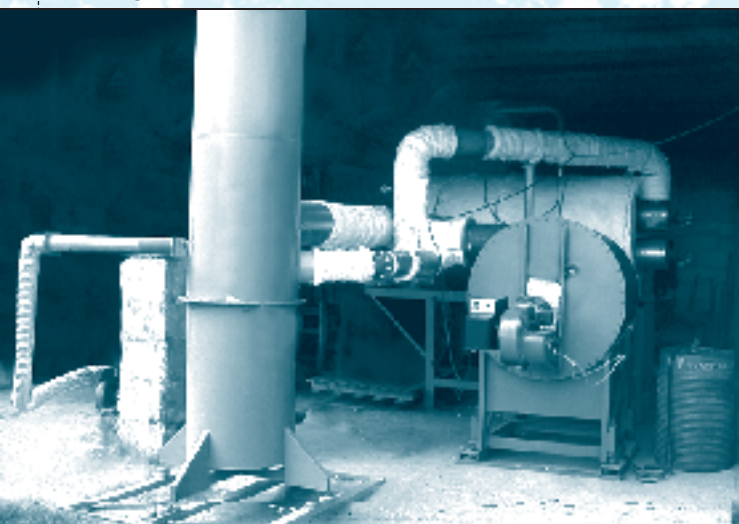
Innovate... through Biomass Energy and Carbon Sequestration

Two billion people around the world use wood for household energy needs. This contributes significantly to the world's deforestation activities as well as increasing the risk of droughts and desertification. In an attempt to reduce deforestation, Pro-Natura, in co-operation with the engineering firm Eco-Carbone (www.eco-carbone.com), has developed **Green-Charcoal**.

This technological innovation, using agricultural residues and unused biomass, produces an environmentally friendly and economically competitive alternative to wood and charcoal. It has been awarded the 1st Prize 2002 of the AL-TRAN Foundation for technological innovation.

Carbon sequestration is another means of reducing the greenhouse effect. Reforestation and agroforestry practices allow the excess of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to be stored in trees and in soil (in the form of organic matter). The consequent revitalization of the soil also improves agricultural productivity. In this field Pro-Natura also collaborates with Eco-Carbone. ■

Pyro-6
demonstration machine
in Camargue.



Participatory Projects: Three examples

...Akassa, a show case for 'bottom-up' community driven development



Micro-credit meeting
in Akassa.



Mané Soto with son in
their coffee plantation.

...with the local people in Amazonia

Nigeria - Niger Delta: Pro-Natura began working with the Akassa community - **population 40,000** - in the Niger Delta in 1997. Pro-Natura has since established a **Development Foundation** that assumes responsibility for development activities and includes a Board of Trustees elected by the Community. This democratic structure, built on principles of transparency and responsibility, has inspired great confidence amongst the local people. The participatory development process has permitted the Akassa people to define **their own development plan**.

The plan involves:

- Relinquishing large infrastructure projects in order to focus on micro-projects
- A locally managed micro-credit system (\$100,000 lent with 99% repayment)
- The creation of health, education and training institutions
- A natural resources management plan that has resulted in part of Akassa being selected as a RAMSAR* site, the second in Nigeria

The Pro-Natura **coastal development initiative** is extending this development model along the entire Niger Delta coastline, so transforming a corridor of conflict into an avenue of peace, involving at present more than **200,000 people and soon 500,000**. ■

Brazil - North-Western Mato Grosso: Pro-Natura began to battle deforestation in the Mato Grosso state of Brazil in 1990. Local stakeholders, including farmers, foresters and local officials have since been called to take part in the **participatory**

* The Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

project 'Vidamazônia'. The project presently involves **100,000 people living on 11 million hectares**. The Global Environment Facility has committed to providing funding for the project until 2008.

This project is also multisectorial and involves:

- Environmental analyses to determine the most appropriate usage of land
- Establishment of an agroforestry applied research centre
- Implementation of a nursery which distributes 300,000 seedlings a year
- Set up of agroforestry systems on farms
- Collaboration with local businesses to ensure sustainable forest management
- Local valorisation of wood by producing furniture and creation of small scale local agro-industries
- Creation of a carbon sink, in the form of reforestation with indigenous species, in partnership with Peugeot and the French National Forest Administration ■

Guyana - Pro-Natura has been working with Amerindians in Guyana for six years, building a training and development centre with agriculture, forestry, natural resource management and cultural preservation as its core programme. Using a participatory approach it has achieved:

- Establishment of a development and training facility with solar energy and internet
- Training in management and natural resources for over 1,000 people in two years
- Excellent working relationships with Government, NGOs and local stakeholders
- Establishment of a loggers cooperative and community forestry programme ■

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