Ireland

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Contents

1. DOMESTIC FORESTS AND FORESTRY

The history of Ireland is reflected in the history of its forests. The rural idyll which characterises external perceptions of Ireland belies a land which is one of the most deforested in Europe, and whose deforestation has been, to a significant extent, a manifestly political phenomenon. Ireland, never itself a colonial power, was long a colony of another European nation (Britain). This dependent status, and the injustices and hardships which accompanied it (most notably the Great Famine of 1845–9), have had their influence on Irish attitudes to humanitarian aid. They have contributed to the solidarity which many Irish people feel with the developing world, a solidarity underwritten by Ireland's long history of missionary work and its prominent role in international peacekeeping and humanitarian affairs.

1.1 The history of Irish forests

In Irish folk history, the country was known as *'Fidh-Inis'*, the wooded isle. The remains of ancient forests found at great depth in Irish boglands are evidence of widespread and undisturbed forests during early human habitation. The Mesolithic peoples (6000 BC) were hunters and gatherers who concentrated seasonally around forest edges, lake-shores and the coasts. Forests in the lowlands were dominated by oak, ash, elm and yew associations, with widespread hazel. Willow, birch and alder forests were found in the wetter sites while pine was found on the higher ground.

Three thousand years later, the Neolithic agriculturalists arrived from the northern regions. These were cultivators and pastoralists who rapidly cleared the land for tillage (mainly oats) and for pastures. Hazel, ash, hawthorn and holly were common firewood species. Hazel nuts were also an important part of the human diet, and hazel scrub was maintained as wood pasture (Rackham, 1986).

Bog development was the most important early factor in forest change in Ireland. As the boglands developed, starting about 5,000 years ago, species dominance shifted. Large areas of forests comprising oak, birch, ash, alder, yew and pine were colonised by bogs. Hazel became widespread, and formerly abundant species, such as elm and Scots pine, declined rapidly under human influence.

1.1.1 Ancient laws of land and woodland

The Brehon Laws, dating back to the seventh century AD, are the oldest known land laws in Ireland. Under Brehon law, there was no concept of private ownership or land transfer. The dominant concept was of land use, and with the right of use came certain obligations. Penalties could be imposed for poor management of trees, and tree listings and classifications were included in the Brehon Laws. The ancient population, the Celts, treated woodlands as commons, held jointly by the members of a tribe. Early management systems may have existed for species such as hazel coppice (used for wattle) and hazel and elm woodlands for wood pasture.

1.1.2 The Norman influence

The invading Norsemen (eighth-eleventh centuries) and later the Normans and Anglo-Normans (from 1169) abandoned traditional land and timber laws and introduced the concepts of possession and dispossession of land. Leasing and sub-leasing of land were introduced. The Normans contributed substantially to forest decline, with large-scale forest clearances from 1200 AD, mainly in the most fertile areas (O'Carroll, 1987). Clearing for year-round grazing was widespread, and felling for fuel and construction placed heavy pressure on the woodlands. A trade in the export of Irish oak emerged by the late fourteenth century, and continued for 300 years and more (McCracken, 1977).

1.1.3 Forest exploitation, 1500–1800

The English Tudor dynasty (1485–1603) adopted a policy of conquest in Ireland, confiscating Irish lands and transferring them to English settlers. Ireland's forests acted as refuges for both the Irish and the Tudor armies. In the late sixteenth century, Queen Elizabeth I of England ordered the destruction of Irish forests and woodlands, as a means of gaining greater control over the territory. Timber exploitation was encouraged, and this gave a boost to the English shipbuilding industry.

At the start of the seventeenth century, 12.5% of the country was forested. Two hundred years later, the cover was less than 2% (McCracken, 1977). There were three main causes of this deforestation. The first was the high domestic demand for wood, wood products and fertile arable and grazing land, as new settlers arrived from England and Scotland, and new towns and villages appeared. The second factor was the growing export trade in Irish timber, mainly oak. And thirdly, industrial development was also a voracious consumer of wood. From the sixteenth century, industries such as iron-smelting and glass-making were heavy users of charcoal. One ton of iron required 2.5 tons of charcoal – the equivalent of roughly an acre of 5-year old oak coppice (Neeson, 1991). Industrial growth in Britain and Europe also created a demand for other export products, many of them dependent on wood or wood products (casks for transport, bark for tanning skins, etc.).

As the Irish forests declined, imports of timber increased. By the late 18th century almost all of the country's need for softwoods was coming from Norway and Russia (at this time, Ireland had no softwood supply of its own), and from the mid 18th century, it was also importing quantities of ash, beech and oak from England, and mahogany and ebony from Central America and West Africa.

1.1.4 Estate afforestation, 1700–1800

The Dublin Society (later the Royal Dublin Society) was formed in 1731, and in 1741 introduced a premium scheme for afforestation which lasted for forty years. Its beneficiaries were mainly large landowners who, experiencing new-found security of ownership, began to invest in the development of their properties (Neeson, 1991). Regular planting premiums were introduced in 1765 for the planting of oak, ash, elm and pine, and in 1783, these were increased for enclosed plantations of not less than 10 acres, supporting 2,000 trees or more per acre. Other planting schemes were introduced over the next two decades. In the period 1766–1806, an estimated 25 million trees were planted, largely as a result of the Society's efforts.

1.1.5 The Act of Union and 'absenteeism'

With the Act of Union in 1800, the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland came into being. As London replaced Dublin as the capital of Ireland, so was there a rise in the distinctive Irish phenomenon of the 'absentee landlord'. Rents were increased to support the landlords' extravagant lifestyles, and years of harsh living for the Irish tenant farmers ensued, characterised by evictions, insecurity and food shortages (O'Brien, 1977). The independence movement grew in the countryside, fuelled by tenurial insecurities and land repossession.

Around this time attitudes to tree species selection began to change. Interest in conifers as a quick-growing and cheaply-maintained alternative to the oak grew steadily, aided by a shift in demand, as iron ships began to replace the traditional oak-built vessels. This period was a watershed not only for the oak but for the character of natural woodland in Ireland. The demise of the oak stimulated a fresh approach to the denuded landscape. Scientific interest was nurtured in exotics such as Douglas fir and Sitka spruce from the Americas, which thrived on difficult acid soils. Plans were stalled, however, as climatic and social conditions in the 1840s led to a national potato blight and a five-year period of great deprivation and suffering.

1.1.6 The Irish Famine, 1845–9

The Great Famine resulted in the death of almost one million people from hunger and disease, and led to the start of a movement of mass emigration of 2 million people, mainly to Canada and the United States (Kee, 1981). In the short term, the decline in the country's population, from 8 million in 1841 to 6 million in 1851, changed the national population structure, and substantially reduced the number of small tenant family members dependent on subsistence farming.

1.1.7 Movement for Land and Social Reform

A national Irish movement in an organised sense had its beginnings in 1793. The common perception among many Irish people was that trees represented a tangible sign of land dispossession. Decades of persecution resulted in a strong focus on land and land rights by the majority of the Irish population who were predominantly tenants with little security of tenure.

The Famine years provided a stimulus to political solidarity at home and led, ultimately, to increased access to external financial support from the emigrant community. The land agitation movement grew in strength from 1879 onwards, and secret agrarian societies transformed themselves into an efficient and organised Land League. The Land Acts of 1881 and 1885 met some of the demands of the Land League by giving tenants fairer rents, guaranteed tenure and free sale, with compensation for land improvements made during tenancies. Substantial transfer of ownership followed the Land Purchase Act of 1903. This required landlords to sell to tenants if 75% of them were willing to purchase, and credit for purchases was made available by the state. In the period 1903–1920, 9 million ha changed hands By 1917, a true Irish farmer class had emerged, and two-thirds of all farmers owned their own land.

1.1.8 Land transfer and its impact on forestry

While the passage of the 1903 Act was a welcome move in terms of land and social reform, its effects on forestry were less positive. Under the new law, landowners were unable to retain ownership of the trees on any land they were forced to sell. Though a woodland preservation scheme was introduced, this was severely underfunded. Landowners, realising that they had little chance of adequate compensation, destroyed large acreages of private woodland and sold the timber to the sawmillers. In effect, landlords sold their former woodlands as purely agricultural land.

The ex-tenants who became the new owners likewise had little incentive to preserve their trees. Many of them needed quick revenue and income from annual crops. Almost three-quarters of the sawmills which existed in 1907 came into being in the aftermath of the Land Acts of 1881 and 1903.

1.2 The development of Irish forestry

1.2.1 Towards a national forest policy

In 1907, a Departmental Committee on Forestry was established whose report, in 1908, laid some of the foundations for an Irish forest policy. The area under woodland in Ireland was estimated to be roughly 1.5% of the total and was shrinking, with only 400 acres planted annually. The Committee's main concern was that once land passed to tenant farmers, it was irretrievably lost to afforestation. It strongly recommended that the government assume responsibility for the acquisition of land for forestry development. The 1908 report envisaged roles for both state and private ownership in forestry development. Links were established with both Germany and France, and there was strong interest in scientific forestry.

With the creation of the Irish Free State in 1921, forestry was assigned to the Department of Lands and Agriculture. A modest programme of government afforestation was undertaken, with plantings growing from 200 ha in 1922 to 1,600 ha by 1933. Private woodlands continued to be neglected, however, with uncertainties as to the future of the timber export trade to the British market, and many reverted to grazing land. The new government recognised afforestation as a priority and encouraged a programme of replanting. The types of land available to afforestation were mainly marginal for agriculture. The principal species planted during the early years of the Free State were Scots pine, European larch and Norway spruce. The Forestry Act of 1928 sought to limit felling on private lands, and a planting subsidy was introduced.

During the Second World War, firewood demands increased as coal imports were restricted. Despite delays in seed supply from North America, 2,000 ha were planted annually throughout the war. By 1948, the long-term strategy of the government included a planting target of 10,000 ha over a 40-year period, in order to secure the country's softwood supplies. With developments in deep ploughing techniques, afforestation on the western peats began in the early 1950s. Two species, Lodgepole pine and Sitka spruce were planted on these peats and exhibited fast growth and high increment. By the year 1959–60, the annual planting target was achieved.

Economics came to feature strongly in Irish forest policy from the late 1950s. The need for efficiency was stressed in the 5-year Economic Expansion Programme of 1958. Maximum economic returns (rather than maximum wood production) were to be the goal. State forest lands increased substantially from the 1950s onwards; by contrast, private forest enterprise among small farmers was negligible. By the 1970s, the forest industry was severely affected by the international oil crisis, and falling prices coupled with rising production costs led to a recession in the industry. In 1973, Ireland became a member of the European Economic Community. Land prices rose sharply, and this affected the acquisition of land for forestry.

1.2.2 The growth in the private forest sector

When Ireland joined the European Community in 1973, the total forest area under private ownership was 81,963 ha (Purcell, 1979). By 1994, the area was 127, 000 ha, 24% of the total forested area (COFORD, 1994). One of the major factors contributing to this expansion was the changing economic situation for 'conventional' agriculture. Surpluses, high market support costs and a decline in world demand all indicated poor prospects for traditional agricultural products and encouraged growing out-migration from the rural areas. Ireland benefited from the structural funds available to less developed areas of the European Community. Diversification was established as a rural development strategy, and the importance of forestry in rural wealth creation was recognised in Irish development plans (FOP, 1994).

At farm level, the major incentive to tree planting was provided by the guarantee of regular income in the short term, rather than the prospect of high future returns. Response had been poor under the first EC-assisted scheme, the Western Package Scheme, which covered only establishment costs (and almost half of the beneficiaries were investment companies rather than farmers). But private plantings improved dramatically with the introduction of increased grant levels and a compensatory allowance in 1987, as well as three new schemes which widened the eligibility of planters and the areas covered, and guaranteed income from plantation establishment for up to 15–20 years. Additional schemes were introduced in the early 1990s. These included grants for woodland improvement and reconstitution, assistance for co-operatives, and a forestry partnership scheme in which ownership of land is retained by the farmer but planted by the State Forestry Board, Coillte. Income received from all these schemes is tax-free.

The overall investment in private forestry since 1982 has amounted to IR£80 m. (of which IR£56 m. was from European Community financial assistance). In the decade to 1993, the area of private planting was 110,820 ha, 44% of which were covered by EC and Irish Government schemes. Investment companies dominated the planting programme in the period 1982–8, but these have gradually given way to private farmers, and by 1993 75% of all plantings fell into the latter category. Co-operative bodies have played an increasing role in the past decade. This is a new development; unlike many other European countries, Ireland lacks a history of co-operative forestry.

1.2.3 Irish forestry today

The forest sector in present-day Ireland comprises an expanding state and private sector with a combined forest area of 570,000 ha, 8% of the land area. This represents an eight-fold increase since the turn of the century. Ireland is still, however, the least forested country in the European Union. Coillte owns 390,000 ha (68%) while the remaining 180,000 ha are under private ownership. Ireland has the second largest proportion of forest in public ownership in Europe, surpassed only by Greece. It also has the highest per capita afforestation rate in Europe, with annual planting exceeding 20,000 ha. In recent years, over 60% of total afforestation has been in the private sector, with farmer plantings accounting for 85%.

Sawmilling capacity and technology have also expanded progressively in the last decade. Total wood production is currently 2.4 million m^3 per annum. It is expected that, within 10 years, the wood processing industry will become one of the most important Irish industries.

1.3 The institutional framework of forestry in Ireland

Responsibility for forestry development now lies with the Irish Forest Service, under the Department of Marine and Natural Resources. The Department's responsibilities include national forest strategy, the development of private and public forestry, forest protection, support for research in forestry, multiple-use forestry and relations with the European Commission. The Forest Service is the forest authority in Ireland, and is the main body in the Department dealing with international forest conventions and agreements. It handles relations with the International Tropical Timber Organisation, and represents the government on the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development.

2. HISTORICAL INVOLVEMENT WITH TROPICAL FORESTRY

2.1 The tropical timber trade

Never having been a colonial power or a major trading nation, Ireland has had little historical involvement with tropical forestry, except through the timber import trade. Imports of tropical hardwoods amounted to 70,000 tonnes in 1994, valued at £37 m., mainly from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

2.2 The Irish missionary presence in the tropics

The strength of Irish missionary organisations (mainly Catholic, but not exclusively so) has been a long-term feature of Irish social and cultural life, and has provided the main means for its involvement in developing countries. The Irish missionary presence has been an entry point for both Irish bilateral and non-governmental organisations, and helps explain the geographical profile of much of Irish official and non-governmental aid (see section 3).

While education and health have been key sectors for development work by missionaries, forestry, agroforestry and agriculture have also figured to some degree. This is particularly the case in Africa (countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Ghana). In South America, NGO-supported missionary work in the tropical forestry sector (in Brazil, Chile and Paraguay) represents the major Irish government funding to the sector on the continent (see section 4.2).

3. STRUCTURE OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

3.1 Development Assistance Commitment

Until the 1990s, Irish overseas development assistance (oda) was small in volume and declining; the oda/GNP ratio fell from 0.28% in 1986 to 0.16% in 1991 and 1992. Almost two-thirds of the aid programme was taken up by contributions to the multilateral agencies, including the World Bank and the European Community. The appointment of a coalition government in 1993, and pressure from the junior partner, the Labour Party, to increase social expenditure, led to a pledge to increase Ireland's oda to 0.2% of GNP in that year, and by 0.05% thereafter, in support of a movement towards the UN target of 0.7% of GNP ('Programme for a Partnership Government', 1993–7). One result has been a steady increase in the bilateral programme (by 60% per annum).

In absolute terms, however, the Irish official aid programme remains small. In 1995, total multilateral and bilateral expenditure stood at only IR£106 m. (0.29% of GNP). There is no provision for programme (budgetary) support to partner countries. Irish oda is in the form of grants and is not tied to procurement of goods and services from Ireland (OECD, 1995).

Aid expenditure for 1993 and 1994, broken down by sector, is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Ireland's oda, 1993–4 (IR£ m.)

	1993	1994
A. Administration	1.1	1.4
B. European Union	17.9	25.1
of which:		
EU Budget (Development Cooperation)	10.9	17.2
European Development Fund	7.0	7.9
C. United Nations and World Bank	8.9	10.6
D. Bilateral Assistance	26.8	38.1
of which:		
Bilateral Aid Programme	16.8	24.7
APSO	4.7	7.0
Emergency Humanitarian Assistance	4.5	5.8
Refugees	0.8	0.6
Total:	**54.7**	**75.2**
Total as a % of GNP	*0.20*	*0.24*
	[GNP: £27.5bn.]	*[GNP: £30.95bn.]*

(Source: Irish Aid, 1994)

3.2 Organisation of the aid programme

3.2.1 Irish Aid[1]

Irish Aid is the name of the official development service of the Irish Government. Irish Aid is administered by the Development Co-operation Division (DCD) of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), headed by an Assistant Secretary under a Minister of State with responsibility for overseas development co-operation. There are three sections within the DCD, 'Bilateral I', 'Bilateral II' and 'Multilateral Aid', each headed by a Counsellor.

The Bilateral Aid section has four First Secretaries – effectively Desk Officers – each with responsibility for a different group of countries. The four groupings are:

- Lesotho, Mozambique and South Africa
- Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda
- Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe
- Other partner countries, including Cambodia, Rwanda, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia.

There are seven 'priority countries': Ethiopia, Lesotho, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and (since 1996) Mozambique.

Matters relating to emergencies and NGO co-financing are dealt with by the relevant Desk Officer. The Division has an Evaluation and Audit Unit, the staff of which formerly included a Rural Development and Natural Resources Adviser whose responsibilities covered tropical forestry. However, the officer in question was reposted in 1996, and was not replaced. Development Co-operation Offices (DCOs) in the priority countries are staffed by a First Secretary and by national personnel. Programme Officers deal with in-country support in each DCO.

There are two First Secretaries in the Multilateral section in Dublin, responsible, respectively, for EU and UN matters.

Funding of Irish Aid derives from two sources: a 'Central Fund', under the Department of Finance, which covers the EU Budget and the World Bank; and the 'Departmental Votes'. The Vote for International Co-operation is administered by the DFA and includes contributions to the European Development Fund (EDF), the UN General Budget, the Bilateral Aid Fund, the Irish Volunteer Programme – the Agency for Personal Service Overseas (APSO), other development organisations and emergency relief. The Vote for Agriculture includes the Irish contributions to the EU's quota for the Food Aid Convention, the World Food Programme and FAO. Many of the contributions to international organisations are mandatory, the exceptions being the Votes for Agriculture, Finance and Foreign Affairs.

1. Following the change of government in 1997, the Irish Aid programme is being reorganised. The following section takes account of the changes up to July, 1997, though further changes are expected later in the year.

An *Inter-departmental Committee* (IDC) coordinates the aid efforts of the various departments, and includes representatives of the Finance and Foreign Affairs Ministries.

The *Irish Aid Advisory Committee* (IAAC) was established by the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1993. This is an independent body whose brief is to advise the government on matters of policy, aid strategy and the effective delivery of aid. It also commissions research on issues of relevance to the Aid Programme and, where appropriate, arranges for publication of research findings. There are no forestry professionals on this Committee at present, although it does have NGO members with experience of tropical forestry development work.

The IAAC initiates projects on specific topics of relevance to Irish aid. Each of these is directed by a Steering Committee comprising members of the IAAC and external appointees with appropriate experience. A report is submitted by each Steering Committee, and is often presented for discussion at a public meeting before being sent on to the Minister along with the Committee view. Each year, the IAAC organises a National Forum on a current topic of development aid, which provides an opportunity for dialogue and exchange between the government and the NGO sector.

3.2.2 The Agency for Personal Service Overseas (APSO)

APSO is a government agency established in 1973, the primary mission of which is the transfer of skills to developing countries by qualified Irish people, usually on two-year assignments. It also has a number of other functions, including co-funding of Irish personnel working overseas for other agencies (particularly Irish and international NGOs); staff training; maintaining a resource centre to support development organisations and workers, including consultants, overseas students, etc.; and educational grants for returning volunteers. It also acts as the Irish agent for United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and the European Volunteers for Development (EVD).

In 1995, APSO made 1,226 placements overseas, 43 of which were in agriculture and forestry. Almost all the Irish Aid or NGO personnel working in forestry projects have participated in APSO training. Funding for post-graduate research has included a study of pastoral agroecosystems in Kenya (1985) and Miombo woodland ecology in Tanzania (1989).

APSO, in collaboration with the Department of Crop Science, Horticulture and Forestry of University College, Dublin (UCD), has been responsible for two initiatives in recent years with regard to tropical forestry. In 1990, it organised and funded a study tour of forestry projects to Lesotho and Zimbabwe for final-year undergraduate students at UCD. And in 1993, it facilitated a study visit organised by UCD to the International Council for Research into Agroforestry (ICRAF) in Kenya.

3.2.3 Higher Education Development Authority (HEDCO)

This was founded in the late 1970s within third-level colleges and universities to coordinate their role in overseas development co-operation. HEDCO has been involved in coordinating a number of multilateral projects and has managed some co-financed projects on behalf of the World Bank and its associated Economic Development Institute. In addition, it manages a number of projects for the bilateral programme, for which it is paid management fees. It has an advisory capacity in the placement of overseas fellows at Irish third-level colleges. For example, in 1994, two overseas students, from Ethiopia and Lesotho, were studying for an MSc in Forestry at UCD, under the Bilateral Fellowship Programme. Eight other students were on parallel courses in other rural development fields.

HEDCO also works in development education in Ireland.

State Agencies Development Co-operation Division (DEVCO)

This was established in 1975, with a view to promoting aid in areas appropriate to the Irish 'pool of expertise and competence'. Irish expertise has suffered from a very low participation rate in the management of bilateral programmes (only 2–7%). The strategy of DEVCO is to focus on long-term development, and on sectors whose potential is underutilised. This latter category includes forestry. Two new commercial units have been established, one of which promotes the export of services by the agriculture and forest sector.

3.3 Personnel

Since 1996, there has been no professional officer at headquarters level responsible for natural resource management and forestry. The appointment of rural development specialists (rather than career diplomats) as Programme Officers to some of the Development Co-operation Offices (DCOs) in priority countries is a relatively new development, which indicates the government's concern to professionalise its aid delivery at field level (see section 4.1, with reference to the case of Ethiopia).

3.4 The NGO sector

The NGO sector has long been, and remains, a significant conduit for the management of both Irish oda and EU funds to tropical forestry and related fields. In overall terms, NGO expenditure exceeds that of the Bilateral Aid Programme (BAP). In 1990, the figure was almost twice that of the BAP, at IR£25 m. Roughly half of this comes from co-financing by the EU, bilateral donors and other international agencies, and the rest from private donations. In the region of 60% of expenditure is accounted for by two NGOs, Concern and *Trocaire* (Gaelic for 'mercy'). The other major Irish NGOs include *Gorta* ('hunger' or 'want'), Goal, Self-Help Development International (SHDI) and the Irish Foundation for Co-operative Development (IFCD). The Irish NGOs are formed into a confederation known as DOCHAS (formerly, CONGOOD).

Geographically, Irish NGO programmes are found in Africa, Asia and South America. On a regional basis, sub-Saharan Africa is the priority area, although there has been an increasing volume of support in recent years in South-east Asia, particularly Cambodia, Laos and

Bangladesh, from agencies such as Concern and Trocaire.

Some of the principal Irish-based NGOs are briefly reviewed below:

CONCERN (officially, 'CONCERN-Worldwide') is a 'voluntary non-governmental organisation devoted to the relief, assistance and advancement of peoples in need in less developed areas of the world. It seeks to concentrate on the poorest people in its countries of operation and seeks also to engage the peoples of both donor and recipient countries more fully in the practical struggle against poverty and injustice in the world'. Its origins were in the Nigerian Civil War (1966–70), when a request for assistance was made by the Holy Ghost Missionaries working in the area of Biafra. It has since built up an international reputation for its speedy and professional response in emergency and relief work.

Trocaire, the Catholic Agency for World Development, was established by the Bishops of Ireland in 1973 to 'express the concern of the Irish Church for the needs and problems of the developing countries and the issue of justice involved'. The agency has two main aims: 'to help those in need in developing countries and to make Irish people more aware of those needs and our duty in justice towards them'. The key values of Christian social teaching inspire its work: 'respect for human dignity; freedom from injustice and poverty; active promotion of equity and equality . . . ; participation of all in the work of justice and development; . . . justice as the basis of all actions' (Trocaire, 1993). Though its main emphasis is on long-term development, it has played a major role in humanitarian crises in countries such as Somalia and Rwanda. Except in emergencies, Trocaire is not an operational NGO but works in collaboration with overseas partners (usually other NGOs or community groups); in emergencies it also works with host governments. It is also involved in public education and lobbying on development issues in Ireland.

Self-Help Development International (SHDI) was established in 1984 in response to the Ethiopian famine, and relief and prevention of famine were central to its original aims. Its Board includes representatives of the Irish Farmers' Association, the Irish Countrywomen's Association, *Macra na Feirme* (young farmers' organisation), *Teagasc* (the agricultural advisory service) and other prominent rural associations and groups. Self-help through development is the overall aim of the agency. Its approach involves setting up a tripartite co-operation between the local farming community in the host country, the relevant agricultural authorities and the agency staff (who are all nationals of the host country). Elected committees represent the local farmers. Farmers identify their own problems and the agency focuses on addressing the issues they have raised.

Gorta was established by the Department of Agriculture in 1965 as a permanent body born of the FAO-linked Irish Freedom from Hunger Campaign. Gorta was Ireland's first non-denominational development agency, specifically established to channel Irish goodwill money to the developing countries. It has fund-raising committees in every county, and is the Irish sponsor of the annual FAO-sponsored World Food Day.

Gorta provides only long-term assistance through small projects; unlike most Irish NGOs, it is not involved in relief and emergency aid. It focuses on agriculture and food-related projects, following a philosophy of prevention of famine and food shortage through small-scale projects aiming at self-sufficiency and self-reliance. It mainly works with missionary groups and finances materials, equipment, infrastructure (nurseries, training centres, bridges, etc.) and educational programmes. At present, there is only one expatriate working for Gorta in the developing world; skilled national staff are employed where necessary, although reliance is placed on existing government personnel wherever possible.

3.4.1 NGO co-financing scheme

This is a scheme by which the Irish Government co-finances NGO projects. At present most of the funds allocated under the scheme support small-scale, one-off development projects of a type in which the BAP would not normally be involved.The limit of co-financing is normally 75% of the cost of the project up to a maximum of IR£100,000, but most grants are much smaller than the ceiling amount. The scheme has traditionally been oriented towards the social sectors, but includes rural development and community forestry. It favours projects with a 'basic needs' approach, with long-term sustainability (rather than, say, emergency relief). The scheme is mainly directed at projects proposed by Irish or Irish-linked NGOs, but will also consider applications from developing country and other NGOs 'if they are exceptionally worthwhile' (DFA, 1995).

The scheme is managed by an NGO Co-financing Committee, chaired by the Counsellor for Bilateral Aid-I in the DFA, and with a membership drawn from Irish Aid, APSO and IAAC. NGOs have no representation, though dialogue is maintained through a National Forum on Development Aid and other means. The Committee meets quarterly. Two months advance notice is normally required of NGOs seeking to make an application for funds.

Block grants. Since 1994, a block grant scheme has been available to a 'small number of NGOs which have demonstrated a significant track record in development projects and involvement in the Official Aid Programme' (DFA, 1995). At present four NGOs receive DFA block grants. These are CONCERN, Trocaire, Goal and Christian Aid; the first two are implementing forestry projects under the scheme. The change towards the allocation of block grants has been interpreted by some observers as a welcome move towards programme funding and away from a project-by-project approach.

An evaluation of the NGO Co-financing Scheme was carried out by DFA in 1996. It is likely that multi-annual funding will become available under the Scheme in the future.

3.5 The commercial private sector

There is a small number of commercial companies, either public sector with a profit orientation or private sector. Coillte is representative of the former type, and EDC of the latter.

Coillte Teoranta, the Irish Forestry Board, was reconstituted as a limited company under the Forestry Act of 1988, and began operations in 1989, the shareholders being the Minister for Finance and the Minister for

Agriculture, Food and Forestry (both acting *ex-officio*). Coillte's long-term goal is to ensure that an internationally competitive timber processing industry is developed in Ireland.

Coillte's commercial involvement in tropical forestry has developed only recently, mainly through tendering for World Bank consultancies. Through its association with the former International Development Ireland Ltd (IDI), it has become involved in projects in Kenya, Fiji and Tanzania. Coillte provides expertise, through staff secondments with Irish Aid, to the Government of South Africa, as well as to some of the states of Eastern Europe, and has previously provided technical assistance to Tanzania. In Kenya, it provides silvicultural, management, engineering, procurement and harvesting expertise to the Institutional Strengthening Plantation Management Project, a US $80 m. project funded by the World Bank.

Environmental Development Consultants Ltd (EDC) is an Irish-based international consulting company, which provides services in project management and training in the environment and development sectors. Its clients include the European Commission, the World Bank and Irish Aid.

4. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE STRATEGY

4.1 Official aid strategy

The challenge for the official Irish aid programme has been to deploy what are, in absolute terms, small amounts of money to good effect in an international arena dominated by much larger states and agencies, with much more substantial resources and influence.

The principal instrument for aid delivery is now the bilateral programme. In recent years, this has seen a shift from a policy focus on 'hi-tech', relatively sophisticated, intensive programmes, heavily dependent on Irish technical assistance and mainly provided by consulting firms (for example, dairying and road-building schemes), to a less intensive approach, focused on the social sectors and livelihoods issues, and integrated with local management systems in the partner countries. Relief work represents a focal area in Ireland, whose importance can be attributed to the country's long traditions of missionary work and of social concern, its small independent status, and its influential roles in international emergencies and policing activities. Relief work is increasingly seen as part of a long-term commitment and strategy, leading from relief to rehabilitation and thence to sustained development.

Irish NGOs form an important national constituency, and currently receive IR£11.5 m. from the offical aid programme (more than 10% of the total aid volume). Ireland also funds development work directly through the bilateral programme, on a government-to-government basis, work which is managed by the overseas embassies.

The official programme has many of the characteristics of a quasi-NGO: relatively unconstrained by national commercial constituencies; relatively small commitments of funds at project level; a broad area focus (particularly unusual for a bilateral donor); and a high degree of flexibility in management. Paradoxically, this flexibility is seen as a major reason for the continuation of the official bilateral aid programme, rather than (as would be feasible, given the low volume) its re-routing through the NGOs. As NGOs become more constrained by the conditions imposed on their operations internationally, so, it is argued, is room created for a small government programme able to operate in an adaptable and responsive way.

Given the relatively small amounts of money available to Ireland's developing country partners (the largest programme, Ethiopia, receives less than IR£7 m. per annum from Irish Aid), the accent is firmly placed on an area-based approach. Except in one instance (Lesotho), this is seen as offering the most effective use of low aid volume in the context of a participatory philosophy.[2] The Ethiopia programme involves two area-based projects, both entirely integrated into national structures, with no expatriate technical assistance. The programme is supported by two Irish Programme Officers based in the Embassy, and by a small number of technical specialists (all Ethiopian).

Forestry is not – *qua* forestry – a major programme focus for Irish official aid, and there are no earmarked sectoral funds. It has been found difficult to give priority to forestry in small area-based programmes with low expenditure, and shortage of technical staff also limits the potential for forestry development.[3]

Nevertheless, forestry does enter into the programme as an important sub-component, albeit without firm financial targets or sectoral commitments. Forestry represents approximately a third of all expenditure in a small programme in Sudan (see section 8.2). In Ethiopia, conservation issues (including forestry and reafforestation) are important components of the programme in Tigray, less so in the second project area, Sidama. Forestry is a small but increasing component of the Tanzania programme, in relation to work in social forestry (see section 8.1).

In terms of multilateral aid, forestry expenditure is represented by funding to the CGIAR centres (c.IR£500,000 in all, of which IR£100,000 is given to ICRAF). Doubts have been expressed in some quarters as to the effectiveness of such small contributions to the international research agencies, given the other demands upon Irish Aid.

The 1996 IAAC report, *'Irish Aid involvement in Sustainable Agriculture, Rural Development and Food Security'*, had considerable relevance to the tropical forestry sector. This placed tropical forestry and agroforestry within the context of sustainable agriculture. It argued that 'the emphasis in forestry development should be on a *livelihood* approach, rather than a

2. The Lesotho programme covers a range of activities, often relatively narrow and focused, in a variety of sectors, including rural water supply, bridge-building, roads, technical education, health screening and disease control. Work was completed in 1994 on construction of a National Environment Centre at Masianokeng, to serve as a base for environmental educational activities.

3. As one indication of the small size of the labour pool: the recent recruitment by Coillte of 7 forestry experts for work in Kenya is said to have virtually cleared the pool of available, uncommitted forestry expertise in the country, at least temporarily.

narrow commercial approach'. In relation to development, the report used a series of case studies (none of them Irish Aid-funded) to emphasise:

- the inadvisability of nationalising forest land without due consideration of issues of community involvement and forest rights (India);
- the need for appropriate research and development support in relation to traditional agroforestry systems, such as the miombo *chitemene* systems (Zambia);
- the weakening of village land tenure systems and rights through the creation of State Forest Reserves, and the irrelevance of plantation forestry approaches to many community-level needs for forest products (Lesotho).

4.2 NGO strategies

The traditional preoccupation of Irish NGOs with emergency relief work, and the expertise which the country has developed in this field, have implications for forestry strategy. By and large, Irish NGOs are most active in drylands areas of Africa (Ethiopia, Sudan) and other areas with marginal and fragile environments (Rwanda, parts of Tanzania, Lesotho). Development programmes have tended to emerge out of emergency relief work, and have figured either as a short-term strategy to secure the basic needs of vulnerable populations (often, in the initial stages, as food-for-work schemes) or as part of a longer-term process to reconstitute the assets of the poor. In several projects, forestry and reafforestation activities have been undertaken in support of these strategies.

Some of the CONCERN projects provide 'classic' examples of the ways in which famine relief provides an entry point for long-term work. The 'dual nature' of these programmes (short-term relief and longer-term development) has implications for their management, the accent being on a fairly broad, area development approach. The primary beneficiaries are the 'poorest of the poor' (now tending to be replaced in agency thinking by the 'absolute poor').

In recent years, Trocaire has focused increasingly on issues of entitlements and tenure in its development work. Its 1996 *Guiding Principles for Overseas Programmes* notes:

> The importance of forests and trees in protecting the environment, providing food and fuel and precious genetic resources is now widely recognised. However the destruction of forests, mainly through unhindered commercial exploitation and population pressure continues unchecked in much of the developing world. It is the poor and marginalised who suffer the most from loss of forest cover, both in terms of fuel and food resources and environmental damage. The issue is closely bound up with entitlements to the forests which [are] rarely recognised by governments [with regard] to those who live there. Often these are minority groups of indigenous peoples who have no voice in the existing power structures. Efforts to combat deforestation supported by NGOs link an awareness-raising approach on environmental and justice issues with management approaches to ensure sustainable exploitation of the forest resources. Reforestation in rural areas is approached on a community basis which tries to find ways to encourage planting and protection of useful species by individual farmers. (Trocaire, 1996)

Gorta's policy of concentration on small projects, long-term (rather than relief and emergency) assistance, and support for established partners, particularly missionary groups, leads to a rather different profile from NGOs such as the two discussed above. In the forestry sector, investments have tended to be on single-theme projects in limited areas: tree and agricultural nurseries (19 out of 28 projects), community plantations (2/28 projects), reforestation (3/28) and agroforestry (4/28). This agency seeks to 'fill a gap', as many international agencies are no longer involved in development projects which operate on small budgets. Small projects are viewed by Gorta as easier to manage, with lower overhead costs and greater effectiveness in aid delivery.

5. REGIONAL AND THEMATIC DISTRIBUTION OF FORESTRY PROJECTS

The overall distribution of tropical forestry projects funded by official and NGO sources in Ireland, in the period 1984–96, is indicated in Table 2.

5.1 Official aid programme, 1994

Regional and thematic distribution of the official aid programme for 1994 is shown in Table 3.

Expenditure on forestry projects is not indicated in the Official Aid Statistics, except by reference to the project title. Thus, the 'Community Forestry' Project in Sudan accounted for IR£182,157 of the Sudan total (37%); 'Gairo Agroforestry Project' and 'Tanga Conservation', respectively, IR£114,040 and IR£289,984 (4% and 9.5%) of the Tanzania total; and Tigray Reconstruction, IR£254,143 (19%) of the Ethiopia total. It is likely, however, that significant forestry expenditures have been made within other projects, though there is no clear indication of forestry relevance in their titles.

5.2 Distribution of NGO projects

Among the NGOs, CONCERN provides the most substantial support to tropical forestry. Since 1984, a total of 13 forestry projects have been implemented in Africa and Asia with co-financing from the DFA, EU, the UK DFID (ex-ODA), Comic Relief and internal sources. Projects are usually operational, fairly large in size and (by NGO standards) of relatively long duration. The African-based projects have the longest histories. With the exception of the Tanzanian projects, early involvement in the sector in Africa was set against a background of successive food shortages, famine and, in some instances, regional conflict. Five projects are currently under way in forestry, to a total value of IR£2,887,725 (mean expenditure per project IR£481,286). These cover objectives such as:

- increasing the availability and accessibility of

fuelwood and wood products to target families, and promoting sustainable land-use practices (2 projects in Tanzania, begun in 1983 and 1985);
- increasing fuelwood and timber availability, protecting land from soil erosion, and increasing crop production in an environmentally sustainable way (Ethiopia, begun in 1984);
- improving the quality of life of the community by various means, including the promotion of reafforestation and soil and water conservation (Ethiopia, begun in 1984);
- improving household food security and income, and improving village level management and control of indigenous forestry resources (2 projects – Cambodia, begun in 1991 and 1992).

Gorta's preference for much smaller initiatives is underlined by the small size of its forestry projects (mean, IR£7,161). A total of IR£200,575 was expended on 28 forestry projects in the period 1988–96, in Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe), South America (Brazil, Chile, Honduras, Paraguay), and India. In addition, a total of IR£202,871 was spent in the same period, all in Paraguay, on projects which, while not specifically designated as 'forestry', involved resettlement of farmers in forest areas and thus had implications for the sector (5 projects, mean £40,574).

5.3 Official co-financing of NGOs

Co-financing of NGOs under the Bilateral Aid Programme involves a total of 279 projects to a value of IR£3,978,043 (1994). The mean value per project is IR£14,258. Major conduits for co-financing are missionary organisations (139 out of 279 projects – 50%) and the five main Irish NGOs – CONCERN, Goal, Gorta, SHDI and Trocaire (58 out of 279 projects - 21%). Other NGOs and charities account for most of the remaining projects. Very few of these projects would appear – at least from their titles – to be concerned with forestry matters. Only about 20 projects (7%) have titles which suggest possible forestry components ('integrated rural development', 'beekeeping', etc.), to a total value of IR£454,594. Only two specifically mention forestry or conservation themes; these are the Trocaire El Viejo Reforestation Project in Nicaragua, for which co-financing of IR£10,000 was provided, and the SHDI's Conservation Based Rural Development Project in Shoa, Ethiopia (IR£75,000).

6. FOREST RESEARCH AND TRAINING

6.1 Forest research

COFORD, the National Council for Forest Research and Development, was established by the government in 1993. COFORD coordinates all forest research in Ireland. It aims to stimulate appropriate and cost-effective research to secure long-term industrial viability and optimise social and cultural developments associated with forestry. Supported by EU funds, it engages in international networking and monitors progress to ensure effective transfer of technology. COFORD also acts as the 'contact point', and informal forum and facilitator, for governmental and non-governmental bodies with regard to both temperate and tropical forestry.

In 1993, COFORD joined IUFRO, the International Union of Forestry Research Organisations. It was appointed the Irish node for ETFRN (European Tropical Forest Research Network) in the same year, in which capacity it supports the Network's aims to promote the wise and sustainable management and protection of tropical forests and woodlands.

6.2 Higher education and training in forestry

The only forestry expertise at university level in Ireland is provided by the Forestry Section of the Department of Crop Science, Horticulture and Forestry at University

Table 2: Tropical forestry projects, 1984–96:

Region	Irish Aid	NGOs	Coillte	Totals
Africa	9[a]	28	1	38
Latin America	—	10	—	10
Asia	—	3	—	3
Totals:	**9**	**41**	**1**	**51**

[a)] 6 projects initiated since 1994.

Table 3: Official development assistance programme, 1994 – summary of expenditure

Official Aid	Expenditure (IR£)
A. Geographical programmes	
Lesotho	3,185,093
Tanzania	3,054,973
Zambia	3,144,177
Sudan	494,414
Uganda	681,561
Ethiopia	1,310,926
Other Countries	3,424,820
Sub-Total – A	***15,295,939***
B. Democratisation	486,820
Co-financing with Multilateral Agencies	1,155,360
Co-financing with NGOs	3,968,043
Development Education	675,367
Training/Fellowships	622,367
Grants to Organisations & Courses	691,917
Programme Support	1,057,196
Sub-Total – B	***8,656,931***
Total:[a]	***23,952,870***

(Source: Irish Aid, 1994)

[a] Actual expenditure is slightly less than the total commitment of IR£24.705 million as indicated in Table 1.

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College, Dublin. Tropical forestry is a very minor component of the 4-year undergraduate course, though it is represented at post-graduate research level (MSc and PhD). An informal link arrangement between UCD, the Department of Foreign Affairs and ICRAF in Nairobi has permitted a number of post-graduate research projects to be undertaken in East Africa, with DFA/ICRAF support.

7. PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT

Until recently, there was no formal requirement for *ex-post* evaluation of Irish Aid projects, most of which were of a long-term nature 'with no fixed timetables for completion' (OECD, 1995:27). Projects were (and continue to be) reviewed on a three-yearly cycle by the Evaluation and Audit Unit ('E and A') of the DCD (formerly the Planning and Evaluation Unit). All project reviews are submitted to the Project Appraisal and Evaluation Group (PAEG). This is a sub-committee of the IDC and consists of representatives of the Departments of Agriculture, Finance, Health, Education and Foreign Affairs. It meets regularly and acts as a management committee for the bilateral aid programme. It is also responsible for appraising the major project proposals. Financial approval is through the Department of Finance. The forest sector is not formally represented on this committee.

Outside of the E & A and PAEG procedures, there is no formal appraisal methodology, although consultants may be called on to give advice where necessary. The small size of many Irish aid projects, and their concern with low-specificity areas such as human resource development and capacity building are recognised as posing particular difficulties for project appraisal and evaluation (OECD, 1995:28).

A first attempt at a full country review was undertaken in 1994, with a joint Irish/Basotho review of the Lesotho Programme, accompanied by four in-depth project evaluations. Though very brief (only 2 weeks in all), this was felt to be a useful study, and a possible model for programme planning and review exercises elsewhere (OECD, 1995:27).

8. PROJECT REVIEWS

This section reviews two of the longest-established Irish Aid country programmes, in Tanzania and Sudan. The reviews highlight the distinctive character of official Irish development programmes, namely, long-term, flexible funding to broadly-based integrated rural development programmes concentrating resources on well-bounded local administrative units, and increasingly managed by national staff.

8.1 Irish Aid programme in Tanzania

Irish Aid has been working in Tanzania since 1979, initially by providing technical assistance and a capital fund to commercial agriculture (mainly dairy farming) in Kilosa District. More recently, the programme in this district has changed into one of area-based integrated assistance (the 'Kilosa District Rural Development Programme', KDRDP), with five principal components: education, rural transport infrastructure, health, rural economic development and the environment. Total investments in Kilosa District now run at approximately IR£2 m. per year, 6.4% of which is accounted for by spending in the area of forestry and agroforestry (1994).

Forestry support has developed in a number of ways. From 1982 to 1985, a variety of micro-projects were funded in agriculture, forestry and related areas, in response to requests from interested groups and government departments. These were spread widely across the District and included coconut nurseries; a bull breeding centre (aiming to reduce environmental pressure by improving the quality, but not the quantity, of cattle in the area); viticulture; grain store construction; and fish farming.

After the reinstatement of district councils as a local government institution in 1985, Irish Aid adopted Kilosa District Council as its main partner, with the aim of improving capacity to provide basic needs and sustainable development. A Technical Co-operation Agreement was signed with the Tanzania Government in the same year. The programme is now one of the largest Irish Aid country programmes in volume terms, with expenditure of IR£3.1 m. per annum (1994) and rising, most of this being devoted to work in Kilosa District. In 1985, an Agricultural Adviser was appointed to work with the District Natural Resources, Livestock and Crops Officers. Capital and recurrent costs of the three Departments were covered, in order to enable them to implement a 'basket' of projects, including forestry and agroforestry.

8.1.1 Gairo Agroforestry and Land-use project (GALUP)

GALUP is based in the north-west of Kilosa District. The original project sought to address the problems of declining food yields and the linkages between low food production and environmental degradation. In the proposal, emphasis was given to the need to promote sustainable forms of land use, as well as training in agroforestry and soil and water conservation techniques, for forestry and agriculture personnel. A number of activities were organised around a central nursery and training centre. Re-training of village extension staff focused on combining soil conservation and tree planting with agronomy and livestock husbandry.

Over time, the role of the central nursery has changed, and farmers have begun to produce their own tree seedlings. New components have been added, including village land-use planning (with a strong emphasis on environmental conservation), bee-keeping, zero-grazing of improved cattle varieties, and oxenisation. Animation training for village extension workers has been provided as a means of stimulating demand for nursery and bee-keeping enterprises. Participatory rural appraisal techniques have been used as a diagnostic tool, to investigate the variable adoption of the different technologies on offer. In 1996, Irish Aid began supporting land-use planning at village level, in three of the project villages.

GALUP has a Steering Committee at village level, which includes senior District staff. The project is headed by a Project Manager (a Tanzanian national, and a forester). From 1990 to 1995, there were two expatriate advisers (one seconded from Coillte), but, following the country review in 1995, it was decided to

indigenise the project fully, and there are no longer any Irish advisory staff.

An environmental planning exercise was conducted in 1995, and a one-year environmental project plan drawn up. This committed GALUP to a continuation of its existing activities, plus additional forest gazettement and environmental components outside of the Gairo Division.

8.1.2 Kilosa Environmental Action Plan

Kilosa District suffers from serious environmental problems in all Divisions. The main vegetation type, miombo woodland, has been over-exploited for many years, because of both agricultural expansion and charcoal/fuelwood production. Late-season fires are widespread, some spreading into the adjacent Mikumi National Park (where agricultural encroachment and poaching of game pose additional threats). In 1995, an environmental planning workshop was held in Kilosa, as a first step towards developing a District Environmental Action Plan. Planning objectives were identified for the coming year, and a further planning exercise was scheduled for late 1996.

8.1.3 Tanga Coastal Zone Conservation Programme

This was initiated in 1994, as a joint venture between Irish Aid and IUCN. The project is concerned with sustainable exploitation of natural sources, with a local livelihoods perspective. Community management of marine resources is the main focus, with attention given to mangrove swamp and coral reef rehabilitation and conservation.

Also included in the Tanzania Programme is the *Sokoine Agricultural Extension Training Programme*. This has been running for 10 years, as an institutional link between the Department of Agribusiness, Extension and Rural Development of University College, Dublin, and the Centre for Continuing Education at Sokoine University, Morogoro. This project is establishing links with GALUP regarding the promotion of agroforestry extension methodologies for village-based extension workers.

Building on the success of the KDRDP, a second District in Morogoro Region, Ulanga, was identified for Irish Aid support, and a similar programme began in 1996.

8.2 Irish Aid programme in Sudan

This programme was initiated in 1986, and is the longest-running Irish Aid forestry programme. The main forestry investments have been technical assistance and capital input support to the Forest National Corporation (FNC) in the Gezira Province of the Central State. Aid has been concentrated on Butana Province, an area of low mean annual rainfall (average 250mm., though a record low of only 10mm. was recorded in 1993). The population of the province is estimated at 385,000 persons. Subsistence farming predominates, though many of the men obtain seasonal work on the Gezira irrigation scheme.

In the first phase, from 1986 to 1991, the emphasis was on a community forestry programme, with three levels of activity: individual and homestead planting; school planting; and compound and village planting.

A conservation-based approach was used, promoting tree-planting for fuel and poles, shelter belts, shade trees, and dune stabilization. Seedling production was carried out at two central nurseries and a number of communal nurseries supplying 40 villages in the catchment area. This phase involved both rainfed and irrigated establishments, with heavy emphasis on exotics, such as *Eucalyptus microtheca*, *Casuarina equistifolia*, *Prosopis chilensis* and *Azudirachta indica*. Local *Acacia* species were also produced, as well as some fruit trees.

In the next phase, 1991–3, support to community forestry continued, and experimental work was undertaken in *Acacia-Balanites* riverine forest reserves. A fuel conservation and improved cooking project was introduced and initial work began in rainfed forest conservation. Planted woodlots were fenced in the early stages and, once a woodlot was established, the fence was moved to another site. Local demand for indigenous species proved very high, not least because of their quicker establishment and better field performance under low rainfall (with indigenous species, the fence could be moved after one season, while the exotics needed fencing for two years or more). In general, demand for indigenous seedlings in Butana exceeded the project supply. Within the fenced area, natural regeneration of grasses and woody vegetation, chiefly *Acacia spp.*, was also found to occur among the planted stock. The project strategy was thus adapted to include direct sowing of indigenous species such as *A.nilotica* and *A.senegal*. The project also contributed to seed harvesting and storage, which benefited users both within and outside the project area.

The project promoted charcoal use and trained women in the manufacture of improved fuelwood stoves. A local artisan was engaged to make charcoal stoves using fired clay and metal liners. Again, demand exceeded supply.

Rehabilitation and conservation of natural forests in rainfed and partially irrigated areas had been priority activities of the FNC for some years. The project supported this work (which was particularly challenging in the rainfed areas, because of the unpredictability of rainfall and the prevalence of wind erosion). The project worked with the FNC in direct sowing of up to 20,000 fedans per year.

Expenditure under the Bilateral Aid Programme amounted to IR£494,414 in 1994, including the forestry programme and other work in primary health care, water supply and microprojects. Though considerably diminished in volume since then (like other donors, Ireland has scaled down its presence in Sudan), the programme retains a small presence in the country on humanitarian grounds, and is directing its efforts to the needs of the poorest sections of the population.

9. CONCLUSION

The Irish aid programme provides one example of the ways in which a small European state with limited resources can seek to use its influence to the benefit of the developing world. Tropical forestry has not been a major sectoral focus for Irish aid, though given its main preoccupations – integrated area-based projects largely

in marginal environments – indigenous drylands forest management has nevertheless figured strongly in programme development. The 'dual nature' of the programmes of the main Irish NGOs (relief and rural development), itself a reflection of the strong humanitarian tradition in Irish society, has also led to the growth in knowledge and expertise in tropical drylands forestry.

In recent years, Irish foresters have experienced notable success within the national territory, and institutional changes have figured strongly in the remarkable growth of the Irish forestry industry. To date, this has had little impact on the developing world, save for limited consultancy work in plantations management and forest development. It remains to be seen whether the institutional models which have been applied with such success within the national territory prove to be of value in the rather different economic and social contexts of Ireland's partners in the developing world.

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ACRONYMS

APSO	Agency for Personal Service Overseas
BAP	Bilateral Aid Programme
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
COFORD	National Council for Forest Research and Development
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development (UN)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DCD	Development Co-operation Division (of the DFA)
DCO	Development Co-operation Office
DEVCO	State Agencies Development Co-operation Division
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development
DOCHAS	Irish NGO Federation (formerly CONGOOD)
E & A	Evaluation and Audit Unit of the DCD
EC	European Commission
EDC	Environmental Development Consultants Ltd
EDF	European Development Fund
ETFRN	European Tropical Forest Research Network
EU	European Union
EVD	European Volunteers for Development
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FOP	Forestry Operations Programme
GALUP	Gairo Agroforestry and Land-use Project, Tanzania
GNP	Gross National Product
HEDCO	Higher Education Development Authority
IAAC	Irish Aid Advisory Committee
ICRAF	International Council for Research in Agroforestry
IDC	Inter-Departmental Committee
IDI	International Development Ireland Ltd
IFCD	Irish Foundation for Co-operative Development
IR£	Irish *punt*
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUFRO	International Union of Forestry Research Organisations
KDRDP	Kilosa District Rural Development Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
oda	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAEG	Project Appraisal and Evaluation Group of the DCD
SHDI	Self-Help Development International (NGO)
UCD	University College Dublin
UN	United Nations
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

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