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MANGROVES SPECIAL

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SHARING EXPERIENCE

MY VOYAGE IN THE GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY FORUM

BY J. DÉLIA BRÉMOND

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San Francisco. USA



Taking part in the Global Philanthropy Forum means being swept up in a three-day whirlwind of activity where meetings succeed presentations at a furious pace.

7.30 a.m., themed 'table talks' at breakfast, and you'd better have an alert mind as everyone is supposed to participate. On the first day, this is followed by 'speed dating', which creates a tremendous din, each participant being given six minutes to find an interesting and potentially interested partner in the middle of this 'mêlée'.

The 'working groups' focus on teaching, learning and creating together. The topics covered are targeted and specific and the...



Continued on page 4

Dear Readers,

'Together' is the keyword of our Foundation, the watchword of our mission.

Nature teaches us how every link of the life chain is tightly interconnected. This issue of the Newsletter, devoted to marine ecosystems, gives the perfect illustration. Wherever mangroves disappear, communities and entire ecosystems are under threat. And conversely, wherever people take action to preserve the mangroves, living conditions improve, fish stocks are replenished and families food security is once again ensured. The testimony of Simon Mériaux, member of our Board of Experts, sheds light not only on the fragility of these systems but also on their astonishing resilience (see p. 2).

In the last ten years, the Foundation has entered into over 130 partnerships, regularly participated in the sharing of experiences and met on the field those who implement the projects we support, during project monitoring visits. More recently, financial partnerships have been established in France (see p. 4).

By taking part in the ritual gathering that is the Global Philanthropy Forum, founded by Jane Wales, in San Francisco, I went to meet figures of international philanthropy. You will find my impressions on this adventure on pages 1 and 4.

I hope you enjoy this issue of our Newsletter.

Jacqueline Délia Brémond
Co-Chair

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In Basse-Casamance, certain ancestral beliefs have been revived and modernized to protect the mangroves.



Photos: François Nimal



INTERVIEW

'Sustainable protection of the mangroves entails all stakeholders being involved in managing the land.'

Simon Mériaux is based in Senegal. He coordinates the Capacities and Competences Programme at the FIBA (Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin). A member of our Board of Experts, he takes us into the heart of the West African mangroves.

Why is mangrove conservation essential?

This valuable ecosystem acts as a buffer zone between the land and the sea and provides a nursery area for many species of fish. Conserving the mangroves thus means conserving vital fish stocks. In West Africa, that also means safeguarding the population's main source of animal protein. Here, people harvest oysters and honey and fish for threadfin and barracuda, which have a high market value. In this way, the mangroves also provide a valuable source of revenue for local communities.

Mangrove replanting has been a great success in recent years. What is the current situation?

Replanting has indeed been in vogue, partly due to the Oceanium initiative. The fact that the results can be seen quickly has also encouraged the trend. But is replanting always appropriate? Unfortunately, we lack objective data that would help us prioritize our action on the ground. In some areas, mangrove degradation could well be compensated for by natural regeneration within protected zones, the mangrove ecosystem being remarkably resilient. A protected mangrove can regenerate in just a few years. In other areas, however, action is urgently needed. We cannot compare the mangroves in peri-urban areas, where local populations harvest it for firewood, with mangroves that are less accessible.

What approach do you favour on the ground?

When money pours in, we have to be more targeted and move away from a global grant approach, which overwhelms the population concerned. Solutions must be found at the local level through dialogue and a more detailed land management approach, with specific rules shared by all stakeholders.

Like the Kawawana experiment, carried out by fishermen in Basse Casamance?

This is a model projet, led by a very dynamic fishermen's CSO (Civil Society Organization), who decided to combat the loss of their natural resources by reviving and modernizing their traditional practices for managing the land. Supported by a favourable regulatory framework (the Convention on Biological Diversity) and the decentralization laws in force in Senegal, a Community Conserved Area was set up in 2009. Land traditionally considered sacred was demarcated, and, as in the past, declared off-limits to all activity. In other areas, strict fishing regulations have been imposed (no motorized pirogues, only cotton fishing nets allowed, etc.). The whole community has been involved in this initiative.

The first positive effects are being felt today, with fish gradually returning ...

Some results were visible very quickly! Everyone gradually realized the effectiveness of the rules that had been established and the point of having protected areas. It's the fishermen themselves who conduct surveillance operations, with the authority delegated to them by the

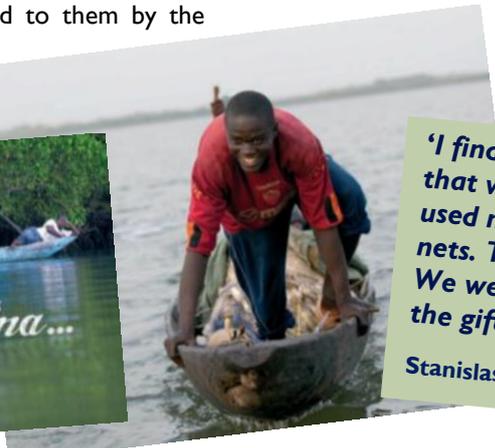
regional fisheries authority. Such surveillance has become increasingly necessary as the recovering fish stocks attract more and more fishermen!

What role in the process did the FIBA play?

Along with other external partners (IUCN, in particular), our role was deliberately limited so as to enable the community itself to run things. We gave a bit of help right at the start by funding the purchase of equipment and then we ensured that there was regular support in the form of advice or training (on management, surveillance, etc.).

How do you see your role in the Foundation's Board of Experts?

Our two family foundations have the same requirements when it comes to their partners as well as a real commitment to the work being done in the field. Both are also firmly committed to sharing experience and capitalizing on good practice. We share the same values. The FIBA has a sizeable team in Senegal and in Mauritania. At a time when Fondation Ensemble is increasing its involvement in the coastal area of West Africa, I can offer valuable support!



'I find it incredible now that we could ever have used monofilament nets. They kill fish! We were killing the gifts from the sea.'
Stanislas Congo

Find out more about Kawawana, including many personal accounts, on the FIBA website (in French) www.lafiba.org under the heading 'Documentation'.



70% of Ecuador's mangroves were destroyed between 1987 and 2001.

ZOOM

Mangroves, source of life

Over half of the world's original mangroves have been lost. Just between 1990 et 2000, more than 2 million hectares of the 15 million documented have gone. The Foundation has paid several visits to Ecuador and met the 'Mangrove People'.

'Just a few years ago, we could harvest up to \$20 worth of shellfish a day. Nowadays, we can barely expect to get \$9!'

It says it all, this statement made to Olivier Braunsteffer, Fondation Ensemble director, during his last visit to Ecuador, the only country to have recognized the rights of nature in its constitution. But some ghost villages in the Muisne-Cojimies and Pagua Jubones Santa Rosa estuaries testify to a reality that is far more complex.

Where the mangroves once stood, shrimp farms have proliferated with impunity. The shrimp business is booming,

watched by communities who derive no financial benefit from it: 98% of production is destined for export and scarcely any local jobs are created.

Fish, crustacean and shellfish stocks are directly threatened.

As the mangroves have disappeared so, too, little by little, has the communities' food security as well as a host of benefits for the area as a whole, and indeed further afield. Mangroves act as natural barriers against coastal erosion, winds, and the devastating waves caused by cyclones and tsunamis. They are also considered to be highly effective carbon sinks.

Restoring ecosystems is a source of new income

Since 2013, the Foundation has been working to support communities living in the mangrove forests in the Muisne-Cojimies and Pagua Jubones Santa Rosa estuaries. On the agenda is restoration of these ecosystems, the cornerstone of a system that aims to develop new income-generating activities with the local communities (environmentally friendly fishing methods, agroecological crop production, eco-tourism, etc.)

www.acting-for-life.com



ENDED PROGRAMME

The Foundation has supported **OCEANIUM DAKAR** since its inception.

Length of agreement: 3 years
Grant: € 190 000
Beneficiaries: 15 000 people

Outcomes:

- Establishment of 2 Marine Protected Areas
- Involvement of 150 villages
- 5 million mangrove trees planted

www.oceaniumdakar.org



CALL FOR TENDER

The Foundation plans to have reviews conducted of the marine ecosystem situation in Ecuador and Mozambique.

The aim is to draw up an environmental, social, economic and political assessment in order to gain a better understanding of and prioritise the threats that affect, in particular, the coastal areas, seabed, mangroves, coral reefs and flora and fauna in biodiversity hotspots as well as among the local communities. This study will also enable key indicators to be established and potential levers of action to be identified.

For further information: download the Terms of Reference for these reviews at:

www.fondationensemble.org

... MY VOYAGE IN THE GPF (continued from page 1)

... discussions firmly focused on greater effectiveness (monitoring, replicability, scaling-up, etc.).

One conviction dominates:

**'It is only by creating wealth
that we can defeat poverty.'**

Otherwise, what we do

is simply charity.'

The round table speakers are practitioners who have come to share their experiences. No lectures, apart from a few sessions featuring big names from the worlds of politics or economics. On the podium, speakers from international philanthropic organizations such as the Gates, Packard, Cargill and Sall Foundations, follow one after the other. Some charismatic and humorous speakers were a great success, such as Ford Foundation President Darren Walker on 'Redefining philanthropy', or one of the rare Frenchmen present, Patrick Dupuis, CFO of Paypal, on 'Poverty alleviation strategies'.

**Rare moments occurred, such
as when Gro Brundtland,
a remarkable figure who happened
to be celebrating her 75th birthday,
sparked the audience's attention.**

Physician and former Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Brundtland authored the ground-breaking 1987 report that introduced the concept of sustainable development. She will endure in my memory for her straightforwardness, her authority and the strength of her commitment...

The GPF website makes it easy to contact and network with those of the 350 participants who share similar interests. Some reply, this leads to individual meetings during the breaks. There are also unexpected encounters round the lunch table that turn out to be equally 'productive' because, as Jane Wales says, 'those who listen are generally as well informed, committed and vital as those who express themselves in public'.

From time to time, silence falls to let music flow from other lands... Artists working with recycled waste display their creations with infectious enthusiasm... A Japanese anthropologist Shinichi Takemura shows the first multimedia interactive digital globe... A welcome respite in a tightly packed schedule.

You will, I think, have the picture by now: it may be a long way to go, but the Global Philanthropy Forum is well worth the trip.



COFINANCING



*'Good connection' between Synergie Solaire
and Fondation Ensemble*

One hundred renewable energy companies have already joined forces with Synergie Solaire to support NGOs in promoting access to solar energy for the poorest communities. Héléne Demaegd, president of this endowment fund, shares with us the sources of her own – inexhaustible – commitment!

Why did you set up a solidarity fund for solar energy?

At this time of energy transition, renewable energies are a major issue, particularly for the millions who still live without electricity. Among them, solar energy is a universal resource that offers a lever for development yet to be fully exploited. In France, the sector is developing. The Synergie Solaire endowment fund was set up to bring together as many donors as possible, giving them the means to contribute to creating a solidarity-based economy. More specifically, this involves meeting the poorest communities' needs for electrification with the goal of improving their health and education conditions.

One hundred solar energy companies have already joined you. How do you move forward together?

Every year, we organize a dinner that enables us to attract the attention of all the sector's players. NGOs can present their projects and enter into direct contact with these companies. At the beginning, our venture brought together donors from the construction industry. Since then, we have been joined by other firms that are helping us to develop a broader entrepreneurial approach to the sector. Some of their managers are even members of our Strategy Committee. It's almost as if we had included skills sponsorship in our own governance.

What kind of support can people give?

While 80% of our resources come from financial donations, we are also receiving more and more offers of equipment donations or skills sponsorship. My role is to foster the kind of commitment that is consistent with our activities by highlighting not only the tax benefits for donors

but also, above all, the meaning of what we do and its impact on both individuals and communities.

What are your expectations of the co-funding agreement signed with our Foundation to support 'Humana People to People' in Mozambique?

I am delighted to be co-funding a project with the Foundation, which I had come across several times along the way and which never hesitates to put all its project monitoring expertise at our disposal... That's a very brave step to take! The co-funding began in March, and we will be working side by side over the next three years. I hope that Synergie Solaire will in turn be able to put its own entrepreneurial skills at the disposal of the Foundation.

How do you manage to stay on course at a time of financial crisis?

Our sector has indeed been very badly affected. But I'm still optimistic. To date, we have supported 15 projects and mobilized € 450 000 in funding. Yann Arthus Bertrand, patron of our last annual dinner, is right: 'It is by taking action that we find happiness'. And I can testify to the fact that everyone who has taken that step comes back for more!

**To find out more:
www.synergiesolaire.org**

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