

[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

## In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

## Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends:



Thanks very much to Joy and the authors of these newsletter articles for sharing their perspectives and experiences promoting "sustainable agriculture" in their respective countries. In this issue you will travel the world from land-locked, "green farming" in Rwanda to reclamation of drylands in Rajasthan, India, learn about sub-soil wealth from Sulastrri in Indonesia, joint management of mining/agricultural operations in southern China, and, the latest on sustainable agriculture in Switzerland, where consumers heavily invest in "multi-functional agriculture". It is wonderful to have ELPers still very active in the network from our charter year – 2001 (Hans, Ren), as well as all years hence.

2009 ELP was a very successful year. Soon you will all meet (2001-2009, 340 leaders!) via the elpalumni listserv. This is the first year we had women outnumber men – 20 women, 14 men, with several new countries joining our Berkeley ELP Alumni Network – Costa Rica, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Burkina Faso, Sri Lanka. We were saddened not to have Bill Sonnenschein with us... however, Philip Thomas has joined the ELP as an expert practitioner in collaborative leadership and democratic dialogue. We are very pleased to have him on board. Joy will share the course [website link](#) for you to see presentations and photos of your fellow alumni.

I have recently returned from Costa Rica where I am carrying out research for a case study on the role of local leadership and collective action in promoting sustainable agriculture and "rural territorial development" in the northern boundary region between Costa Rica and Nicaragua ("Zona Norte"). ELP alumnus Beto Rivas (2008), Nicaraguan, accompanied me on this field trip along with Alfredo Malespin, Secretary of the Farmers' Union of Costa Rica. We visited pineapple plantations (Costa Rica is now the 1st exporter of fresh pineapple in the world through unprecedented expansion), cacao producers, and several cooperatives of mixed crops, as well as conservation and women's associations. There is a struggle in the region between dominance by large agro-business and resurgence of family farms, producer organizations, new farmers markets featuring locally produced, organic food, and incipient ecotourism. It is hoped that the local leadership capacity-building and institutional support by IICA/Programa de Desarrollo Rural will help tip the balance toward inward-focused territorial development.



The "Zona Norte" case study is one of ten that will be featured as part of the "Ag Bridge" project, that seeks to connect university students with the real life experiences and challenges of rural territories in the United States, Central America, Africa and Asia via a state-of-the-art web portal. "Ag Bridge" is a collaborative project with Cornell, UC Berkeley (CSRSD) and Ecoagriculture Partners, funded by USDA. Stay tuned for more on this project, and ways for your respective universities to get involved!

That's all from Robin for now.

[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

## In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

## The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative

by James Rubakisibo(ELP '03)



**Who are RPEPI, Model farmers, and Ntibishoboka?** Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative (RHEPI) is a local NGO that I formed after participating in the ELP Program, with the aim of promoting sustainable agriculture, health and a green environment. Inspired by the leadership course taken at UC Berkeley, I chose to develop "model farmers". With two successive SGI grants we managed to build the capacity of grassroots farmers to reach out and help neighboring and less privileged farmers to adopt new sustainable farming techniques.

Model farmers are farmer leaders selected from within their communities to serve as models for their neighbors. Home-based demonstration units are set up to serve as living blackboards on which the model farmers' neighbors can see their practices. They must have the will and capacity to share the knowledge and skills gained with their neighbors. We started this approach with 33 model farmers in the southern province then under the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)-Rwanda. This initiative reached over 1500 farmers linked with the Farm Demonstration and Training Center (RFDTTC). They are now independent and operating under their registered UMUHUZA Cooperative.

Kagitumba is the entry border post from Uganda through Rwanda's north easternmost corridor. It is here the RPA (Rwandese Patriotic Army-Inkotanyi) waged a war on October 1st, 1990 that toppled the regime which had planned and executed the genocide against Tutsis in 1994. In Kagitumba, RHEPI started with 40 model farmers (30 women and 10 men), and they too have formed a Cooperative, DUFITINTEGO Cooperative, and have reached over 800 more farmers. They even started other model units in the neighboring districts, Gatsibo and Kayonza. However, Ntibishoboka has challenged and confronted them on many fronts, often forcing some to abandon their good intentions.



NTIBISHOKA is simply the inflexible mindset resisting any innovations and new practices, common with our model farmers, their neighbors and even conventional agricultural professionals. It is a Kinyarwanda word which literally means, "It is impossible". Farmers in Kagitumba believed that it was impossible to produce dry season vegetables away from the banks of perennial rivers like Akagera and Umuvumba (the government now prohibits cultivating these environmentally vulnerable areas), and others even believed that it was impossible to eat vegetables when there is no famine or when there are alternative sources of food. Others, including agricultural professionals, believed that it was impossible to

produce any crops without deep or clean cultivation and disturbing the soil. RHEPI and the Model farmers are trying to confront Ntibishoboka starting by using Kagitumba as an example to many other areas. During this campaign new practices of sustainable agriculture will be introduced.

### Any success so far, or what are the new practices adopted?

Kitchen gardens and raised and mulched beds to demonstrate zero tillage are common features in every Rwandan small farm or homestead. Farmers have been taught and trained to set up simple but appropriate technologies that are friendly to nature and the environment. These include: rain water harvesting and storage tanks (Umukomero type), drip irrigation, minimum or zero tillage technology; vegetable production, green manure and cover crops, and advocating the promotion of local markets. Surplus produce is sold to local school-feeding programs and other local markets.

### Challenges and setbacks

The major setback is lack of funding, we do this with a very low budget and often with no cash involved. The dissemination of information from reputable sources is still a big challenge. Every Rwandan is motivated to act towards our country's goals, outlined in the document [Rwanda Vision 2020](#). Open

■ debate on the impact of our interventions and what other actors can do right now is necessary to ensure sustainability.



[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

## In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

## "Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture: Experience from KRAPVAS

by Aman Singh, (ELP '06)



Krishi Avam Parishitiki Vikas Sansthan (KRAPAVIS), which means "organization for the development of agriculture/livestock and ecology", works with a clear mission: the betterment of ecological, agricultural and livestock practices. The goal is to ensure sustainable livelihoods for rural pastoral communities in Rajasthan, the largest state in India. For the last 17 years, KRAPAVIS has been working to revive Rajasthan's orans (sacred village forests), both physically and conceptually. Orans are local micro bio-diversity reserves harbouring the shrine of a local goddess or deity. Most orans contain

sources of water in small springs, rivulets or a variety of ponds and nadis. KRAPAVIS has succeeded in conserving biodiversity and protecting rural livelihoods in over 100 villages. This has been achieved through bio-diversity reconstruction, institution building, and stakeholder/community engagement. KRAPAVIS has empowered local communities in order to expand their administrative and managerial abilities. The organization has long-term experience in protecting trees, conserving water, raising saplings in nurseries and planting them in orans and other community conserved areas. As well as oran restoration, KRAPAVIS is working on agriculture and pastoralism issues, which have a direct impact on conservation.

KRAPAVIS primary project is to check the decline of Rajasthan's orans through the design and construction of water-harvesting structures, as the orans or sacred groves of Rajasthan have long been an essential component of rural livelihoods in this arid region, providing water, grazing for livestock, fuel and plants of medicinal value. Rajasthan is the largest state in India, accounting for 10% of the total area, but has access to just 1% of the country's water resources. KRAPAVIS develops and installs water-conservation structures and applies diversion-based irrigation technology systems capable of bolstering water retention in the orans, thereby increasing availability of forest resources and greatly improving rural livelihoods, agriculture and livestock. This contributes to ecological sustainability and to local socio-economic self-reliance by empowering communities to manage their orans, using both traditional and modern conservation techniques. The project utilizes traditional water-harvesting techniques in conjunction with modern scientific expertise (i.e. watershed approach, hydro-techniques, etc.) to rehabilitate or recreate water storage structures (talabs) and thereby to provide optimal solutions to water dispersion in degraded lands. This greatly benefits local livelihoods through the increased availability of water for crop irrigation and livestock. The talab renovation activity proceeds along the following lines:

- Obtaining water availability data from the Orans
- Creating gravity-fed devices in the following stages:

- 1) Construction/ renovation of talabs (storage tank) from local materials. Geological analysis to decide strategic placement of auxiliary water harvesting structures, ensuring maximum returns for minimal temporal and financial outlay. Each talab is constructed at a place which has maximum run-off flowing into it. The topography of the catchments is square / circular and tributaries tend to come together to join the main stream somewhere near the center of the area, thus collecting water. This is important to provide water for irrigation and drinking. The Talab is constructed solely from local materials - clay, stone or rock, and grasses, which serve to keep them affordable and replicable.
- 2) From talab, laying out of field channels and/or pipelines to agricultural fields for irrigation.
- 3) Redesigning the watercourse system if necessary and field layout to increase conveyance.

The creation of water-conservation structures brings enhanced economic sustainability. Economic sustainability is enhanced by the increased availability of water and fodder for livestock, in turn providing more crop yield, milk, meat and/or dung for sale; minor forest produce, such as honey, seeds, nuts and grasses for weaving, all of which can be sold for profit; and resources in close proximity to dwellings, reducing 'costs' of travelling further a field.

After orans and livestock, agriculture is the project's next priority. Agriculture is totally dependent on rainfall in the project area, and is associated with other numerous problems. Issues that we face include

the unavailability of traditional seeds, use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides that destroy soil and cause food poisoning in the animals fed on the agricultural waste, fields prone to soil erosion and rapid draining of water, limited crops grown and no tradition or awareness of growing fruits. Cultivation is done in the valley areas and at the bottom of the hills and yields less than subsistence. In this context, the following activities are proposed, as follows:

- Tak' gully plugging - construction of small check dams (masonry & gabion) on agriculture fields.
- Medbandhi/ field bunding, trenching, field leveling, tracing etc.
- Identification of farmers helping them who are taking or have taken initiative(s) to overcome the problem of modern seeds and expensive, destructive chemical inputs (reviving traditional seeds and farming systems)

Thus the project works with the community to develop contextually sensitive regulation and enforcement systems, and to establish linkages between the three: oran-livestock-agriculture. In the project villages, where poverty and vulnerability to climatic changes (drought, famine) is common, villagers depend on the Oran talab for water. KRPAVIS helps villagers revive their orans and empowers them in sustainable management. Healthy orans mean less poverty and more livelihood security because restoring orans provides more fodder for livestock, water and resources for villagers. Demonstrating conservation techniques increase communities' self-reliance, safeguarding livelihoods from political and climatic change for generations to come.

[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

## In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

## The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices

by Sulastri (ELP'05)



### The use of beneficial microorganisms in agricultural practices.

High input agriculture is increasingly recognized as contributing to the degradation of environment and health. It is also not profitable due its dependence on chemical inputs. There is therefore a conscious effort to promote the use of environmentally friendly products such as beneficial microorganisms instead of chemicals. Microorganisms are ubiquitous in the soil where they play a vital role in nutrient cycling and mediate various processes through their interaction with plants and other soil organisms. These interactions can be managed in sustainable agriculture, agronomically or otherwise for the benefit of farmers.

The importance of microorganisms (fungi, bacteria, actinomycetes and yeast) cannot be overstated, yet their presence and activities are often disregarded in conventional agricultural systems, which rely heavily on non-sustainable inputs of energy, fertilizers and pesticides. The legume-rhizobium symbiosis, mycorrhizal symbiosis, plant growth promoting bacteria (PGPR), nitrogen fixing organisms, phosphate solubilizing bacteria, and numerous other beneficial microorganism in relationships among plants, soils and microorganisms, have evolved since plants first appeared on land. It clearly makes sense to utilize these resources, particularly through direct economic management, which would be of the greatest benefit to farmers. This can only be fully realized through improving our present understanding of agro ecosystems.

The Indonesian Center for Biodiversity and Biotechnology (ICBB) in collaboration with "Plant Clinic" at the Department of Plant Protection, Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), have developed some potential microbes for active biofertilizer and biopesticides to substitute for the function of chemicals. The bio-agents that have been collected and developed by those institutions have proven to be able to substitute or even improve upon results given by chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Isolating microbes that have been developed by those institutions are:

- Effective decomposer (yeast-*Saccharomyces* sp. *KT O1*)
- General plant disease-resistance inducer (plant growth promoting rhizobacteria) consisting *Pseudomonas fluorescens* PG 1 and *Bacillus polymixa* BG25)
- Biofertilizer (*Azospirillum*-free living N fixing bacteria, phyllospheric bacteria), *Bradyrhizobium*, *Rhizobium*- N fixing bacteria on soybean, PGPR – phosphate solubilizing bacteria and IAA producer, phosphate solubilizing bacteria) that also improves rooting systems and drought-resistance
- Antagonistic fungi and yeast for control plant diseases (*Trichoderma harzianum*, and *Pichia* sp.)
- Insect pathogens (*Spodoptera litura*, *Nucleopolyhedrosis virus*, *Spodoptera exigua* *Nucleopolyhedrosis Virus*, *Beauveria bassiana*)
- Endophytic fungi: *Coniothyrium* and non sporulating fungus-SH1 for aphid, whitefly and thrips control of chili.
- MVA (Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi) *Glomus* sp., *Gigaspora* sp. and *Acaulospora* sp.



"Plant Clinic" IPB and ICBB also have extensive experience in disseminating beneficial microbes, especially for the bio-control of pests and bioremediation of contaminated soil.

Farming practices have profound effects on the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of ecosystems. Farming practices that emphasize the use of beneficial microorganisms play an important role in nutrient cycling, ecosystem balancing and conserving the land properties. These methods reduce chemicals inputs, enhance soil biodiversity, lead to more efficient use of water, as well as preserve organic matter and decrease soil erosion. In addition to these benefits, using beneficial microbes in such contexts reduces the risks associated with chemical run-off, while contributing to sustainable agriculture strategies.

[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

## In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

•

## Joint Cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community

by Ren Xiaodong (ELP'01)



Natural resource conservation, sustainable agricultural development, and participatory planning are the central tenets of the Community-based Conservation and Development Research Center (CCDRC) of Guizhou Normal University in PR China. Since the establishment of the CCDRC in 1999, long-term partnerships have been actively sought and formed to ensure comprehensive community development. One of the most successful collaborations to date has been with Guizhou Provincial and Zhenfeng County Poverty Alleviation Offices (PAO), and Sino Gold, a pioneer in the Chinese mining sector's commitment to community sustainable development. In the last year, CCDRC and its partners have begun a long-term project for

participatory development in three administrative villages around Sino Gold Jinfeng Mine located in the Shaping Township, Zhenfeng County, and Guizhou Province (Jinshan, Lannigou, and Niluo). Based on technical support from CCDRC, Sino-Gold established the first community development department (CDD) in China.

These three villages are comprised of approximately 3,380 people, nearly 80% of whom are Buyi ethnic minority. These villages comprise one of the poorest and most underprivileged areas in all of southwest China, with an average annual income in 2008 of RMB 2,050. The villages have a 22% Mandarin illiteracy rate, limited access to education and health facilities, and lack of opportunity for economic development.

In coordination with the PAO and the Community Development Department at Sino Gold Jinfeng Mine, the CCDRC has sought relieve some of the pressures that systemic poverty has created in these villages through the promotion of income-generating projects. Since 2008, 21 demonstration biogas tanks have been built with the goal of integrating environmental protection and economic development. Hopefully, in the next few years, the biogas will serve all households in those three villages. Nearly 250,000 Yuan has been invested in chestnut tree cultivation, which has stimulated agricultural output for many local farmers, and with nearly a 500,000 Yuan commitment over the next 18 months, the continued development of chestnut tree production seems assured. The CCDRC has also been instrumental in the creation of vegetable plantations, which have directly supplied the Jinfeng Mine food facilities. In May and June alone, local farmers supplied 976 kilograms worth of vegetables to the mine site. Furthermore, the establishment of the Kongfang Market has enhanced the economic viability of the area by providing market access for local farmers and their produce. Additionally, many local incomes have been augmented through part-time or full-time employment at Jinfeng Mine and its contractors, totaling 140 local workers, or 20% of the total workforce.

However, the CCDRC believes that true sustainable development does not just focus on income-generation for underdeveloped communities. In conjunction with the PAO and the Jinfeng Mine, CCDRC has successfully completed projects in a number of areas including education, health and sanitation, energy conservation, and community-based organizations. Some of these projects include the construction of access roads between villages, support to three teaching sites (one for each village), a primary school and playground, the first medical clinic in Jinshan, toilet facilities, and the creation of local community development project teams to oversee project implementation. The creation of local community-based organizations to facilitate participatory development is a hallmark of CCDRC activities and is vital to the long-term sustainability of community development initiatives.



It is this comprehensive and participatory approach to community development that has earned the PAO, Sino Gold, and the CCDRC high praise and recognition. Ultimately, the CCDRC hopes to inspire and collaborate with other NGOs and enterprises, and to expand our model, so successful at Jinfeng, to other mining communities throughout China.

[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

## In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

## Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland

by Hans Burger (ELP'01)



### Swiss Agriculture

Swiss Agriculture is characterized by family farms with an average size of 20 - 30 hectares. In the mountain and alpine areas, cattle rearing on grassland and meadows predominate. In the plains, most farms combine animal husbandry with arable crops. Specialized farms with vegetable, fruit or wine growing also exist. Food self-sufficiency in Switzerland amounts to 55-60 %. There are strict regulations regarding environment, animal welfare, the maximum number of animals per farm, a ban on GMO's (moratorium till 2013), spatial planning etc. Forest areas are protected by law. General costs of living as well as the costs of agricultural production are high.

### State Policy: from Market Support to Compensation for Ecosystem Services

The broad aims of the agricultural policy are outlined in Switzerland's constitution, namely a multifunctional agriculture, which produces food and provides services for the common good. State support for agriculture has been and will further be changed from market support towards direct payments for ecosystem and general services to society. To get these payments, the farms have to comply with a set of ecological performances regarding crop rotation, crop protection methods, fertilizer application (balance of nutrients), animal welfare and a minimum of 7% of the farm acreage covered by ecological elements. 95 % of the farms adhere to this system.

To achieve levels beyond the standard described above, there are special incentive programs to promote animal welfare, biodiversity and to protect special landscapes. Further, there are programs to reduce nitrogen seepage into the groundwater or to reduce ammonia emission into the air by special techniques for spreading liquid farmyard manure.



### Market Organizations and Ecosystem Services

Although food amounts to only 7 % of household expenditures, consumers behave price sensitively. However, eco-friendly or regional products are a marketing asset as long as their price does not differ too much from ordinary food. Producers, processors as well as big retail chains offer a variety of different private labels with eco-friendly and regional products.

### Science, technology and knowledge transfer

Innovation in sustainable agriculture is usually seen as a process in which research develops new technologies which are then transferred by extension services to the farmers. However,

this is a one-sided view. Most common practices of organic farming in Switzerland have been developed by farmers, by real pioneers. The Research Institute for Organic Agriculture, for instance, has been cofounded by farmers, policymakers and scientists. Proper interaction between all the partners is essential.

### Conclusion

Sustainable agricultural practices do not develop automatically. A multidisciplinary, innovative approach is required which includes private initiatives, science, technology, economics, government regulation and incentives, as well as promotion from the market side.

[Beahrs ELP Homepage](#)

- [Updates from ELP Alumni](#)

- [Class of 2001](#)
- [Class of 2004](#)
- [Class of 2006](#)
- [Class of 2007](#)
- [Class of 2008](#)

### Also In this issue

- [Update from Robin for ELP Alums & Friends](#)
- [The Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative](#)
- ["Oran-Agriculture-Livestock" as a Path to Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [The Use of Beneficial Microorganisms in Agricultural Practices](#)
- [Joint cooperation Model for Sustainable Development in a Mining Community](#)
- [Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Switzerland](#)

## ELP Updates

### Class of 2001



**Alexander Belyakov (ELP'01)**

Alexander holds a position as the deputy head of the Foundation for Local Democracy and European Integration of Yuri Panejko, in Kyiv, Ukraine. After many years of teaching at the Institute of Journalism of Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, Ukraine, Alexander Belyakov now contributes to international and local projects. In 2008, Belyakov was a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Environmental Communication, University of Lüneburg, Germany supported by the German Academic Exchange Service. He also completed the non-residential Global Policy Fellows Program in 2007 and 2009 at The Institute for Higher Education Policy, Washington DC, USA. Furthermore, Belyakov was a consultant for the Ukrainian Standardized External Testing Initiative, which is a USAID contractor. He is an alumnus of a number of foreign exchange and professional development programs, including Junior Faculty Development Program (Fulbright Junior Faculty Program) with an appointment at the Graduate School of Journalism, at University of California, Berkeley; the German Academic Exchange Service, with a placement at the Catholic University Eichstätt, Germany; and was a Civic Education Project Local Fellowship in Ukraine. Belyakov developed and published numerous academic articles, more than 500 journalistic materials, eight course curricula and five books. Recent publications include:

- Successful Communication in Business and Education (in co-authorship with Hans Gutbrod), (in Ukrainian & English), Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, 2006.
- Environmental Issues in the Mass Media. Textbook (in Ukrainian), Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, 2nd edition (with changes), 2003. Also available online: <http://journlib.univ.kiev.ua/index.php?act=book.index&book=37> (English summary).

Please stay in touch for a possible meeting: [alexander.belyakov\(at\)em-a.eu](mailto:alexander.belyakov(at)em-a.eu)

### Hans Burger (ELP'01)

At the end of September, at the age of 63, I will retire as Head of the Department of Agriculture of the Canton of Aargau. The last 16 years my team and I were responsible for the agricultural training and extension activities for the implementation of the sustainable agricultural policy, as well as for the disbursement of direct payments for 3000 family farms.

In future I will have some side businesses like farming on my own small farm with fruit production as well as acting as president of the communal utility of my own and a neighboring village. Further, I have become a member of the development agency Senior Expert Corps of Swiss Contact. Swiss Contact offers short assignments of experienced seniors to institutions in developing and east European countries.

### Class of 2004



**Pieter Terpstra (ELP'04)**

My wife Sanne and I were blessed with twins. Quinten and Livia were born on June 18th.

### Nelia Lagura (ELP'04)

I am now teaching Environmental Law again at the University of San Carlos-College of Law in the Philippines. I am also part of the Environmental Compliance Audit Team of the Office of the Ombudsman whose task is to assess the level of compliance with environmental laws by local governments.

### Ross Hagan (ELP'04)

I have now moved from the water sector to energy. I am the director of the Energy Office of the USAID Jordan. We are focused on legal/regulatory regime, energy efficient buildings, energy conservation incentives, and integration of renewable generation into the grid.

## Class of 2006

### Martine Ngobo (ELP'06)

In addition to my position as Senior Research Manager at [Farm Radio International](#), I have joined the teaching community of the University of Yaounde in Cameroon. I have been a lecturer in the Faculty of Sciences, Department of Plant Sciences since January 2009. Therefore, I am now based in my home country, in Yaounde, and I travel from here to oversee the 5 African countries that are under my supervision once a month as required by my position at Farm Radio International. Having some knowledge is good, but aiming to pass this knowledge on to others is a duty for me.

There are great opportunities in my department for collaborative activities/actions with the ELP group, which I look forward to exploring and discussing in a near future with the team over there. For example, Robin's hope to be able to organize a kind of local ELP summer course in this sub-region may be possible in my department

## Class of 2007



**Loan Le (ELP'07)** I won a scholarship from the [Erasmus Mundus in Eurasia Project](#) for my PhD study at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. I am now in the Netherlands for my 4- year study.

### Happy Tarumadevyanto & other Indonesian Alums(ELP'07)

As a general update from our Indonesian group we are making progress with the Indonesia Young Leaders for Environmental Governance Initiatives (IYLEGI). There are some of alumni from the ELP 2008 that initiating a number of voluntary based- studentship sharing activities. **Alifah Sri Lestari (ELP'07)** will soon present the results of the small gathering of ELP alumni and Asia Young leaders alumni that we had on June 18, 2009 - as well as the progress of our SGI preparation training which we expect to be released this August 2009. Also, **Suzanty Sitorus (ELP'02)**, and IYLEGI core team member recently finished her PhD.

### Adrian Ruiz (ELP'07)

In the last few months I have been working to set up a "sustainability open innovation platform" called "Bioalternativas". It is a website where people knowledgeable in sustainability issues can register to tackle problems and work towards for the best solution. I serve as the intermediary between organizations with challenges and a network of problem-solvers interested in solving these issues for compensation. I charge a fee for the service for companies and offer it free of charge to non-profit organizations. To visit my website [click here](#).

### Mahasin Ahmed Elabass (ELP'07)

I am enrolled and will join the UN University for Peace in Costa Rica for a one year's Master's degree in Environmental Security and Peace. After finishing I will be involved in teaching and coordinating our master program at Ahfad University for Women, which was established by UPEACE as part of the Africa program. I hope to meet other ELP alumni in Costa Rica.

## Class of 2008

### Karin Kaechele (ELP'08)

After the ELP I came back to my institution and I was promoted! Now I am the vice-president of ICV (Instituto Centro de Vida). I think ELP helped me a lot and made me feel more confident to address all challenges of my work.



### Mimi Nawawi (ELP'08)

I have pretty big news at my end!!! I am now living in Northridge, California. I came here about two months ago. My fiancé and I were married on July 27th in Kauai, Hawaii. It is a very big change for me. It's hard to leave Komodo but I am also looking forward to having a new life in the US. I am still adjusting to living here. Hopefully I can work in the environmental field still when I get back to work. I believe I can work from anywhere to promote and support sustainable development / environment because the earth is one.

### Faiz Kakar (ELP'08)

I have accepted the position of "Project Coordinator" for a UNDP funded project on Sustainable Land

Managment. The goal of the project is to combat desertification in Pakistan.



**Wim Schaerlaekens (ELP'08)**

Since November I have been working as trainee diplomat for the Belgium Public Service of Foreign Affairs, Development Cooperation and External Trade. Voilà, an official title! The work I'm doing will become really challenging soon. I'll keep you guys updated!

**Elena Castro (ELP'08)**

I have changed jobs since we left Berkeley. I'm working as the Commissioner in the Deputy Ombudsman's Office for Environment, Public Utilities and Indigenous Peoples in Peru.



**Beto Rivas (ELP'08)**

Three weeks ago, Angela Weber(ELP'08) visited me at CATIE. She's pushing forward an interesting project called "network of local prominence for global development". With the support of ELP Small Grants, the network aims to bring to the table the concerns of local communities about how "sustainable development" should be implemented in their region. As a start, Angela and I wrote an article which she recently presented at the IX Conference of research on the third sector:

[http://www.cemefi.org/congreso/component/option,com\\_frontpage/Itemid,1/](http://www.cemefi.org/congreso/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/)

I am now looking for a partner in Nicaragua, so communities in both countries (Brazil and Nicaragua) are able to exchange experiences and letters based on their concerns about development and sustainability. We look forward for any of you who want to engage in the project. In the picture is my new wife Catherine, Angela, and me.