

GREENCOAL MOVEMENT IN MADAGASCAR CHARCOAL FROM RICE HUSK AS ALTERNATIVE

Background/ Information

Madagascar has suffered environmental degradation over a significant part of its landmass, as you can observe on the pictures below. Forests that once blanketed the eastern third of the island have now been degraded, fragmented, and converted to scrub land. Spiny forests in the south are rapidly giving way to "cactus scrub" as indigenous vegetation is cut and burned for subsistence charcoal production. Viewed from above, Madagascar's rivers look as if they are bleeding the country to death as soil is eroded from the central highlands. Each year as much as a third of the country burns and 1 percent of its remaining forests are leveled. 290 plant species on the Masoala peninsula alone "are used by local people: as fuel wood, as wood for construction, for medicinal purposes, carving, and other purposes.

Madagascar's major environmental problems include deforestation and habitat destruction, agricultural fires and erosion and soil degradation. Our "Greenbelt Movement" in Madagascar is to raise especially national awareness of the consequences of those kinds of deforestation. People ought to learn about substitutes and most importantly the skills to use them most efficiently. "Greenbelt Movement" is an environmental friendly project, with which we approach the solution of our concern about a better future, a healthier future, our future.

Plan of Action

Our project will be conducted over the course of six weeks from the second last week of July to August 2014. The project will be carried out in one target area, Masoala. This is a target area because this is the place where deforestation is at an alarming stage. Also because of the availability of the materials needed for making sustainable charcoal. Making of this charcoal is less costly compared, the material needed are readily available. Masoala after clearing the forests, they use the land to grow rice currently. It will be a new skill to the area and in order to make it effective and realistic, we will offer tutorials on how to make the product.

During the first week, we will be educating people on our idea and how important it is. This will be done by going from school to school, starting with our city of arrival, the capital Antananarivo. This first week will be also a chance to explain mostly to women how harmful the smoke from the charcoal from trees is harmful to their health since who spend most of their time in the kitchen. In this week we will further distribute T-shirts (written, "Gardez le calme et utiliser le charbon de bois sain =Keep Calm and Use Healthy Charcoal) to first 100 residents in our project. This slogan of "keep calm and..." is very used among teenagers and understood by everybody of our age. It encourages interest and attention. They will be more willing to wear the t-shirt and ask about the cause and to even lay hand on the planting.

In the second/ third week we will gather rice husks as much as we can with the help of local schools, universities in Masoala and make the charcoal in huge quantities. The whole process of collection takes approximately a week. In order to ensure the happening of the idea, we will have to pay local workers as well, in order to create some more incentives in the beginning, to make it work.

GREENCOAL MOVEMENT IN MADAGASCAR CHARCOAL FROM RICE HUSK AS ALTERNATIVE

During our fourth week, we will distribute the sample to the residents to try them out. Obvious experiments would be helpful and making them understand the easiness of the procedure. When they have in their hand the own product, which even works, will make them more familiar with the new charcoal. This is more efficient than distributing statistics and only educate. We will of course also distribute t-shirts to them.

In the fifth/sixth weeks, we will go to schools around and in Masoala and engage students in a dialogue about the interconnections between our new skill, environment and health of 'new' and 'old' charcoal. During the following week, we will be planting *Alluadia* tree seedlings with the help of permission from authorities in Masoala protected area. *Alluadia* is one of the species that is almost being outsourced.

International Support

We want to work together with the World Bank's supported project *REDD*, which trades carbon credits earned on Madagascar, which result from conservation efforts in protected areas in Madagascar. "The results from the sale of carbon credits will be used again to promote biodiversity conservation efforts and to assist local populations improve the locals livelihood" (biodiversity-l.iisd.org; World Bank Conservation International Support REDD Project in Madagascar). *Hope for Madagascar*, that aims to reduce poverty and improve the well-being of Malagasy people while preserving the unique biodiversity; and as well the very active *World Wildlife Fund- Madagascar*, which also aims to protect wildlands and wildlife, to train local conservationists and guides and to promote sustainable use and development.

TEAM

Hilda K. R. WEIT: **Leader;** SKEMA Business School; Born in Madagascar, delivers contacts, speaks French, travel arrangements

Stella Langat: **Leader;** Skidmore College; from Kenya, allocates \$10,000, practical experience in winning rice husk charcoal from previous project in Kenya