INTERGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT THROUGH PROGRESSIVE TERRACING TECHNIQUES

Rwanda Wildlife Clubs-RWC

Now called: Rwanda Environmental Conservation Organization (RECOR)

HABINEZA Frank, RWANDA, AFRICA
Rwanda is situated in Central and Eastern Africa. Literally it’s in the heart of Africa.

Rwanda is bordered by Uganda in the North, Tanzania in the East, Burundi in the South and DRC in the West.
Erosion: Rwanda’s big water problem

- Over 1 ton of soil per hectare is swept away by erosion to rivers and lakes every month
- Erosion has polluted Rwanda’s water – the water has changed colour from white to brownish red
- Soil erosion is the main hazard to Rwanda’s water (Nyabarongo, Akagera and Nile rivers)
- We are demonstrating progressive terracing techniques to control erosion in Rwanda
- RWC did all this with the local people after acquiring strong support from the district and local authorities
What we are doing about the problem?

- RWC, a registered conservation NGO, chose the pilot site of Volcanoes National Park boundaries.
- The local action is based in Burera district in the former Ruhengeri province.
- Through the use of agroforestry techniques (progressive terracing), this devastating land loss is being reduced.
- The high speed water run off has started reducing, thus preventing pollution of lakes Burela & Buhondo.
- The local population and local Government administrative units participated extensively in project activities.
Obstacles and Opportunities

Main Obstacles

- Rain scarcity led problems in watering of the plants
- Steep hills made it difficult to take proper measurements of contour lines while planting the shrubs

Main Opportunities

- Both Govt. & farmers were concerned about energy, tourism, agriculture, land loss and the dangers of erosion
- The local people and Government units participated in all activities of the project, this made work easier
- The National Parks office availed its staff all the time and this made the people trust the project
Lessons & Achievements

- Progressive terracing techniques, in the steeply sloping lands, is the most appropriate, affordable, efficient and socially fit in controlling soil erosion.

- The agroforestry trees and shrubs selected for use provide farmers with useful products, some of which have the potential to earn extra income.

- Reduction of erosion leads to improvement of the productivity of agriculture and greater food security.
Lessons & Achievements cont.

- Enhancing the quality of life by providing cleaner drinking water and a greener environment
- Regionally, these techniques are expected to lead to a reduction in the pollution of Lake Victoria and its multi-country basin
Recommendations

- The 4th WWF assembly is requested to promote progressive terracing techniques as a best technique in controlling soil and water erosion and member countries can take a leaf from Rwanda.
- Water CSO’s should involve local authorities and local people in all activities, since once convinced, these people perform with or without money.
- CSO’s should bring positive constructive ideas to their home governments other than being negative all the time, if they want to become development partners in their countries.
Recommendations cont.

- Involving local people in progressive terracing has the potential to improve transboundary water resources and needs to be implemented at a larger scale.

- Funds have been made available to the Technical Advisory Committee of AMCOW for transboundary water resources management – progressive terracing should be considered as a potential solution.

- These recommendations should be fed into NEPAD processes and activities.