



NILE BASIN DISCOURSE FORUM IN RWANDA

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“LET US FIGHT AGAINST WATER SCARCITY...” said Prof. Bikoro

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SAVING UGANDA’S MABIRA FOREST



Let the Ugandan Parliament know rainforests and their ecological services including water, climate and biodiversity are more important than sugar which can be grown elsewhere.

INTERNATIONAL WATER DAY CELEBRATIONS IN RWANDA

The Minister of State for Water and Mineral Resources Prof. Munyanganizi Bikoro earmarked that Rwandans need to fight against water scarcity, he said this while as the chief guest in the International Water Day Celebrations in Rwanda, held at SAVE in the Southern Province.

This water day was highly attended by various guests who included the Minister of Infrastructure, Governor of the Southern province, Governor of Kiyundo province in neighboring Burundi, Mayor of Gisagara District and senators; Iyamuremye, Kayumba and Mukandutiye. The ceremony also included various donor representative from World Bank, CTB, WFP, FAO, Coordinator of PEAMER (Rural Water Supply Project) etc and many other partners of which Nile Basin Initiative, Nile Basin Discourse Forum in Rwanda, Electrogaz and many more stakeholders.



Above: Photos of an already completed water project in SAVE sector which was launched on the Water day.

STAKEHOLDERS' WORKSHOP ON THE SUCCESS OF NTEAP PROJECTS, WATER HARVESTING AND SOCIO AND ECONOMIC BENEFIT SHARING

The stakeholders’ workshop on the success of NTEAP projects, efforts in water harvesting, social and economic benefit sharing was done this April, 2007 at Ninzi Hotel in Kigali.



Stakeholders’ participating in the NBDf-Rwanda at Ninzi Hotel .

National Coordination Office,

NDNF-Rwanda, Opposite Amahoro National Stadium, Gate No. 17,

P O Box 3967 Kigali-Rwanda, Tel. +250-55 10 17 86 or +250 (0) 85 630 39, Email: info@nbdfrwanda.org.rw

Website: www.nbdfrwanda.org.rw

Experts warn warming will harm society, nature

BY John Walter Gakumba

An international global warming conference approved a report warning of dire threats to the Earth and to mankind — from increased hunger in Africa and Asia to the extinction of species — unless the world adapts to climate change and halts its progress.

Africa will be hardest hit, the report concluded. By 2020, up to 250 million people are likely to be exposed to water shortages. In some countries, food production could fall by half, it said.

Agreement came after an all-night session during which key sections were deleted from the draft and scientists angrily confronted government negotiators who they feared were watering down their findings.

“It has been a complex exercise,” said Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Several scientists objected to the editing of the final draft by government negotiators but in the end agreed to compromises. However, some scientists vowed never to take part in the process again.

The climax of five days of negotiations was reached when the delegates removed parts of a key chart highlighting devastating effects of climate change that kick in with every rise of 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit, and in a tussle over the level of scientific reliability attached to key statements.

There was little doubt about the science, which was based on 29,000 sets of data, much of it collected in the last five years. “For the first time we are not just arm-waving with models,” Martin Perry, who conducted the grueling negotiations, told reporters.

The United States, China and Saudi Arabia raised the many of the objections to the phrasing, often seeking to tone down the certainty of some of the more dire projections. **To Page 5**

DONORS VOW TO SUPPORT RURAL CLEAN WATER SUPPLY DURING THE INTERNATIONAL WATER DAY



Among the achieved, as far as this PEAMER and other partners together with the Ministry of Water, a water project was completed and it is able to supply clean and safe water to the residents of the mentioned regions of the Southern Province. According to the CTB representative, the Belgian government vowed to help in supplying clean water to at least 200,000 residents of Huye, Gisagara and Nyaruguru districts. The CTB initiative will be realized in three phases:

- i. Technical rehabilitation of water sources
- ii. Implement and sensitize the participants in the execution of the project
- iii. And finally, construction of public sanitary and hygiene facilities in the three mentioned districts.

However, the CTB project is estimated at a total 5 860 000 Euros and will spend a time duration of 4 years before completion. Other pledged contributions came from the various stakeholders and partners who have long been supporting the clean water supply and conservation as well as rehabilitation of water masses in all parts of the country. These included support pledges from

the representative of the World Bank. In his speech, the minister argued the masses to conserve mother nature through the proper use of natural resources. Also, Prof. Bikoro encouraged investors to invest in the proper use of natural resources such as water for income generating activities. All partners' speeches exhibited endless effort to help in the natural resources conservation and development.



Residents carry water in the shantytown of Kibera, on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya. U.N. climate experts have warned that future global warming could hit Africa harder than other regions.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION PLANS TO USE RENEWABLE FUELS

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency, following a congressional mandate, finalized plans Tuesday for new standards to boost the use of renewable fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel.

Refiners will be required to use at least 7.5 billion gallons of renewable fuel in gasoline by 2012, the EPA said.

The rule, authorized in an energy law signed by President Bush in 2005, also requires that 4.02 percent of gasoline sold or dispensed to U.S. motorists in 2007 be renewable fuel, or about 4.7 billion gallons. That is more than 1 percent higher than required last year. The announcement came a week after the Supreme Court declared that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are air pollutants under the Clean Air Act and said the EPA has the authority to regulate those emissions from new cars and trucks.

EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson said the agency was evaluating what actions it would take as a result of the Supreme Court decision. He said it was premature to outline any steps the EPA might take. Bush administration officials sought to build support for Bush's goal of reducing gas consumption by 20 percent over 10 years. Bush's plan would try to increase the use of alternative fuels to 35 billion gallons by 2017 and boost fuel efficiency standards in new vehicles. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman said the renewable fuel plan was a "critical step in increasing the nation's energy security." Supporters in Congress pushed the renewable fuel requirement in 2005 to boost the use of ethanol, which is commonly made from corn, and biodiesel, which is frequently made from products such as vegetable oil.

The EPA said the new law has led to increased production of ethanol and projected that by 2012 renewable fuels would reach more than 11 billion gallons, or about 3.5 billion more than required under the plan. Environmental groups noted that vehicles using ethanol blends get 20 to 30 percent fewer miles per gallon than with gasoline and argued that the Bush administration needs to implement significant increases in fuel economy standards for vehicles.

"The president has said he wants to increase vehicle efficiency 4 percent per year, but his fuel economy rules over the past six years raised light truck standards only half that much," said Philip Clapp, president of the National Environmental Trust. "Without specific mileage targets, there's no guarantee consumers will ever see cars that are significantly more fuel efficient."

EPA said the new standards are expected to reduce carbon monoxide emissions from gasoline-powered vehicles and equipment by 0.9 percent to 2.5 percent and greenhouse gas emissions by 8 million to 13.1 million tons by 2012.

But the agency said other smog-forming vehicle emissions could rise with the increase in the use of renewable fuels. EPA estimated the standards could cause a 41,000 to 83,000 ton increase nationally in volatile organic compounds plus nitrogen oxide emissions, with effects varying by region. Ethanol helps reduce carbon monoxide during the winter but can increase smog levels in the summer. Ethanol releases more nitrogen oxides, a key element of smog, and evaporates more easily than gasoline, adding other air pollutants.



In the picture:

The Nile Basin Discourse Forum in Rwanda National Coordinator (far end), Mr. Habineza Frank, The Chairperson Steering Committee of the Nile Basin Discourse, Ms Albertine Uwimana as well as the NELSAP Coordinator, Mr. Antoine Sendama. During the stakeholders' workshop at Ninzi Hotel, Kigali.

SAVING UGANDA'S MABIRA FOREST

.....By John Gakumba

In the beginning and middle of the this month of April, the Ugandan police opened fire at hundreds of Mabira rainforest protection campaigners in Uganda protesting against government plans to allocate forest land to a sugar company, and at least three were killed in ensuing riots.

It came to such a point because Ugandan leadership seems not to listen to the demands of citizens in regard to environmental issues of the nation. Stopping the "Great Mabira Rainforest Give-Away" has been something the Ecological Internet Earth Action Network has been deeply involved with internationally (media coverage below). This in support of one of Africa's first grassroots modern ecological protest campaigns - with local peoples organizing boycotts against the sugar company involved, setting up cyber-petitions and text messaging via cell phones to organize protests. Efforts to save Mabira rainforest are a spontaneous, home-grown rainforest conservation protest that deserves our continued support.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has continued to pursue legally dubious plans to destroy large areas of Uganda's last important intact and protected rainforests. Some one-third of Mabira Forest Reserve, about 7,000 hectares of an area which has been protected since 1932, will lose its protection for sugar cane production by the Mehta Group.

Ecological Internet was the first to bring a thriving Ugandan rainforest protection and protest movement to an international audience. Local groups are organizing boycotts of the sugar company that will benefit from the deforestation, and seven civil society organisations have sued the government over the planned giveaway and degradation of natural resources, including Mabira Forest Reserve. Since that time many more local and international groups have joined the campaign, and a dramatic discussion is being held in Ugandan society and in the media regarding the legitimacy of giving away forest reserves to private business interests. What is so exciting is that the level of protest in Uganda is substantial and growing, with boycotts of the sugar company and online petitions.

Uganda has long been facing a deforestation crisis, with forests covering 20 percent of Uganda 40 years ago, but now just covering seven percent. Deforestation has been directly responsible for declining levels of waters in Lake Victoria, River Nile and other rivers resulting in a scarcity of drinking water and reduction in hydroelectric energy production. Continued destruction of Uganda's surviving forests will have further grave ecological consequences -- threatening ecotourism revenues, rare species, sparking soil erosion and water pollution. Local people are critically dependent upon remaining forests for firewood and building houses.

Loss of forest cover in Uganda has had devastating ecological impacts which will be intensified by Mabira sugar give-away. According to Uganda's National Forest Authority (NFA), the plan to log Mabira reserve endangers 312 species of trees, 287 species of birds and 199 species of butterflies. Nine species found only in Mabira and nearby forests risked going extinct. The forest absorbs pollution in an industrial area, sinking millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide, and helps maintain central Uganda's wet climate. Their removal would bring drier weather and hurt crop yields. Mabira is a watershed for two rivers contributing to the Nile, an ecological stabiliser between two major industrial towns and it protects Lake Victoria. According to the Uganda Tourism Board, eco-tourism generated some \$300 million for Uganda last year.

The likelihood of stopping the Mabira Forest Reserve give-away and other ill-conceived protected forest degazetting has been an up and down ride. A couple months ago it was reported that the autocratic President was pushing through many other forest give-aways, then later it was reported the projects may not commence, and most recently the President's cabinet has approved the Mabira forest give-away for sugar production and now the Ugandan parliament will have the last word.

Mabira must be protected to maintain water, biodiversity and future development potential. But already the movement for sustainable rainforest use and development in Uganda has won. Maintaining and expanding rainforest protection has been established as a critical pillar of climate change mitigation, water availability and national ecological sustainability for Uganda's future. Please contact President the entire Ugandan parliament, and Ugandan ministries and embassies and insist that these projects be abandoned, and Uganda's remaining rainforest strictly protected as ecological reserves while restoring forests where they historically occurred.

Apocalyptic future?from page 2

The final IPCC report is the clearest and most comprehensive scientific statement to date on the impact of global warming mainly caused by man-induced carbon dioxide pollution. “The poorest of the poor in the world — and this includes poor people in prosperous societies — are going to be the worst hit,” Pachauri said. “People who are poor are least able to adapt to climate change.”

The report said up to 30 percent of the Earth’s species face an increased risk of vanishing if global temperatures rise 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit above the average in the 1980s and ’90s.

Areas that now suffer a shortage of rain will become even more dry, adding to the risks of hunger and disease, it said. The world will face heightened threats of flooding, severe storms and the erosion of coastlines.

“This is a glimpse into an apocalyptic future,” the Greenpeace environmental group said of the final report.

Without action to curb carbon emissions, man’s livable habitat will shrink starkly, said Stephen Schneider, a Stanford scientist who was one of the authors. “Don’t be poor in a hot country, don’t live in hurricane alley, watch out about being on the coasts or in the Arctic, and it’s a bad idea to be on high mountains with glaciers melting.”

“We can fix this,” by investing a small part of the world’s economic growth rate, said Schneider. “It’s trillions of dollars, but it’s a very trivial thing.”

Negotiators pored over the 21-page draft meant to be a policy guide for governments. The summary pares down the full 1,500-page scientific assessment of the evidence of climate change so far, and the impact it will have on the Earth’s most vulnerable people and ecosystems.

NBDF-Rwanda Website

NBDF-Rwanda has already established a website (www.nbdfwanda.org.rw) from which all general and detailed information on our activities, achievements, future and past developmental plans can be accessed. The website also comprises public and membership forums as well as chatroom, anyone however, has the chance to register or access subscription to our activities and involvement.

STAKEHOLDERS’ WORKSHOP ON THE SUCCESS OF NTEAP PROJECTS, EFFORTS IN WATER HARVESTING, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS SHARING

.....from page 1

The workshop was opened by the NELSAP Coordinator as the Guest of Honor and different NBI, government and various stakeholders and partners from various civil society organizations participated and presented papers

Objectives of the workshop

Purpose

The overall goal was to contribute to effective stakeholder participation in the Nile Basin Initiative.

Knowledge achieved from this workshop will help in improving the ability of national initiatives to moderate multi-stakeholder platforms for the implementation of the NBI projects and programs.

Specifically, the workshop aimed at:

- Strengthening stakeholder involvement in NBI programs and projects

Sharing of information and experiences to enhance learning and knowledge generation within the NBI and NBD

Workshop Outcomes

The following are the outcomes that were expected:

To have a practical and theoretical knowledge of the NBI-NTEAP projects, Water Harvesting and SDBS

To have a network of practitioners that can continue exchanging experiences and building their facilitation skills

Would have different mechanisms for stakeholders’ participation in NBI projects and programs

Enhance Civil Society participation in NTEAP projects, SDBS and Water harvesting.

Compiled, Designed and Edited by Gakumba John B.

kistlife@yahoo.com,

Tel +250 (0) 8583536

EDITORIAL

International Water Day in other parts of the world

BRITAIN: RAINWATER HARVESTING FACILITIES IN LONDON'S DOCKLANDS

In London's Docklands (East London), a revolutionary plan to build zero-carbon estate will begin next month. In addition to solar panels and wind turbines, rainwater will be used to flush loos and water plants. Rainwater is an important part of the project, which aims to be an example to inspire people, even for working-class families as for everyone else (half of the homes are intended for social housing).

The New Zealand Herald

MARCH 2007 - GRASSROOTS

Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation is a non-profit civil society organization, which aims to engage mountain communities to participate in ecological restoration of languishing river basins in the central and western Himalaya of India.

The Grassroots strategy involves spearheading appropriate technology options in cross cutting sectors like drinking water, sanitation, renewable energy and rainwater harvesting in order to improve the quality of peoples lives, here and now. An Artisans Guild comprising of sixty barefoot engineers have been trained to assist communities with technical and managerial issues regarding the adoption of such appropriate technologies.

<http://www.irha-h2o.org>

WORLD WATER DAY: IRHA MEETS THE POPULATION

The theme announced for the 2007 celebration of the World Water Day was "Coping with water scarcity". So many people still have to fight every day to find the precious resource! Worldwide, 1.1 billion people do not have access to adequate clean water to meet their basic daily needs and 2.6 billion do not have proper sanitation. This year IRHA (International Rainwater Harvesting Association) was invited to participate in the celebration of the World Water Day by the Geneva company SIG (<http://www.sig-ge.ch/>) (Geneva Industrial Services). They organised a competition for best drawing on the theme of water for the children from Geneva schools. Children were aware that SIG would verse for each drawing a little sum to IRHA to contribute to the implementation of its project Blue Schools.

INDIA: THE MINISTRY INCREASES THE RAINWATER STORAGE CAPACITY

According to a response given by the Minister of State for Water Resources, the total Indian rainwater storage capacity estimated is about 76 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM), for a total utilizable water of 1123 BCM. Further, the State Governments have identified various other schemes for investigation and planning and the estimated storage for such schemes is about 108 BCM. India is already one of the countries most concerned about rainwater harvesting; still, New Dehli stress its advance.. Source: Government of India (<http://pib.nic.in>).

Energy challenges: the next thousand years

Dinner Keynote Speech at the March 2007 Energy Challenges international conference, Seattle; 30 March 2007.

Looking forward a thousand years may be difficult, if not impossible, but at least none of us will be here to see whether any of our guesses are right or wrong. Two thousand years ago it might have been possible to guess something of the world a thousand years later; but a thousand years ago it would have been impossible to guess what the world looks like today.

There has been a steady acceleration since organized human society began: from hunter gatherers to farmers and fishermen, to town dwellers, to the creation of hierarchies in cities, and in the last 250 years to the industrial revolution. Throughout small environmental, in particular climatic, variations have been critical. Throughout the use of resources, particularly for generation of energy, has greatly affected the character of each society. In the past such energy came from

- fire
- wind
- water (and hydro power generally)
- animal including human muscle
- wood
- coal
- oil and gas

In one way or another all such sources contained environmental penalties as well as advantages.

More recently energy systems have included

- terrestrial solar panels large and small
- tide round coastlines, and waves
- geothermal to make use of the heat beneath our feet
- nuclear with prospects for new fission technology (such as pebblebed), and later fusion technology using tritium and deuterium
- even use of seawater for agriculture as well as for generation of energy.

For the future there is a range of exotic possibilities which we have had fun in discussing at this conference. They include solar space power and even gravitational energy.

To be continued in issue 5.



Climate Change and Food Security

.....By John W.B GAKUMBA (BSc in FST-KIST)

Introduction

Over the past fifty years, human ingenuity has led to technological advances in agriculture that have dramatically increased crop yields. However, despite these improvements, agriculture is still highly dependent on climate since solar radiation, temperature, and precipitation are the main drivers of crop growth. Since the industrial revolution, humans have been changing the global climate by emitting high amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, potentially resulting in higher global temperatures, changed hydrological regimes, and increased climatic variability.

Climate change over the next century may have significant effects on food supply, i.e., how much food is produced, as well as food security, i.e. how much food is available to people. How much, where, and when food supply and security will be affected by climate change are questions many scientists and policy-makers are examining.

Global Warming and Food Security

It seems obvious that any significant change in climate on a global scale should impact local agriculture and thereby affect the world's food supply. Considerable study has gone into the questions of how farming might be affected in different regions, and by how much; and whether the net result may be harmful or beneficial, and to whom.

Some of the major organizations studying the effect of climate change on agriculture include:

- Food and Agricultural Organization
- Columbia Center for International Earth Science Information Network
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Impacts of Climate Change on Food Production and Supply

Overall, climate change, including global warming and increased climate variability, could result in a variety of impacts on agriculture. Some of these effects are biophysical, some are ecological, and some are economic.

They include:

- ◆ A shift in climate and agricultural zones towards the poles
- ◆ Changes in production patterns due to higher temperatures
- ◆ A boost in agricultural productivity due to increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
- ◆ Changing precipitation patterns
- ◆ Increased vulnerability of the landless and the poor.

Rosenzweig and Hillel (1995) explain these and other ideas in [Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Agriculture and Food Supply](#).

In the early 1990's in a study sponsored by EPA, agricultural scientists in 18 countries estimated potential changes in national grain crop yields using crop models and the GCM scenarios at 112 sites worldwide (Rosenzweig and Parry, 1994) (Figure 3). The results of this global assessment suggests that a doubling of the atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration will lead to only a small decrease in the global crop production. However, it appears that developing countries in lower latitudes will bear the brunt of these problems (Figure 4). Several factors contribute to the latitudinal differences in simulated yields. In high latitude regions, increased temperatures benefited crops otherwise limited by cold temperatures and short growing seasons.

The climate change induced warming at low latitudes brought greater heat and water stress, resulting in greater yield decreases than at higher latitudes.

.....TO BE CONTINUED IN ISSUE 5

MEMBERS OF NBDF-RWANDA

N°	ORGANISATION	CONTACT PERSON	ADDRESS	MAIN INTERVENTION FOCUS
1	ARECO-RWANDA NZIZA (Association Rwandaise des Eco-	MUKAKAMARI Dancilla	e-mail :	Environmental Protection
2	ARJE (Association Rwandaise des Journalistes Environnemen- taux)	UWIMANA Albertine	rwejass@yahoo.com	Promotion of Environmental Reporting in different media in Rwanda
3	(RECOR) Rwanda Environmental Conservation Organisation	SEHENE Jean Chrysostome	rwec@planet-save.com	Conservation, Agroforestry, eco- tourism and Environmental education
4	SERUKA ASBL	KAYITEGEYE Athanasie	seruka@rwanda.l.com	Gender Environmental Protection
5	IMBARAGA SATP Environmental Trainer Organic Farming	Mrs. SANYU Régina	sanyuregina@yahoo.com	Agriculture Parcs protection
6	URUMURI RW'URUKUNDO	NDIRIMA Denis	Tél/Fax: 575668	Rural Development
7	SOLIDAIRES BENURUGWIRO	MUKABINAMA Edith	solidaires_b@yahoo.fr	Gender, Development, Micro projects for women
8	JOC/F (Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique for Girls)	NKUNDIZANA Domina	nkundizana@hotmail.com	Catholic Youth Promotion
9	ISUKU ASBL	HABIYAREMYE J.B	isuku_rwanda@yahoo.co	Hygiene, Environmental Protection
10	ARDI	RUDASINGWA Emmanuel	Tél: 08571048	Development, Environmental Protection
11	FRSP (Federation Rwandaise du Secteur Privé)	BITWAYIKI Eugène	frsp@rwanda.l.com	Private Sector Federation
12	Rwanda Rain Water Harvesting Association	KABALISA Vincent	nilerwa@yahoo.fr	Rain water harvesting
13	RDO Rwanda Development Organisation	BAHORANA Augustin	08594464	Rural development
14	Fondation Nzambazamariya Vénérande	MUKANTABANA Crescence	mukacresc@yahoo.fr	Gender Child Rights Protection
15	ACNR (Association pour la Conservation de la Nature au	BIZIMANA Innocent	Inbizimana@avu.org	Nature Conservation
16	ARDHO (Association Rwandaise pour la Defense des droits de l	SAFARI Emmanuel	manusafari@yahoo.com	Human Rights
17	CLADHO (Human Rights Umbrella Organisation)	UWANYIRIGIRA Agnes	572740	Human rights umbralla organisation
18	JOC (Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique Garçons)	KALISA Ernest	kalisajoc@yahoo.com	Catholic Youth Promotion
19	UGAMA/CSC	SIMPUNGA Innocent	simpunga@yahoo.fr	Capacity building for local CSOs, training
20	PRO-FEMMES/TH	Suzanne RUBONEKA	Profemme@rwanda.l.com	Gender, Umbrella for Women Associa- tions
21	AREDI (Association Rwandaise pour l Environnement et le Developpement Intégré)	SIKUBWABO Adélard	aredi@rwanda.l.com tekesik@hotmail.com	Environmental protection and Integra- ted Development
22	COSYLI (Conseil des Syndicats Libres au Rwanda)	TWAYIGIRA Jean Léonard	Tél : 522585, 08479390	Workers Union
23	CCOAIB (Conseil de Concertation des Organisations d Appui aux Initiatives de Base)	Prisca	ccoaib@rwanda.l.com	Dialogue, capacity building and exchange for local initiatives
24	Réseau des femmes	UWIMANA Bibiane	refemme@rwanda.l.com	Gender Promotion of Rural Women in Rwanda
25	BENISHYAKA	GAHIMA Betty	benasoc@rwanda.l.com	Gender Support to Women and vulner- able Children
26	ARJ (Association Rwandaise des Journalistes)	SEMUKEYA Martin	msemukanya@yahoo.fr	Promotion of professional Journalism in Rwanda
27	INADES FORMATION	KABAYIZA Eustache	584713	Rural development
28	(RWEPI) Rwandese Health Environment Project Initiative	James RUBAKISIBO	Tel: 08856116	Environmental health and protection
29	CAURWA (Conseil des Autoctones au Rwanda)	SEBISHWI Juvéal	juvesebi@yahoo.fr	Promotion of Indigenous People