

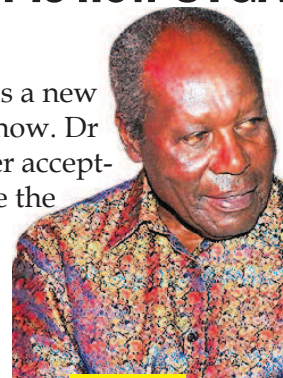
# UTGA NEWS

01<sup>st</sup> November 2013

No.23

## Dr Aliker is new UTGA Patron

UTGA has a new Patron now. Dr Martin Aliker accepted to become the new UTGA Patron following the demise of Dr James Mulwana.



Dr Aliker

Dr Aliker is a former Minister, a diplomat and highly influential person and a high profile achiever especially in promoting private sector business. He is also a Senior Presidential Adviser. Both Dr Aliker and the UTGA fraternity are looking forward to working hand in hand to leverage the commercial forestry sector in Uganda.

## UTGA West Nile Cluster Meeting On Next Week

Timber growers in 'Horn of Uganda' face set of unique challenges



POOR ACCESSIBILITY: Poor or lack of roads is a major hindrance to growers in the area

All roads lead to Arua on Thursday 7th November 2013 where UTGA has organised and will hold its first Cluster meeting for tree growers in the West Nile region. The field excursion will take place at Moses Obeta's teak plantation in Ajie starting at 9am and growers are expected to share experiences

and learn from the discussions that will take place that day. The theme of the day will be "Promoting fast growing and high yielding teak". The meeting will also look at those aspects that specifically afflict growers in the West Nile region to deliberate and agree on how to tackle and work towards solving them.

## UTGA in Market Development Drive

The UTGA Secretariat is currently working on a timber market development exercise. This entails the fetching, compiling and processing of resource information from its growers all over Uganda and owing to its importance, UTGA realises that there are unique opportunities within the value chain that are increasingly becoming available and in which our Members can participate and benefit. It is these opportunities that UTGA has identified and would like to grasp because they would allow direct integration, greater participation by the growers in the chain to allow them to access and retain an optimal share of incomes and value out of their plantations. Calls to Members continue to be made and UTGA urges them to respond positively.

# BRACKEN TIMBERS

## How South African timber industry relates to Uganda

By Wamani Henry

On day three of our trip to South Africa, Wednesday July 17, 2013, Warren and Walter led us to Bracken Timbers sawmill in Graytown KwaZulu Natal. Bracken started in 1959 as an agricultural farm on family proprietorship with 365ha by Mr Martin Hills – still alive and active – and is now a fully-fledged company. The company currently has a total of 7,340 ha of plantation forestry. Of the plantation, 4,780 ha is *Pinus patula* and *Pinus elliottii*, 2,297 ha is wattle tree and 263 ha is Eucalyptus. The company has tried, at varying periods, to diversify income generation by engaging in wine, furniture and charcoal production, and has also not lost its foundation with agriculture. Besides maintaining about 7,500 ha of plantation forestry, Bracken Timber runs a large sawmill. The sawmill was started in 1979 with a capacity of 100 cubic meters per day and currently processes 75,000 cubic meters of round wood pine producing around 38,000 cubic meters of quality-sawn timber. Although, one rota-



A well maintained stand of 11-year old pines at Bracken timbers

tion of *Pinus* species in South Africa takes 25 -30 years, much longer than in Uganda where a rotation could be 15-20years, sawmills process trees of all ages. First thinning trees are used for industrial paper production while second thinning trees are used for sawlogs, industrial sawlogs (short logs) and pulp timber. All components of tree are useful in South Africa and possibly that has increased the vibrancy of the plantation industry in South Africa.

### How does plantation forestry in Uganda relate to Bracken Timbers case study and what lessons can we learn

i) Although Bracken Timbers has only 7,500 ha of trees, it

owns a large sawmill. This is amidst presence of many other sawmills in KwaZulu Natal by other large companies. In Uganda we already have planters exceeding 10,000 ha of plantation forestry. The question therefore is, are planters with over 10,000 ha in Uganda able to operate sawmills? My answer to the question, although oblivious of the establishment costs is, we are long overdue. This is because our trees are maturing fast. Many thinning logs are being lost due to lack of processing facilities.

ii) Bracken Timbers has a number of tree species planted, even for *Pinus*. For example, wattle tree is planted for a number of reasons. The bark of wattle is extracted for its large quantities of tannins used in lather tanning industries. Wattle also provides very good hardwood for charcoal production. However, wattle plantations are also used as firebreaks. Wattle forests have the potential to stop large fires because they normally have no undergrowth. Nonetheless, wattle has a number of disadvantages that I will not dwell on now. Diversifying species, I believe even for small-holder planter like we have in

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## KNOW your Cluster leaders

Cluster	Cluster Head	Cluster Coordinator
West Nile	VACANT	Aluma Robert 0772-514244
Mubende	John agaba 0772-976357	Dr James Semwanga 0752794612/0776-794612
Northern	VACANT	Opio Ambrose 0777-156906/0754-533894.
South Western	Basigire Felix 0772/0712-447758	Masiko Augustine 0788-660211
Albertine	Yohannes Mokwena 0777-057098	Yohannes Mokwena 0777-057098
Central	Nkwanga Samuel 0782-949192	Muwanga Samuel 0772-415115

**GREEN TREE NURSERY**  
 Has quality Pine seedlings (14 weeks *Pinus Caribaea*) at only Shs 400 only  
 Nursery located 18km on Kampala-Mpigi Road, Please contact: Julie  
 on 0772-403300/0702-418137, email: greentree121@gmail.com  
 Transport may be arranged on request

## Preparation of timber for commercial use

### STAGE FOUR: Conversion

At the sawmill, the logs are cut into 'boards' using equipment such as circular saws and bandsaws. This process is called 'conversion'. The first stage of conversion is a process called 'breaking down', which means rough sawing. The second stage is called 'resawing' and refers to more accurate / precise cutting and finishing, such as planing and further machining.

### STAGE FIVE: Seasoning and why it is necessary

When a tree is felled, it contains a large proportion of water / moisture. Many felled trees have forty to fifty percent water content. Seasoning of natural wood, is the process through which excess water / moisture is removed, leaving typically fifteen to twenty percent water content.

Wood that has not been seasoned and still has a high water content is called 'green wood'. Wood that has had its water content reduced is called 'seasoned wood'.

Water is held inside a tree in two ways. 'Free Water' is water that is held in the vessels and cells and its purpose is to distribute nutrients inside the tree. 'Cell' water (also known as 'bound' water), is an intrinsic part of the tree's cell walls. During the seasoning process a tree loses its 'free' water and a high proportion of its 'cell' / 'bound' water. Seasoned wood is used to make furniture and most other wood based products, because it is less

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# Lessons to Learn from the South African timber industry for Uganda



Martin Hill (centre) flanked by Managing Director Gary Schwarz and Forestry Director Murray Mason

Bracken Timbers sawmill were ladies. The same trend was similarly observed in all the forestry industry in South Africa. On personnel, you could rightly say forestry is a women affair in South Africa. Women were engaged in

Uganda, is strategic for a number of reasons. Different species have different pests or risks and there is need to minimize such risks. Since different species grow at different rates, you can also have an economic advantage. For example planting eucalyptus and pines at similar periods can have one earn first from the former. We also need to identify biological firebreaks similar to wattle plantations, which we can interpose in our plantations.

iii) Although Bracken Timbers did not have an all glossy experience with income diversification, we visited other companies that had controlled diversification and were comfortable. A number of companies were engaged in both forestry and sugar plantations. Besides plantation forestry, KwaZulu Natal is a region with global reputation in sugar industry. Sugar plantations were viewed as short-term sources of finance while forests were for long-term financing. Other forestry companies owned cattle, and engaged in agriculture. Agriculture and/or animal husbandry may be particularly important for a forester because of the potential for quick returns but with equally higher risks. Agriculture is labour intensive, can therefore create employment to communities around your plantation. Importantly, engaging in agriculture contributes to improving food security, important for your workers and communities.

iv) Most of the workers at

planting, spraying, pruning, thinning and even in lifting timber boards in sawmills. Whereas, I have observed women carrying out spot weeding in Uganda, there is need to encourage and engage more women in our forestry industry.

v) Bracken Timbers started as a family proprietorship on a small scale just like many current plantations in Uganda. As medium scale growers, they have had their challenges such as inability to negotiate prices for timber especially in the 1970s which led to the establishment of co-operative unions in SA; limited scope of expansion due to land and water control laws at different periods; challenges of economies of scale on whether to mechanize or not to; and limited scope of influence to national policy. We are facing similar challenges today in our young forestry industry in Uganda. We should therefore be steadfast in addressing our challenges and even employ some tact that Bracken Timbers embraced, such as greater ability to change, greater sense of personal ownership, lesser reliance on outsourcing, controlled level of income diversification without losing focus on forestry and without increasing overhead costs, and being community oriented.

*The writer received financial sponsorship from UTGA and SPGS to participate in the tree planters' trip to South Africa. He acknowledges Warren and Walter for making a wonderful program for the Trip.*

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## Preparation of timber for commercial use

likely to 'deform' and 'warp'. It can be shaped accurately with tools such as planes, saws, routers and hand tools. Adhesives can also be used with seasoned woods.

On the other hand 'green wood' (unseasoned wood), has a tendency to warp and change shape, making it difficult to make precise products. Working with green wood is a skilled craft in its on right, requiring years of training and dedication.

## FSC Africa Roundtable held again in Uganda

The 2<sup>nd</sup> FSC Africa Roundtable hosted by the big planters Global Woods Ltd. New Forests Company and Busoga forestry Co. was held in Kampala on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2013.

There was a field trip to Green Resources on Monday, 21/10/13 and a meeting at the Serena Conference Hall the next day. Support of FSC East Africa for certification schemes of small and medium scale planters was taken as an action point for the new FSC regional representative to follow up in the next year.



UTGA has a sulky at the office that members can hire at a small fee. The sulky is used extensively in the skidding or extraction of wood/thinning from the interior of the plantation to a collection point. Those who are interested can call **0785-343564**

## PLANTATION ESTABLISHMENT STANDARDS

Activity	Standard	Not Acceptable
Site Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable site according to the site requirements of the species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetland areas</li> <li>Swamp areas</li> <li>Riverine areas</li> <li>Steep slopes?</li> <li>High biodiversity areas eg undisturbed natural forests, grasslands</li> </ul>
Land Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All waste removed away from roads.</li> <li>Waste material scattered in compartment and/or burnt</li> <li>Residual stumps lower than 1m</li> <li>Waste material debranched, crosscut and in contact with the ground.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearing of unacceptable land types as listed above</li> </ul>
Planting material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthy actively growing plants</li> <li>shoot : root ratio of 2:1</li> <li>presence of mycorrhiza</li> <li>single stem per pot</li> <li>root collar diameter 2 mm for Eucalyptus and 3 mm for Pines</li> <li>size of 15-20 cm tall from the root collar</li> <li>centred in pot</li> <li>stable root ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diseased, dead, dying and pest infested seedlings</li> <li>Root distortion</li> <li>Over-mature plants</li> <li>Discoloured seedlings</li> </ul>
Planting and blanking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pit size a minimum of 25 x 25 x 25 cm</li> <li>Seedlings/cuttings planted upright</li> <li>Plants in centre of pit</li> <li>Plants planted to 2cm above root collar or cutting point.</li> <li>Planting spacing of 3 x 3 m</li> <li>At least 85% survival/stocking</li> <li>Pit clear of weeds</li> <li>Blanking done within 1 month of planting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Polythene pot in planting pit or field</li> <li>Rocks or stones around plant</li> <li>Weeds within 50cm radius of plant</li> </ul>

UTGA News is a digital newsletter for the Uganda Timber Growers Association. It is published semimonthly (twice a month) to briefly summarize recent forestry-related publications, projects, activities, and news.

Do you have news, content, or ideas that you want to share in upcoming newsletters? Please send us your segments on articles and opinions on your organization, partnership, project, group, field stories, successes, challenges, fact sheets,

papers, books, guides, or other resources, upcoming or past events.

UTGA News is a great way to reach a wide audience of foresters, natural resource persons, practitioners, scientists and the publics across the Uganda, East Africa and across the globe.

If you have friends (*of forestry*) or anyone you think will benefit if they receive UTGA News, please send their email addresses to [dennisk@utga.ug](mailto:dennisk@utga.ug).

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