

Project Update: March 2005

Diminishing carving trees is an issue of both local and national concern. Carvers have lost jobs due to scarcity of suitable carving trees and the resulting high production costs. One way of addressing the situation is turning to the fast growing trees for carving despite the fact that their carvings are of relatively low quality. The government has restricted use of some indigenous trees for carving solely because of their shortage and extinction threat. At the community level, innovative initiatives are being made to address the tree shortage issue. One way is through conservation strategies that reduce pressure on trees.

Interestingly, production of bio fuel has been noted on the ground. By use of locally made pressing machine fuel briquettes are made from diverse waste materials like sawdust, paper, charcoal waste and leaves. This is a strategy that needs up scaling, as it is potential in reducing pressure on trees as sources of fuel wood. Diversification of sources of income is another interesting issue here. Women are involved in basket weaving. They have come to coexist with nature and are able to creatively extract natural dyes from trees. This on its own raises the value for trees hence a cause for their protection.