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Sara Wu, director of the World Forestry Center

WORLD FORESTRY PROGRAM SENDS A GLOBAL MESSAGE

Overseas experts come to Oregon to learn the latest about sustainably growing and harvesting forests

By **ABBY HAIGHT** | THE OREGONIAN

In Zambia, Victor Kawanga wants to teach villagers, who can neither read nor write, to protect their natural forests.

In Bosnia, Milan Mataruga is trying to restore forests laid bare by war, once slipping through a tract laden with old mines to collect seedlings.

In China, educators like Shouxin Xie and Lanhui Wang work to develop policy to manage forests in high demand for timber and to spread understanding of conservation.

And in Australia, Roslyn Henricks uses a background in forestry and art to change perceptions of tree plantations.

The five forestry experts have come to Oregon from distant homes with a shared purpose: to learn the latest methods of sustainably growing and harvesting forests.

Through the World Forestry Center's International Fellowship Program, they spend six months to a year studying forestry policies, talking to conservationists — even learning how a demonstration forest lets kids experience nature.

"If you ask people overseas, 'Where is Oregon?' they don't know," said Sara Wu, director of the World Forestry Center. "But if you ask a forester, they know. Because of Oregon's forests."

Most of the fellows come from countries where forests are owned by government but are not always tended in a manner to preserve and maximize the resource.

The center's World Forest Institute provides exposure to the state's diverse ownership practices, from its publicly managed lands to major timber corporations to small family forest owners to nonprofit organizations that lead tree plantings and teach children to treasure the forest.

They tour replanted clear-cuts, hear about selective harvesting, learn how old-growth forests must be preserved.

Seventy-five fellows have passed through the program over 25 years. The first were strictly foresters, but more recent fellows have included architects, statisticians and other professions.

Please see **FORESTS**, Page D6



ABOVE | Shouxin Xie from Shanghai (center) talks to Milan Mataruga from Bosnia (left) and Roslyn Henricks from Australia (right) on a visit to Hopkins Demonstration Forest in Oregon City. In the background, students from St. John Fisher Elementary School in Portland hear a lecture on tree planting.

LEFT | Min Zhao from Shanghai plants trees alongside students from St. John Fisher Elementary School. Each year, forestry professionals from around the world participate in the World Forestry Center's International Fellowship Program, learning about sustainable forest management practices.

Photos by
MICHAEL LLOYD
THE OREGONIAN

Forests: Students learn about value of healthy forests

Continued from Page D1

"All of these countries face similar resource challenges," Wu said. "It's an exchange of ideas. It's learning in an area that has been famous for years."

The education isn't one-sided.

"There are a lot of areas where the U.S. is not necessarily the leader," Wu said. "We've brought in foresters from Australia to talk about carbon sinks and mitigation."

Kawanga sorely misses his

family, which includes three biological and 11 adopted children. But the coordinator with the Commonwealth Forestry Association is absorbing ideas that he hopes will help educate Zambians about conservation — and, in turn, push lawmakers into caring about natural resources.

Half of Zambia is covered by natural forests, slow-growing hardwoods that are plundered for timber and charcoal — or sold off to foreign companies.

"The level of poverty does impact the forest resource," said Kawanga, who uses plays, storytelling and nature walks to reach out to communities. "If we can go to the people, educate them, they'll tell the politicians. This is what we need from you to elect you."

For some, the wealth of resources in Oregon's forestry industries is breathtaking. Mataruga, a professor at the University

of Banja Luka in the Republic of Srpska who is writing a university textbook on seedling growth and management, recalled visiting a Willamette Valley nursery.

"I was told, 'This is not a big nursery — 10 million seedlings,'" he said, then laughed. "Oh, my gosh! That's our whole national production."

Nursery production in Bosnia is slowly reviving.

Much of the country's broadleaf forests, its stands of Norway spruce and black pine, were destroyed or cut down to pay for the war. "The land we want to reforest, it's land like the east part of Oregon," said Mataruga, who helped draft the first postwar forestry policy.

Xie is responsible for forest resources with the national State Forestry Administration in a country with huge demand for lumber. Like his peers in the World Forest Institute, Xie said

he is challenged by the need to engage citizens to care about the natural resources around them.

"We need to protect every element," Xie said. "As a government, we have a big challenge. We have a difficult job."

During a recent visit to the Hopkins Demonstration Forest in Oregon City, the fellows listened in as students from St. John Fisher School learned about the importance of healthy forests. The forest is run by Forests Forever, a nonprofit that works to connect kids to nature.

"We need to pay more attention to raising the awareness of children," Xie said. "For protecting the environment."

China doesn't have such programs, said Wang, a statistics professor at Beijing Forestry University who is studying the demand for Chinese timber and forest products.

"We don't have the opportunity



Milan Mataruga from Bosnia photographs a newly planted tree at the Hopkins Memorial Tree Farm.

MICHAEL LLOYD
THE OREGONIAN

for them to go outside to learn about the forest," she said. "We don't have an extension service, especially for kids, the younger generation."

Henricks faces a different challenge than her peers, although it still involves education.

In her past work with a forestry management company near Mount Gambier, South Australia, Henricks heard complaints from residents about plantations replacing farmland. She hopes to create a guide for foresters about the visual impact of plantation forestry, landscape planning and

social acceptability.

"We have to educate people in the practice of forestry," she said.

The fellowships support the aim of the World Forestry Center to educate people about forests, Wu said.

"The more we meet people across the world, the more we realize we face the same problems," she said. "Forestry is about a lot more than growing a tree."

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PDX Green: Do fair trade imports rate as 'green'?

Continued from Page D1

above caring for people," says Beth Sethi, who operates shopbambootique.com, an online fair trade store, from her Tualatin home.

Fair trade, she says, "includes that piece of taking

What is fair trade?

- Not all fair trade certified products are sold by fair trade companies.

Fair trade labeling organizations certify 16 agricultural products sold by various retailers: cocoa, coffee, cotton, flowers, fresh fruit, honey, juices, nuts and oilseeds, rice, spices and herbs, sports balls, sugar, tea, wine and composite food products.

Fair Trade Federation members sell other items, in addition to certified products and adhere to certain principles throughout their businesses, including creating opportunities for economically and socially marginalized producers, paying promptly and fairly, ensuring safe working conditions and the rights of children, and environmental stewardship.

- Percentage of products imported by Fair Trade Federation companies made by women: 76 percent

- Percentage of products made by ethnic minorities: 69 percent

- Find fair trade retailers/products: fairtradefederation.org

belong under the green umbrella? How can buying a decorative candle, flown to Portland from Guatemala, square with other principles of sustainability — such as buying less, or buying local?

Carmen K. Iezzi, executive director of the Fair Trade Federation, said environmental stewardship is a requirement for member companies. That means they pledge to work with artisans and farmers whose materials and methods don't threaten native ecosystems, and who incorporate reuse and recycling in the production process.

Moreover, Oregonians

OUT AND ABOUT GREEN

Ivy Pull and Native Planting:

Meet in the community center for volunteer work in the Linnton neighborhood. Sponsored by the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sat, March 21. Linnton Community Center, 10614 N.W. St. Helens Road; 503-238-4775

Portland Roasting Coffee Co.

World Water Day: This fundraiser celebrates World Water Day with a benefit walk, exhibits and live music. 1 p.m.: Walk for Water. 3 p.m.: family-friendly booths and displays. 6 p.m.: concert series featuring Portland area musicians. The annual event

Library, 13500 S.W. Hall Blvd., Tigard; free; 503-718-2517

Lead-safe Home Projects

Workshop: Registration required. 6-7:30 p.m. Wed, March 25. Community Energy Project, 422 N.E. Alberta St.; free; www.communityenergyproject.org or 503-284-6827

"Sustainable Principles for Land Development"

Hosted by the Tualatin Riverkeepers. 7 p.m. Wed, March 25. Max's Fanno Creek Brew Pub, 12562 S.W. Main St., Tigard; www.tualatinriverkeepers.org or RSVP at brian@tualatinriverkeepers.org