

" OUR EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS THAT "SUSTAINABILITY" RELATES NOT ONLY TO DURABLE PROTECTION OF HOMES AND FIELDS BY EFFECTIVE SHELTERBELTS, BUT ALSO TO VILLAGERS' CAPACITY TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT THEIR OWN PROJECTS. "

poles. With careful management trees can be felled; the coppice regrowth is rapid. Taller shelterbelts are improved by pollarding.

The adoption of Mesquite and the development of shelterbelt and sand dune stabilisation methods are responses to the loss of services originally provided by the natural riverine forests: shelter from wind and wind-blown sand; protection from dune encroachment; shade for people and livestock; and forage, fuel, and timber. Mesquite will surely never compensate for the great old *Acacia tortilla* and *Faidherbia albida* trees, but people do gather in their shade as they did before under the forest trees. Shade trees around the village are almost as important as the houses themselves, as places to gather, relax, or discuss plans for the future of the village.

## Conclusion

Our experience suggests that "sustainability" relates not only to durable protection of homes and fields by effective shelterbelts, but also to villagers' capacity to design and implement their own projects in what will no doubt be a continuing struggle with a harsh environment. The concepts of "participation" and "sustainability" are intimately linked, and have implications for technical design. These communities will have to continue to live with sand encroachment. Permanent stabilisation of the threatening dunes is not a realistic alternative. The aim is to avoid the necessity of migration.

## REFERENCES

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