

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

Diary of Burkina Faso visit

Monday, 2nd of April 2007

Arrival 20 H. 35°C

There was no checking of our vaccination passes.

We encountered no problems getting our samples (Terracotem, polymere, fertilizers) past customs and into the country.

An airport employee, a friend of Martial meets us inside the airport, and leads us to Martial Sawadogo, together with a luggage carrier. He has a friend who helps him to put our luggage in the car. We have to pay both (they are not happy with the 2€ tip)

We check-into our Villa, after passing for dinner in “Palais des Viandes”.

Céline Sawadogo is telling us that it is impossible to charge more for cold beer. This can be important for the way of doing business. Do they want to pay for better quality of vegetables?

Tuesday, 3rd of April 2007

9.00 H: 25°C - 13.00 H: 39.5°C - 15.00H: 41.5°C – 19.00H: 38.5°C

Doing some shopping, fruit and vegetables. We are very surprised to find very nice salades / lettuce (3 for 200 CFA). Mangoes, bananas etc of a very high quality.

Tomatoes: about 3 kg for 500 CFA !!

Potatoes: 400 CFA/kg

Difficulty to have a fast internet connection.

Large “pressions” (beer from the tap) are very nice. (800 CFA for ½ liter of cold beer)

Problems with the car: baby seat is not safe, and very dirty; airco is not working, windows do not open, it is warmer inside the car than outside.

Changing money is going very easily and quickly.

15.00 H: *Vincent Duermael* – ESOP (French project, whose aim is to help to organise the farmers to sell their crop)

ESOP does not do research and in this way could not help us.

They did give us a lot of other NGO's to contact:

INERA:

AFDI: Association Française Développement International

00226 50 36 36 44

IRD Institut Research Development

(Edmond HIEN: 50 30 67 39 domicile: 50 36 28 27)

Federation Nationale groupe Naame)

Some other developers via

KAMBIRE Fostein : 76417140 (Bobo)

NAFIGIBA Sylvain: 76637798

The fruit and vegetable production is in the north of Burkina Faso (OUAHIGOUYA and GOURCY)

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

They did not foresee a water problem in Bobo.

We promised to keep them updated.

Wednesday, 3rd of April 2007

Problem with the Airco in our Villa. 3 Airco systems working at the same time seems to be too much.

Airco in the car is repaired, as is the window for the driver, which can be closed again.

Still a lot of dust in the air. (Since our arrival, and rare in this period)

10.00 H : Meeting with Yves Vanderweën, Belgian Consul.

Since 2003, Burkina Faso is no longer on the list of Partner Countries that Belgium will work with. As BF was seen as a “CVP / CD&V” co-operative country, this decision could be political. The embassy have stopped all their programs with NGO's (15000 NGO's – National and international) in BF of which 15 Belgian)

If nothing changes after the elections of June 2007, all activities will stop in BF.

This also means, most connections have already ceased with local NGO's etc.

One of the biggest problems of BF, is their obligation to work together with a BF partner, which tend to get their hands on all the money generated by the economical structure.

Everybody he knew had, in one way or another, had problems of this type, or with the legal environment (or lack hereof) or with the tax authorities. Meaning that there is no security of ownership, which is necessary for longterm investments.

Yves VDW does not have any contacts concerning micro-finance.

Downloading my mails worked perfectly, thanks to the real high-speed ADSL connection in the embassy.

11.30 – 13.00 H: confirmed a number of meetings for the next days.

POINTS OF CONCERN / NEED FOR INFORMATION:

- Vegetable prices (are low ?)
- Micro-finance: we do not get contact !

15.30 H: Sylvain Margollé buyer of [gum arabic](#)

40°C in the shadow.

Interested in the product, and for being a distributor.

Very impressed by the demonstration of pure polymers

Has a pure economical view on the project.

Contacts Jean Pierre OUIYA, responsible for an NGO, who could help us out with idea's and micro-finance means. (Banque Regionale de Solidarité (BRS)) .

BRS does participate in micro-finance for GOM producers.

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

Thinks about the ONION as a first vegetable to grow, as prices of onions rise very high (up to 10 times its normal price) after production period is over. Onion has to be stocked in a very aerated zone.

Sees as main problems: money and mentality, but first the finance problem.

The basis: no money, growth for own use, financing is a problem.

There is almost no co-operation, nor trading between 2 different regions, even in dry times. (gave example of dry period between neighboring regions)

New meeting Thursday 15.30 H with JP OUIYA.

Thursday, 4th of April

8.00 H : meeting at the CILSS (Committee permanent interetat de lutte contre la secheresse dans le Sahel) with Bertrand Reysset

Heard about the product. Thinks price is too high for reforestation.

Product does not answer the main problems: securisation of the project area and the maintenance of the area.

In Algeria, about 10% of the area where reforestation took place remains after 20 years after the project.

An average project lasts from 3 to 5 years. Biggest problem is afterwards. Water and survival of the plants is only a minor problem.

There is a big difference between community projects and private projects: Community, less than 20% rest, private 60 %.

In the Sahel, biomass reproduction on a herb level is very quickly recovered if left alone and protected from the animals.

For a successful project we are talking about 200 US \$/ha. This kind of project does not have the aim to produce directly economical goods. The survival rate is 60%.

PRICE OF TERRACOTTEM COULD MAXIMUM BE 10% OF THIS PRICE.

Bertrand thinks Terracottem could be more useful in

- the fruit and vegetables sector.

Examples "Zizifus Mauritania" jujube griffé.

Speculation on vegetable prices.

Very low competition for fruit and vegetable wholesalers.

(Idea ? Get their phone-number from the embassy)

For the wholesalers, the cost of water is important.

Also growing strawberries to lengthen the availability period.

There are regional organisations of farmers of vegetables and fruit.

- Private gardens

Watering costs a lot of money.

Water cost: 60 EUROcent for the first 30 M³

1.50 EUR for every M³ over that.

For a garden of 200 M²: 1.5 EUR/M²/Month

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

He sees the evolution towards Burkinabé high class installing gardens and their use of public gardens, where before they did not see the use of it. Mentality change ! Gardens may be seen as a status symbol?

IDEA: contact Francis Déprez (Belgian embassy Region Wallon/APEFE)

11.00 H: CEE Sophie Pelletier

Had seen the product before in 1997, when she was working for another NGO.

Sees as problems: Price and mentality of the people/farmers.

Eg: they would prefer buying a short cheap solution above a much more interesting long term solution, which would ask a bigger initial investment. (Eg: Solar energy)

Water has not to be paid for beside the edge of water reservoirs, so there the key should be the higher crop.

Where water has to be paid for: the cost reduction that Terracottem allows is the key to enter.

The CEE is supporting projects via an auction of projects, but this would be extremely difficult for us, as some parts of our project are purely commercial.

She thought that the "FERME de GUIE, on the route of Pabré (AZN) is working with TERRACOTTEM.

She asked if TC is attracting, or on the contrary repulsing termites. This is the 2nd time this matter is on the agenda.

At the moment furadan (a purple powder) is used to repulse them, but is not very effective, and has to be used on a very regular basis.

Mango trees are especially sensitive to this.

IDEA : ANACARDIER (fruit – noix de cajoux, which are very popular)

She thinks intensive demonstrations and training is necessary to convince the farmers, and this can only happen via NGO's. Perhaps money could be obtained for this matter alone.

Where the aim is less water usage, a door to door selling approach is needed, with free sample for testing. These people are easier to convince as they, on a regular basis, have to pay high water invoices.

Price estimation : 1.5 M³/day for 600 m²

She said she would try it, if we had a distributor. Means distributor is a main factor too.

13.20 H – 14.06 H Mango shower (rare storm in april, normally dry season). Heavy storm of dust and rain.

Temperature drop to 28°C, with regular power cuts as result.

15.30 H Sylvain (potential distributor) & Jean-Pierre (ONG)

Sylvain seems to be only interested in distributing TerraCottem if he is sure about a vast and durable market.

The chief animator of the NGO present (the person who works with the farmers and teaches them) gave an example of mistrust that farmers feel: 2 years in a row a big

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

company asked farmers to produce so many hectares of onions and the people never came back to collect them.

This could be because the organisation was no good or because the production took too long? Whatever the reason, the trust is gone and is very hard to regain.

Jean-Pierre, « chef de projet » of the NGO is only interested in big projects.

BRS, a potential micro-finance organisation, is only interested in micro-finance loans, if there is a sure market.

Jean-Pierre repeats several times that money here is not an issue. Finding buyers for the market is.

Sylvain and JP are looking for a forestry project with Arabic GUM, combined with Carbon Credits given by the Kyoto agreement.

For carbon credit, JP knows all the right people but a “dossier” has to be made (could be expensive)

Their drive is that we find a market, to which they will respond, and if possible use TerraCottem. They are not very warm to the idea of convincing the small farmer to use it for own use, and selling the surplus created by TerraCottem.

This is because they try to find a big project to be the driving factor behind this idea.

What Jean-Pierre tries to do is to create new markets for its Burkina Faso's farmers. If TerraCottem finds a place in this picture, fine for him too. Jean-Pierre understands very well the market principles, and wants to work around these principles to get ahead.

BRS wants to finance small projects, but has to be sure of a market behind the project they are financing;

Ideas are put on the table: Flowers, Mango's, Arabic Gum, Grains, mais?

Transport could be made by DHL, who lowered his prices to get cargo back with them.

Air France followed this price evolution.

Questions that arose during meeting, which should be answered:

CONTACTING OXFAM to see what a possible market could be.

Who wants to invest, via Carbon Credits in Burkina Faso ? (Person to be contacted: Peter Torrekens, Conseiller Technique Principal de la Ministère de l'Environnement et du Cadre de Vie. T :+226 50 35 81 27 M:+226 76 07 81 28 F : +226 50 35 81 29

progref@fasonet.bf – ptorrekens@yahoo.com)

Proposition to visit the Flower garden and botanical garden on the route to Dori.

Could flowers be an export product, and if yes which one, on which conditions?

17.20 H Conference sur le developpement des production des fruit et legumes.

Conference with different stands discussing the issues and challenges for the agronomic industry

The different stands seem to be interested in the product, but were not the right decision makers.

Vegetable prices:

Tomato: 150 CFA/kg

Onion: 200 CFA/kg

Pommes de Terre: 250 CFA/Kg

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

20.30 H: Mr. Wassonguema (working for the tax administration) and T. Tasséré Wassongma (working for an electricity company)

These 2 gentlemen are concerned about the dessertification and scarcity of water in the near future. Both are from a region (Nambeguian, 13 km of Zinisre, the village of the president on the road to Mané) where the cultivation of vegetables is their main income, water is collected in a small barrage.

Very impressed by the product, and willing to test it in their village. Their main concern is mostly the periods there is not enough water in their village to cultivate. Using lesser water would give more possibilities and would lead to less manual labour in watering.

The economical aspect of TC or the pure polymere was not their cup of tea. Their concern went for the financing aspect of the project. Were a bit dissapointed, as we told them that not a lot could be expected, as this was a pure economical project.

Are willing to organise the tests (TC / Polymere with fertilisers from BE/ PM with local fertilisers / local method)

Mr Wassongma would take contact with the Minister for the Environment environment to organise a meeting on Tuesday.

22.30 H Martial in the car

Martial told me to listen more to the people, as they do not tend to tell a lot. Let them explain he told me, instead of talking all the time.

He was afraid of the people I was talking to, as he thinks they only want to put as much money in their pockets as possible. Starting small in the shadow, making sure your are covered by the right people before showing your own hand. And : let people talk. My weakness.

Friday, 5th April

10.30 H Ministry of Agriculture

Albert Bère, directeur des infrastructures Hydro-Agricoles

He is very impressed by our demonstration

This ministry can not do a lot for us directly. But he is pointing us towards other organisations. Sounds very burocratic, but wonderful in theory.

INERA: Institut de l'environnement et agriculture. 50 34 02 71 /50 31 92 02/07/08

This institute is organising centralised research. If successful they spread the word.

(also, Centre National de Recherches Scientifique qui travail ensemble avec INERA)

For commercialising the product, he is pointing to SAPHYTO (50 30 55 04) or Afrique Phyto.

Crop yield :

Tomatos: ?? Ton/ha

Pommes de Terre: 20 – 25 Ton/ha

Onions :20 ton/ha

For getting more info around crop yield and prices, he sends us to a colleague of his :

Zaigré Adolphe

Chef de service “Mise en Valeur”

Mobile : 70 26 03 81

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

Tel : 50 49 99 00-09

cppiv@fasonet.bf

atangre@hotmail.com

Adolphe lived for a short period (14 months) in Belgium.

Has already heard about TC (2004). He thinks it is too expensive.

Adolphe and a colleague of his are prepared to do a test on a scientific level.

They ask us the right questions, and are critical enough to be taken seriously.

e.g. told us we should have more scientific information with us, otherwise how could we be taken seriously? Asked if the plant received water when it was needed?

We make a new appointment with him and his director OUEDRAGO Alphonse.

Their worries: what parameters will be used ?

Scientific aspect is important.

12.30 Conference pour development les productions de fruit et legumes

Several standholders recognized me from yesterday, and are asking for my cards and references.

Aubergines: 100 cfa/500g

Choux: 100 CFA / piece

Concombre: 100 CFA/ kg

*15.00 H Visit to the botanical and flower garden of OUAGADOUGOU
with Sylvain and Jean-Pierre.*

Purpose: finding flowers with an export potential.

Result: no flowers found, but these gardens are certainly a potential customer for Terracottem, as they are watering mostly twice a day.

We also noticed a change in the mindset of Sylvain, as they were less looking for *the* big project, but to several potential ones, such as “haricot vert” (specific Italian project), bio-diesel, water melons, etc. This also means that it is more probable that they are willing to put energy into creating a market.

17.00 H Visit to “Palais des Viandes” (Céline and Martial Sawadogo)

Céline gets interested in creating a market for TC, after listening to the progress we are making.

Saturday, 6th April

9.00 H Visit to a local market

Quality was much better, prices much higher and quite aggressive towards white people.

Small yellow pepper: 100 CFA (looks very high price to us)

11.00 H Finally found interesting bookshop and fast internetconnection.

15.00 H visit to the Ouaga university and student homes.

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

Sunday, 8th April

Visit to Bobo with Martial. Bobo has more water, and is in this manner the source of food for Burkina Faso

Martial is interested in distributing TerraCottem. He would hire 5 to 10 students to sell TC for private use, to save water.

For vegetables and fruits he is less convinced due to the very low prices of vegetables lately. In Bobo, he showed us a big factory that manufactured tomatoes in cans, which had to close doors for this reason. Martial mentioned that prices of tomatoes fell because a lot of promotion was made to grow tomatoes. The herd became too big.

Martial would go to the ministry of Water to see if the use of TC for garden use could not be made obligatory.

He would see what big publicity boards would cost to advertise the product.

He would contact friends within INERA to do tests with TC.

Martial shows the power of a good network, which is even more important in Africa, Burkina Faso in particular.

Martial thinks it would take him a month to mount a structure to sell TC.

Martial would contact BRS to set up a meeting around micro-finance.

Compared with Sylvain, who is looking for certain (big) profit and Jean-Pierre who is looking for big markets abroad, Martial seems to be a better party, even if he just wants to start with the private upper market. Martial also told us he had a bad experience with Sylvain, he is asking a lot, but not giving back a lot.

It did not bother him if the NGO “Terre Verte” was used to better prices.

We decided to start closing our investigation, as this would mean still several meetings and trips. Starting new ways would lead to unanswered questions, and we thought it would be better to go deeper with other issues.

Monday, 9th April Easter Monday

Further discussions with Martial, together with some tourist visits.

Martial wants to order directly 500 kg to ship together with equipment he wants to buy. I suggested he asked TerraCottem for having the dealership for sub-sahara area, as this area is not served yet.

I also should discuss a first order reduction.

This evening we would go through the “accord de convenance” papers and official pricelist of TerraCottem.

Discussed about travel-organisation opportunities. (Tourism)

On our way back we saw a lot of military movement heading in the direction of the Ivory Coast. This was a consequence of the problems with the ego of the president, and deliberate provocation of the rebel counterparty. Will this result in a unstable and dangerous environment?

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

The water bill was given to us for our Villa:

Prices:

First slice	6 M ³ :	188	CFA/M ³
Second slice:	24 M ³ :	393	CFA/M ³
Thirth slice :	20 M ³ :	1040	CFA/M ³
Fourth slice:	44 M ³	1040	CFA/M ³

The villa is used by European business people, with some plants, but no real garden.

Total cost : 88.866 CFA

NETTO: 77120 CFA

Added:

Assainissement 1974 CFA

revedance 1000

Abatement: 31360 CFA gives TVA BASIS: 48734 CFA or a TVA of 8772 CFA

Given the fact that Martial wants to order already, even small quantities, we have decided to go further with Martial instead of Sylvain.

I promised Martial I would organise him a website for his business.

EVENING: Dinner meeting with Martial Sawadogo. We discussed the dealership agreement, territory (sub-sahara seems more coinvenient when very successful) and strategy to follow.

Strategy: trying to involve the ministry of water, the mayor of Ouagadougou and other officials for new and bigger projects where Terracottem could sufficiently reduce the costs. Hire 5 youngsters, who have to sell the product to the upper private market. Payment with a fix and a volatile on results.

We would organise a meeting to calculate the opportunity cost and possible profit.

IDEA: with Google Earth finding all green area's in Ouaga and surrounding areas.

Tuesday 10th of April

10.30 H Meeting with the director of follow up of NGOs (DGSONG).

This was very simple. It is the first meeting where the contact did not show up. Quite a relief in comparison with 15 years ago when a lot of people did not show! Most meetings are quite timely and correct.

Market:

4 paprika's for 1000 CFA. – possible vegetable for growing with TC ?

About 4kg of nice red tomatos for 1000 CFA's.

15.00 H leaving for the Ouaga 2000 quartier.

Made several pictures of the next upper-class quarter and of several public or big commercial gardens. These gardens cost a fortune to water!

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

16.00 H Second meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture. Section “Small scale Irrigation Development program” (Alphonse OUEDRAOGO, Director and 2 of his associates, Pascal and Adolphe, the latter we met before on Friday)

The director explains his department wants to do everything within their means to fight against the poverty and scarcity of water. In this respect, he thought the technology we came with could be an important way of doing this. He was truly shocked that this technology existed 15 years, without an important use in Burkina.

In reaction to my worries about their enormous water-use for private gardens, he agreed that he considered this as a mis-use of the scarce water resources of their country where a lot of people could not afford drinkable water.

He himself switched to paying somebody for getting used or dirty water for his garden, instead of using water from normal distribution. Hereby he cut his water invoice from 60.000 CFA/month to 10.000 CFA for water used in his garden.

He thought about testing 5 different plants, in 3 different areas (areas which use wells or arid areas)

I asked them not to test nearby a dam, as in these areas there is no water-shortage.

Adolphe mentioned that we should not only think of the water use, but also the fuel, as they used motor cycles to fetch their water.

I explained to them that we have only little resources to help them do the tests, meaning 7x750g of TC, only enough to set up a test of 2x 20M². He agreed that the test-program should be modest, but still wanted to set up the test in 4 areas around Ouagadougou, in order to find out where it could work and where not.

To set up the protocol for testing, we got into another meeting with Adolphe, Pascale and 2 other agro-technicians.

The meeting got back to the pre-judgement, which proved to go further than pre-judgement for financing the testing project. Their aim is to test this on a bigger level, and at least at 4 different places. We continuously mentioned that we had no money behind us to deliver TC for free.

After several questions concerning “supporting services” which were foreseen in the program, and them pointing out that they were the heart of every commercialisation for this product, we explained – to the point – that we had already invested an important sum of money in this project, and that we could ask them to do their part, as the benefit was for them too. They tried to get money for fuel and working hours to do the follow up. Shocking. As they noticed that I got nervous on the point of financing the project, they told me they were teasing me. I do not believe them.

We agreed at the end, that I would set up a protocol for testing, and on both sides we would find a way to finance the project. We ended with a negative feeling, as this was again a question for getting money, instead of taking the future in their own hands. The enormous garden around the ministry was not helping me to get over the feeling that something was completely wrong in this nation.

We gave them 6 extra bottles of TC, about 1 kg of polymer and 2 kg of fertilizer to do a first test. This would give us perspective into what a bigger test would give us, and how far this could go.

We asked them to test:

20m² Control – current burkinabe techniques

20m² TC testing

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

20m² Pure polymere with DCM fertilizer

20m² Pure polymere with local fertilizer

20m² TC testing with half of the water-usage (stress test)

We stressed the point that we see this as a economical test for the TC product.

We also mentioned that pure polymers with fertilizer was an unknown factor for us.

Afterwards we were doubting if this was a good strategy, giving the product before having the protocol signed.

They would have to look for the more expensive vegetables to have the most profitable way of cultivating with the product. I explained to them that calculating the profit of this kind of investment is a very simple one. They mentioned also onions as a speculative product.

We forgot to ask for the crop yield and prices.

17.00 - 18.00 H Meeting with Koen Ros, A flemish director of CANAL3, TV station.

We arrived too late, although we passed him going to his car, but not knowing it was him we didn't stop him. He was very short and almost arrogant when we called him. Did he have a bad afternoon? Strange in an African country, where you do not take into account that fellow patriots could come a bit later then the official meeting time. Not done anymore in Burkina Faso? I think even in Belgium we would accept this, perhaps not with joy, but however.

Wednesday, 11 April 2007

Trip to NGO "Terre Verte – AZN" in Guiè, about 1H15 driving from Ouagadougou.

This NGO is a loyal user of Terracottem, and in this way very happy to show their use and results. We were welcomed by Benoit Gagré. AZN ordered in september 2 tons of TC, which was split with another NGO. All TC was used at the time we arrived.

The use is mostly to give a higher survival rate to their nursery for selling to other communities, and to plant bigger plants, trees and natural fences. The drive up (+/- 2km) to the farm itself is bordered by trees planted with this principle.

Guiè is much dryer compared with other area's seen up to now. The ground is hard like rock sometimes up to 5/6 m deep. TC is helping here to get a much higher survival rate compared with no use of TC.

They are still watering 2x a day, and do not really have reports on the success of TC.

They did not seem to have more problems with termites than before the use of TC. They use ashes to keep termites away. We do not have the feeling TC is used to its highest potential. On several places, he could show us the difference between TC used and not. Even if the plantation was up to 10 years, the difference was remarkable.

We left some pure polymer to test for trees and for a private vegetable garden. Benoit promised to keep us informed of the results.

Temperature: 36°C around 9H, 38°C around 10H and rising. Last year was a dry year of about 575 mm rain annually. (Normal: 800-850 mm in this area)

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

14.00H-15.30H : The writing of the testing protocol for the Ministry of Agriculture.
Very detailed, stress on economic yield, rather than only water saving. The more we talk about commercialising, the less they find it obvious that we finance the whole thing.

16.00 H Meeting with Martial Sawadogo.

Martial made up his business-plan. Very detailed, and very good for a non-economist. And most of all, very quickly! In 1 day he had put everything together. But for all he is very optimistic. 20% monthly growth, or from 100 kg/month to 3200 kg after 12 months. First year he would sell 10 tons. Conservative on price, due to high tax rates and handling & transport cost. If everything would go well, he wants to copy his business-model in the neighbour countries. (Mali, Togo, Niger, Côte-d'Ivoire, Bénin) Electricity and water is a very big cost. Due to low labour cost, he can hire straight away 5 vendors, with one supervisor. I advised him to ask directly for the 6 countries as territory, and also for 3 years, to avoid somebody copying him when successful. I would also organise the price negotiations to NGO's and other organisations bying directly. The price should go a bit lower. Martial signed the contract on my tablet PC and this contract is sent to TerraCottem for approval. First target has been reached! Martial also mentioned the high electricity rates, that drivers are expecting extra money when overtime.

He also said the Ministry should pay for the testing.

The protocol is sent to the Ministry. Been thinking about creative financing. Partly could come for lower prices, partly from lower margins, and perhaps the rest from the surplus of the crop, which should be there! Guarantee of TerraCottem NV? Terra@dialogue? Other financing models?

Everybody seems to be exhausted, and waiting for the end of the trip due the heat, short nights (leaving Ouaga means getting up around 6 or earlier), and aggressive mosquitos. Tommorrow again: to Zorgho.

Thursday, 12th of April

8.00 H: Off to Zorgho for meeting Pierre Kaboré, in the meantime we try to contact Pierre Kaboré, in order to know where we have to be. Seems that Pierre is in Ouaga for another meeting. We agreed to see each other same time, same place, next day. We decide to go looking for the older sites where TC was used some 15 years ago. We achieved to indentify 1 place just before the village of Arbolle, the first village where the tests has been done direction YAKO. We found only 1 small piece of a eternit tube, which 15 years ago we used with Bekaert fence to close the forest for animals. As this material was not known in BF at that time, is was safe to use this, as if somebody stole it, it could be traced.

The forest we found, eucaliptus trees, was several times cut but was still ok.

No other site could be identified with high certitude. We were surprised with the number of planted forests beside this road. We also visited a maternity unit in one of the villages.

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

On our way back, we drove into a herd of sheep, killing 3 or 4 of them. Our driver insisted on driving without stopping. The owner would not show himself as he risks having to pay for the damage to the jeep. We were in shock, thinking about the damage we left. Afterwards we recognized that we were lucky nobody got hurt. We see really a lot of accidents on the road, with a lot of blood, trucks on their side,

Friday, 13th of April

Back to Zorgho. Finally we meet Pierre Kaboré, a self made man, busy in a thousand and one projects for his village and around. He has 10 years of experience with TC, via a NGO Comitee Maastricht-NIOU. He has experience with the complete gamma of human aid: re-forestry, fruit trees, and vegetables.

He also has a stock of about 300 kg and 500 kg in customs zone.

For the 500 kg in customs zone, he has to pay 400.000 CFA to get them out. Pierre is trying to get them without customs tax, as it used for human aid, and not for sale.

Pierre thinks the price which is paid for the TC is 6000 CFA/Kg, which seems very high for us, as it is the price for end-customer, and not the price used for NGO's before.

He is very in favor of an official dealer, as this would get some prices lower, and make it easier to use on a higher scale. Pierre is explaining he is setting up a school for young farmers (in Méguet 35km of Zorgho, with the support of musician André Rieux. Before this school is opened, he is sending young farmers to school so they can read and write when they start their education for young farmers, different techniques were the use of TC is one of them.

For Pierre it is very clear that TerraCottem is a very useful product, with high yield in re-forestry (due to the survival of much more trees in the first years), fruit gardens (quicker and more mangoes, more leaves on the trees etc) and for vegetables. For the latter he has some remarks: TC has to be 30cm in the ground, or else the TC is rising after several rounds of watering. This also means TC is ideally for vegetables whose roots are up to 30 cm down in the ground. Tomatoes are not the best vegetable as a result. Better are: cabbage, peppers, Aubergine, etc.

He believes that fruit trees are more profitable than vegetables. This may be due to the fact that the exchange of vegetables in small villages outside of Ouaga and Bobo is much more restricted. Plus, it is very difficult for them to transport their produce.

Talking in grams is also very difficult. Most people are talking in volumes: box of an analogue film, box of matches, Should be taken into account.

With the vegetables, Pierre is talking about water saving in the order watering only every 4 to 5 days, instead of every 3 days. Cultivating vegetables is locked to the season, although the extremes can be looked for, which is more interesting from an economical view, as you are the only one selling the vegetables. In this region, people cultivate until there is no more water. End November, and in December, prices are very good for the vegetables, which is a bit surprising to me.

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

The season ends in April, as there is a dry season in April - May. As also Céline talked about delivering all the time vegetables with the help of TC and a cold chamber, we should have a look into this.

Terracottem is for him also very useful in very difficult ground, as in GUIè, or elsewhere.

Pierre Kaboré is working together with the University of Niamey, the University of Niger. He offered them 20kg of TC for testing.

Pierre explained how he works to convince the farmer:

- 1) He explains the method to the farmer
- 2) He does a test with the farmer, setting up a normal parcel, besides one of TerraCottem.
- 3) Farmer sees for himself.

Pierre has problems with having enough TerraCottem.

Pierre is also going to send us tables and prices for some vegetables and compared tests with and without TC.

Pierre does not see a termite problem, but he would ask again.

The biggest objective against TC is its price of 6000 CFA/kg.

We gave him some pure polymer to test with local fertiliser (12000 CFA for 50kg here)

In return he should keep us up to date.

He is wondering if TC could be used for Cotton. WE don't think so, as cotton does not need a lot of water. But it shows the enormous potential for TC.

After the more formal meeting we went via an African way (we stopped 3 times because Pierre has to do some shopping) to a forest of 3 ha of very healthy Eucalyptus trees. The trees are cut every 3 years for their wood, and start growing again. The forest has been there now for about 10 years. In comparison to the NGO Terre Verte, the people who work on the plantation of the trees are not paid. A young man seemed to be in charge of taking care of it.

We also had problems sending the protocol to the ministry via internet. The lady responsible for the project rang us while we were in Zorgo to say she had not yet received the mail we had sent her on Wednesday evening. She also told us they had already chosen a site which they were to visit next week. We tried to send the mail + attachement several times before she rang to tell us she had received them. This means that internet is not a certain communication method as the original adress we sent it to was correct.

Saturday 14th April

The tension between BF and Cote d'Ivoire as the Rebel Minister made a speech.

Meeting with Martial and futur chief of sales of TC in Burkina.

FRUCTI FERA

Doing nothing is no option

The meeting was with 2 potential sales people of TerraCottem Burkina. Did my explanation, and talked how to convince the potential sales. Ended with 2 small containers of (local) sand, in which one is mixed with TC. We water it, plant something in it, and wait one week or so to see what happened. The TC container should show an much better result then the other one. Still have to find out which plant is the best solution. The 2 ladies were suggesting that even 5kg could be too much as a selling unit.

Monday, 16th April

On Telephone with TerraCottem NV, I noticed that the Manager was very careful and suspicious about the potential candidate, even without knowing them. Is this the real problem of the TC product ?