

Cleared forests present 'world problem'

By LORRAINE NELSON
Of the Emerald

Deforestation — the harvesting of timber without successful reforestation — is the biggest problem in the world today, the coordinator of Eugene's community gardens program says.

Richard Wilen painted a dismal picture of the state of worldwide agriculture Tuesday before a small group in a presentation that also touched on soil erosion, irrigation and other problems.

One-third of the world's population uses firewood for fuel and one-half of the wood harvest goes up in smoke, Wilen said.

India, Central Africa, the Indies, the Caribbean, Indonesia, Southeast Asia and China are all experiencing severe deforestation problems because of this, he said.

"In Nepal, for miles around there is not a stick of firewood," he said. Third World efforts to bring in oil and natural gas are "just going nowhere."

Reforestation attempts in China have been hampered by people who need fuel and pull up the seedlings during the night, he said.

Now that the trees are gone, people have begun to burn dung, an important source of nutrient for the soil, Wilen said, and the results have been a drop in soil fertility.

Deforestation has led to soil erosion and flooding, he said.

"Erosion is really wiping us out today. Five or 6 feet of soil can be washed away in one day. There's a lot of that going on in the mountains," he said.

"Forty percent of the world's population live adjacent to a mountain environment," he added. "In Nepal, the Himalayas . . . are losing top soil at a phenomenal rate. It's washing down into India."

Wilen explained the trees soften the blow of rain on the soil, and in their absence, the rain softens the soil and washes it away or makes it more susceptible to wind erosion.

The loss in top soil and a decrease in soil fertility has spurred the use of fertilizer, a solution that Wilen says "corporate America sees as a real boon."

"They (corporations) are selling a lot of things they (government) don't even allow to be used in this country, and they are selling them all around the world, especially pesticides," he said.

Agricultural erosion from continued use of the soil and soil erosion from deforestation have combined to increase the amount of desert land in the world, Wilen said. "Seven percent of the world has been made desert by man, a major part of which happened in the last 200 years."

The United States now is almost the food basket of the world, with most of the rest of the world now importing basic food, a situation that did not exist 20 years ago, Wilen said.

The United States is exporting about 2.5 million tons of low-protein grain to the Third World at the same time the underdeveloped nations are sending 3.5 million tons of high-protein soy and fishmeal into this country, Wilen said. People here are consuming about five times more the amount of primary plant protein than the people in underdeveloped nations, he added.

"In other words, we're screwing the hell out of them," he said.

The green revolution — The Western world's attempt to mechanize Third World agricultural processes — has displaced labor and resulted in high production costs that average citizens around the world cannot afford, Wilen said.



Photo by Keith Allen

Timber mismanagement has led to soil erosion and flooding worldwide, Richard Wilen, coordinator of Eugene's community gardens program, told a group Tuesday. The Third World's agricultural problems have been further complicated by the high-technology farming of the West, he said.

IFC votes for OSL probe, grants program funds

By SCOTT MALBY
For the Emerald

Tuesday night's Incidental Fee Committee meeting opened with a request from Ramon Herrera, ASUO president. The request stemmed from a recent article by the Emerald concerning the resignation of two student interest lobbyists.

Herrera asked the IFC to hold a hearing dealing with charges of mismanagement of the OSL program. Herrera stated, "I feel that McCarthy-type accusations have been made. People have been damaged. The student lobby group has been damaged."

Kevin Chambers responded, "We (the IFC) are not here to formulate policy. I don't see why we should be part of an investigation."

Janet Eggleston, IFC chair, stated, "Charges have been made against the Oregon Student Lobby. Before we decide to fund this organization we should find out whether these allegations are true or not."

The IFC decided to reschedule the OSL hearing. Also adopted was a suggestion by Herrera to have Eggleston write individual letters to the parties involved in the controversy. Former lobbyist Ronnie Friedman's charges con-

cerning the OSL will be aired at a future IFC meeting.

The Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) had its budget reviewed by IFC. This is OSPIRG's second hearing before the committee. Dan Brandt, executive director of OSPIRG, attended the session, requesting \$46,000 by the group. The final appropriation from the IFC is \$41,700 dollars based on a "a-dollar-per-student-per-term" formula.

"I'm going to vote against this motion. It's an excellent program but it's not equitable," IFC member Dusty Rhodes said. He took exception to the fact that University students currently pay about half OSPIRG's student budget.

Kevin Chambers responded heatedly, "Do you suggest we

cripple the program?"

Rhodes also questioned the efficiency of spending 68 percent of OSPIRG's budget on professional staff. Rhodes and Harry Ricks were the only IFC members to vote against the \$41,700 allocation.

The allocation hearing for the Jewish Student Union (JSU) ended with a recommended budget of \$3,300. Scott Bassett found himself outvoted in an attempt to strip \$450 dollars from the JSU budget for folk dancing.

The 3-D Multi-Cultural Program's budget was accepted as requested. The Hawaii Club asked for and received an IFC recommendation of \$1,300 for its Hawaiian Night.

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