



TAIGA RESCUE NETWORK

International Coordination Center
Box 116, Jokkmokk, Sweden, 96223
Tel: (+46) (0) 971 17039 Fax: (+46) (0) 971 12057
info@taigarescue.org www.taigarescue.org

*Press Release - For immediate use
May 12, 2005*

Forests Sustain Culture

The healing powers of the boreal at the Chelsea Flower Show

The Boreal Forest Garden is a truly unique exhibit at the 2005 Chelsea Flower Show, to be held in London, England from the 23 – 28 of May. With active participation of various aboriginal peoples, this Taiga Rescue Network-LandLab joint venture will raise awareness about sustainable use of world's boreal forests by focusing on the value of non-timber forest products.

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) have traditionally been used by many cultures. They contribute to physical, social and spiritual health of many aboriginal communities, both in the traditional and contemporary context. For example, North American aboriginal peoples use tobacco as an offering of thanks and respect when using nature's gifts and also in exchange of traditional teachings or advice. While the uses of NTFPs vary depending on region, they are consistently assigned high value across cultures.

Increasingly, NTFPs are viewed as a means to diversify rural economies that are often completely dependant on unsustainable resource extraction such as mining and commercial forestry. The Boreal Forest Garden will promote the value of NTFPs by highlighting several boreal flora species that hold cultural significance, but which can also be used to draw income based on the principles of sustainable development. For example, flora such as Birch (*Betula sp.*), Labrador Tea (*Ledum sp.*) and Blueberry (*Vaccinium sp.*) are incorporated into the Boreal Forest Garden to exemplify plants that support informal rural economies – they are also included in an NTFP factsheet produced specifically for distribution at the Show, which is now available on the TRN website for free download.

Aboriginal representatives will be at the Boreal Forest Garden to educate visitors on the importance of the boreal forests and its non-timber products. Two people from northern Saskatchewan, Canada – a boreal region – will be displaying examples of NTFPs used in their regions and explaining why the boreal is so important to their communities. In addition, there will be a traditional hoop-dance performance at the exhibit, which has its roots in aboriginal Canadian culture. The dance expresses the interconnectedness and interdependence of people and the Earth.

"NTFP's offer an opportunity to utilize Tradition, Culture and Heritage of Aboriginal peoples, in economic initiatives, which helps to maintain and strengthen Cultural survival, while providing economic opportunities" said Ric Richardson, one of the two Saskatchewan Metis people involved with the Boreal Forest Garden.

"[NTFP] harvesting and management activities continue to link aboriginal peoples to their cultures. Their ability to heal physical, social and spiritual ailments plays an integral role in cultural survival" remarked Damien Lee, Information Coordinator of the Taiga Rescue Network.

The world's boreal forests are severely threatened by the exponential growth in consumption of timber-based products. If left unchecked or unmonitored, heavy exploitive operations will devour the boreal forests and remove the tools needed to preserve its people's sense of identity. The Boreal Forest Garden aims to focus attention to these threats in support of the people, plants and animals that call the boreal home.

-30-

Damien Lee, Taiga Rescue Network, +46 971 17039, info@taigarescue.org
John Kennedy, LandLab, +44 (0)1 556 505 970
Official Boreal Forest Garden webpage: www.taigarescue.org/chelsea

Contact Details

Taiga Rescue Network (TRN) of Jokkmokk, arctic Sweden, is a network of over 200 participant organizations, whose participants exist in boreal producer (Scandinavia, Canada, Russia) and consumer countries (central Europe, USA, Japan, China). TRN is the Boreal Forest Garden exhibitor.
Damien Lee, Information Coordinator, Office: +46 971 17039, Mobile: +46 (0) 73 093 2368

LandLab – A group of artists, ecologists and landscape architects based in Scotland; Boreal Forest Garden designer and contractor. www.landlab.co.uk
John Kennedy, Office: +44 (0) 1 556 505 970, Mobile +44 (0) 7841 483 157

Chelsea Flower Show – After making it through a rigorous selection process TRN and LandLab saw off over 60 other applicants to win a place for their Boreal Forest Garden at the 2005 Chelsea Flower Show May 23 – 28, in London, England. The Boreal Forest Garden is one of the 20 “Show Gardens in the Open” which are the main attractions at the event.
Royal Horticultural Society, Administrative Offices: +44 (0)20 7834 4333

Sponsors to date (ordered alphabetically by organization where possible)

Arts fundraising expert **Janet Dunnett** of **Arts and Business North West** has provided consultancy time and helped find sponsors and sources of support for the project. www.aandb.org.uk

British-Russian Eco-cultural Network (BREN), a UK based network aiming to foster the exchange of ecological-cultural initiatives taking place in, or between, Russia and Britain. BREN provided vital support in ensuring native representation for the boreal garden from Sakhalin Island, the Russian Far East. For further information on BREN's work www.brenweb.org or e-mail info@brenweb.org

Michael Wickenden of Cally Gardens Nursery, Gatehouse of Fleet has generously given time and expertise with the selection and growing of the herbaceous perennials. www.callygardens.co.uk

The **Canadian Boreal Initiative** has provided funds to support Canadian aboriginal peoples attendance at the Boreal Forest Garden, and other project costs. www.borealcanada.ca

Elevate East Lancashire are sponsoring some of LandLab's design work to help promote and develop new businesses from East Lancashire.

UK haulage experts **Gilbraith**, of Lancashire are providing help and support with transportation and storage. Tel. 01254 581727. www.gilbraithtranstore.co.uk

Laurieston Estate, Scotland, have provided coppice materials, advice and assistance to help build and transport the hazel sculpture.

Scottish artist **Lizzie Farey** has specially made a willow sculpture for the garden.

Lorberg Nurseries of Berlin are providing large (up to 10m high) specimen trees for the garden. www.Lorberg.com

Builders and stone masons **Ren Wallbank and Co.** of Lancashire are providing assistance as main contractor helping to build the garden, especially with project management, stone sourcing, and hard landscape construction. Contact LandLab above for further details.

Snabba Tryck, a Swedish printer with strong environmental ethics are sponsoring the printing of our official Non-Timber Forest Product fact sheet that will be available to interested visitors and media during the Show. Thomas Rosén, Snabba Tryck: +46 (0)31 51 00 53, info@snabbatryck.com

United Utilities, an operator of electricity distribution, water and wastewater networks in Northern England and a UK leader in environmental sustainability are providing some of the materials for the construction of the Boreal Forest Garden at the Chelsea Flower Show.
Mark Donaghy, United Utilities press office +44 (0) 1925 233 328