gardens and fallows of various ages. They were accompanied by a group of expert farmers and Chris Tokomiyer, the PLEC Field Site Manager (Plate 2).

Discussions ranged over a wide number of topics, but included an apparent loss of yam (*Dioscorea*) cultivars as ceremonial exchanges become unimportant; a possible means of conserving remaining forest patches as game animal ‘nurseries’; the planting of timber species in gardens at the end of a cultivation cycle; and the extension of PLEC activities into nearby villages. For Edwin Gyasi the yams were very familiar, even if the steep hill slopes were not (see Plate 11). The recent introduction of a West African yam *D. rotundata* was also of interest.

Michael Stocking reviewed the scientific programme while Geoff Humphries investigated the possibilities of further work on soil loss during cultivation (Plate 3). The PNG team were able to discuss methodological problems particular to the site, like the small size of fields and the myriad of regrowth patches of different ages and hence stages of recovery.

During this visit, the PLEC field botanist, Dr Stephane McCoy accompanied the team into the village, and remained behind for his second period in the field (Plate 4). During this period he completed the collections at Tumam and also at a site about 30 km to the east at Wosera that is being used as a comparator. However the site is difficult to maintain permanently because of criminal activity. Population densities are three times higher there than at Tumam, and forest degradation is extensive.

These data are presently being entered into the PLEC Agrodiversity Database designed by Kevin Coffey.

Scientific Coordinator’s visit

Michael Stocking reviewed the scientific programme while Geoff Humphries investigated the possibilities of further work.

Expert farmer’s visit to Canberra

Beretas Minjautehi (Plate 5) is probably over 70 years old. He has clear recollections as a child of about 10 years old, of the 1936 earthquake, when he lay on the ground