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## The changing task of *PLEC News and Views*

**Harold Brookfield**

*PLEC News and Views* (PNV) first appeared in July 1993, when the project was one year old. UNU then funded the whole of PLEC with \$US 50,000 a year, and although useful supplements were found, it was 1996 before this changed. PNV set out to provide networking information within the project, which in 1993 was composed of five clusters, and to inform selected others about the project. It was intended to carry news, short reports and a correspondence section which never developed. Within two years it was already carrying substantial articles and activity reports by members, as well as full reports on meetings and the accelerating search for major funding.

The papers soon became the most important part of PNV, offering a publication outlet to project authors who did not find it easy to face the formidable review process of the international journals, or who felt that their material was of insufficient consequence for such publication. We were less daunting. Although an early decision was taken not to turn PNV into a refereed journal, the papers were all subjected to a strong editorial process. Some were rejected, and others substantially rewritten. The result was a large number of good papers from most parts of the project. The first paper by a student member of PLEC was published as early as 1995. From among those written up to 2000, 12 were selected for reprinting with or sometimes without editorial change in the project's handsomely praised book *Cultivating Biodiversity* (2002). Three other papers were, by permission, reprinted in regular journals.

Until issue no. 20, in 2002, PNV was printed and mailed to a growing number of subscribers. The printing and mailing bill rose to almost \$US 1,000. The end of GEF funding in 2002 made continuation impossible, especially as we also lost the administrator (Ann Howarth) who, in collaboration with Muriel Brookfield as principal editor after 1996, had produced the journal. At the final meeting in New York, it was agreed to