

Regreening Africa

By MARK HERTSGAARD

The sun is setting on another scorching hot day in the western African nation of Burkina Faso. But here on the farm of Yacouba Sawadogo, the air is noticeably cooler. A hatchet slung over his shoulder, the gray-bearded farmer strides through his woods and fields with the easy grace of a much younger man. "Climate change is a subject I feel I have something to say about," he says in his tribal language, Moré, which he delivers in a deep, unhurried rumble. Though he cannot read or write, Sawadogo is a pioneer of a tree-based approach to farming that has transformed the western Sahel in recent years, while providing one of the most hopeful examples on earth of how even very poor people can adapt to the ravages of climate change.