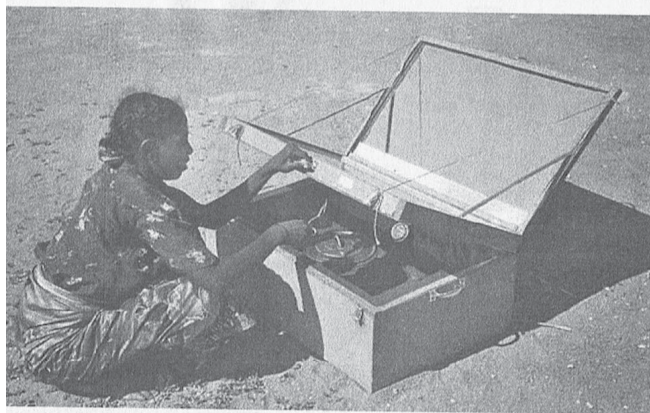


MDAGASCAR / FRANCE

his past March in Paris, France, **Regula Ochsner** received the **Yves Rocher Foundation's** international "Women of the Earth" award for her work promoting solar cookers in Madagascar. The award honors women who lead actions benefiting nature and humanity. The award ceremony was attended by **Yvonne Nelly Olin**, French Minister for the Environment.

In 2001 Ochsner founded the **Association pour le Développement de l'Énergie Solaire Suisse – Madagascar (ADES)** to help combat rampant deforestation. Ochsner lived in Madagascar in the early 1980s and was shocked, when she visited in the late 1980s, at the amount of deforestation that had occurred in a period of just 25 years. (Madagascar families use about 100 kilograms of charcoal on a daily basis, amounting to one-sixth of an average daily salary.) Ochsner researched cooking alternatives that would reduce firewood and charcoal use, and discovered solar cookers. Madagascar, especially in the south of the country, has close to ideal conditions for the use of solar energy.

Ochsner initiated production of solar box cookers by local carpenters in 2001, followed by distribution and sales. In 2003 ADES built a more permanent carpentry workshop in Tulear and another in Ejeda in 2006. ADES currently provides employment to 13 carpenters and trainers. The teaching of the population to use solar cookers is an important part of ADES'



An ADES solar box cooker

work. Regular demonstrations on how to use the solar cooker take place. The interest level of the population is very high.

Over 1500 solar cookers have been sold thus far. A survey of the usage of the solar cookers conducted by two German students in 2004 showed that 75% of the solar cookers were used regularly.

Ochsner plans to invest the prize money of 10000 Euro in a further solar cooker pilot project in the south of Madagascar. Future plans include development of regional centers in Morondava and Fort Dauphin.

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