Trees for Global Benefit, Uganda
Plan Vivo Project

Location: Bushenyi, Masindi, Hoima and Kasese Districts, Uganda

Status: Registered Plan Vivo Project since May 2003, verified by Rainforest Alliance 2008

Project Team:
Implementation, monitoring and administration– ECOTRUST, Uganda
Technical support – ECCM, Wildlife Conservation Society and The World Agroforesty Centre
Financial Support: Initial start – up costs provided by DFID and project expansion supported by USAID, IFAD

Emissions Reductions Capacity: 100,000 tCO_2 per annum

Description: Trees for Global Benefits, is a cooperative community carbon offset scheme in Uganda implemented by ECOTRUST a Ugandan NGO. The programme started in 2003 with about 30 farmers in Bushenyi District and currently has 800 farmers currently registered into the project in Bushenyi, Masindi, Hoima and Kasese districts, and over 1600 hectares is under improved land-management. The project works with established community structures to mobilise farmers and enable ongoing monitoring of *plan vivos*. Participating farmers receive training and attend workshops to identify forestry activities that are suitable to their needs. Once farmers are registered they enter into sale agreements which specify the amount of carbon that they will sell and conditions. Activities include mixed woodlots of native or naturalised tree-species, and fruit orchards which generate strong livelihood benefits. The project uses the Plan Vivo System (www.planvivo.org) which is a set of guidelines, procedures and standards representing a tried and tested system for generating carbon offsets whilst promoting sustainable land-use and improving livelihoods. The carbon credits generated by the project are sold on the voluntary market.

Socio-economic Benefits: This project generates significant benefits beyond carbon sequestration. The project's support enables rural farmers to invest in sustainable resource management using payments received in instalments after activities have been monitored. Participants have gained access to local and national markets for building poles, fuel wood, fruit, medicinal extracts and fodder. In future, the farmers will also gain access to markets for timber. Extra activities (e.g. nursery establishment and production of seedlings) provide additional income to rural communities. In these ways, the project builds local and regional capacity.

Environmental Benefits: Participants plant indigenous trees (mainly the threatened species) and agroforestry species contributing to their conservation. In addition to helping to conserve local biodiversity, native tree-planting has multiple environmental benefits, for example they contribute to the provision of watershed services mainly by Slowing down water runoff, Reducing soil erosion / sedimentation and Regulating water flow. Enhancing natural forest cover binds soil and enhances water purification, soil conservation & stabilisation and moisture retention, which helps to reduce flood and landslide risks which threaten local agricultural livelihoods. Furthermore, small-scale production of fuel wood and timber reduces pressure on nearby forest reserves and national parks, as well as contributing to habitat restoration, and helping communities adapt to climate change.

Future Plans: The project has developed technical specifications to enable it expand to other parts of the country including Northern Uganda, West Nile and Mt. Elgon area. Furthermore, the project is preparing to use lessons learnt from managing the scheme based on private to develop a similar scheme for community forests under REDD (Reduced Emissions from Degradation and Degradation)