

Press Release

World's largest carbon project by area registered with the VCS

The Kariba REDD+ Project has just been registered with the Verified Carbon Standard. It is owned by four rural communities in north-western Zimbabwe, and has been implemented with the proven experience of project developers South Pole Carbon and Carbon Green Africa.

October 16th, 2012 – Harare, Zimbabwe and Zurich, Switzerland – for immediate release. Global deforestation accounts for 17% of all global carbon emissions, and Zimbabwe is the country with the world's 9th highest deforestation rate, losing more than 1.7% of its forests every year.

Enter Kariba REDD+ Project: a truly community-based project that aims to protect Mopane and Miombo woodland and its wildlife from deforestation, which is driven by the expansion of subsistence agriculture, by unsustainable firewood consumption and by a man-made, rising frequency of wildfires.

The project activities have started in July 2011, and already now led to a significant decrease in deforestation in comparison to the project's baseline. This has been made possible by – among others – the introduction of conservation agriculture practices, the improvement of existing subsistence agricultural activities (such as irrigation schemes), and education on fire awareness and prevention activities.

Apart from forest related education, the project engages as well in social benefits, e.g. through school fee subsidies and health care. Thanks to the project activity, the livelihood of lots of the 300'000 people living in the wider project area has already improved now. *Environment Africa*, a Zimbabwe based NGO with a long track record in the project area, is supporting the implementation of the social project activities.

The project area hosts the highly endangered African Painted dog (*Lycaon pictus*), and other vulnerable species, such as African elephants, lions and cheetahs, among others. CCBS "gold level" status has already been awarded to the project for its outstanding biodiversity benefits and above-average climate change adaptation work. The UNESCO has issued a letter of endorsement due to the contribution of the project to the conservation of areas close to their World Heritage Site Mana Pools National Park.

The project's area extends to 780'000 hectares, which makes it world's largest carbon project by area, and is foreseen to withhold 1,700,000 tCO₂e of carbon emission per year from the atmosphere. The first issuance of carbon credits is expected in early 2013.

Just this week, the project activity has been registered with the VCS (using *VM0009 - Methodology for Avoided Mosaic Deforestation of Tropical Forests, v1.1*). The project is also a member of the CODE REDD campaign.

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