Mbirikani Carbon, Community and Biodiversity Project

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AWF is seeking support for the carbon programme and a buyer for the carbon credits. For more information about carbon and alternative livelihood programmes please contact:

Kathleen H. Fitzgerald  
Director, Land Conservation  
Nairobi, Kenya  
kfitzgerald@awfke.org  
Tel: 253 729 406222

Daniel J. McGahey  
Programme Design Officer, Europe  
Oxford, England  
dmccahey@awf.org

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AWF recognises the threat of climate change to Africa and is working to implement an integrated climate change programme to:

1. Improve understanding of climate change through education, capacity building and training.
2. Reduce carbon emissions, forest degradation and deforestation, and generate community and conservation income through carbon offset programmes.
3. Mitigate the impacts of climate change through large-scale conservation.
4. Improve monitoring, scientific assessment and modeling of climate change.
5. Help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change.

MBIRIKANI CARBON PROJECT, KENYA

The Mbirikani REDD project has been set up to:

- Protect more than 20,000 hectares of forest from further unplanned, mosaic deforestation and forest degradation.
- Prevent future greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.
- Promote and develop systems for sustainable forest product utilisation with forest-dependent communities.
- Develop alternative livelihoods with forest-dependent communities.
- Build local capacity and understanding of REDD mechanisms.
- Develop systems to facilitate replication in other locations based on the successful application of these methods.
- Sell carbon credits to benefit the community and support the conservation of the forest.

AWF has an MOU agreement with The Group Ranch and has completed the following:

- Drivers of deforestation study
- REDD training for the community and group ranch committee
- Project Idea Note (PIN)
- Project Development Document (PDD)
- Alternative livelihood assessment completed and some projects initiated

The Mbirikani forest is threatened by conversion and change of use; logging for firewood, building materials and rungus (a Maasai weapon); and charcoal production. AWF is working with partners, including the Mbirikani Group Ranch and the Maasailand Preservation Trust, to mitigate the threat to the forest through alternative livelihood programmes. These include: alternative cookers (fuel-efficient jikos); improved charcoal production. AWF has an MOU agreement with The Group Ranch and has completed the following:

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Mbirikani Group Ranch is located in Kajiado District in southern Kenya, between Amboseli, Chyulu Hills and Tsavo National Parks.

The voluntary carbon market, while still under development, provides an excellent opportunity for communities to generate income to support their livelihoods and conservation efforts. In particular, communities that live in remote areas, such as the Mbrikani community, lack the financial incentives to protect their land. The ability of these communities to access carbon markets provides a potential source of revenue for forest conservation and livelihood improvement.
AWF AND CLIMATE CHANGE

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MBIRIKANI CARBON PROJECT, KENYA

On the east side of this wildlife linkage is Mbirikani Group Ranch. The Group Ranch is approximately 320,000 acres, bordered on the eastern edge by the Chyulu Hills National Park. Mbirikani is owned and run communally by approximately 4,500 members of Maasai pastoralists. There are just over 15,000 people living on the ranch, along with some 60,000-90,000 head of livestock. Permanent water is scarce. Rainfall is erratic and averages between 350 and 500mm per year, making it one of Kenya’s driest areas. This, in turn, makes it difficult for the community to generate income from other means besides pastoralism. Developing alternative income generating mechanisms is critical to ensuring livelihoods in this area.

Less than 3% of Kenya is forested. The Mbirikani community is dependent upon the forest and the rangelands for their livelihoods. Mbirikani contains lava, dryland and cloud forest, which provides important refuge to wildlife, including elephant, lion, cheetah, leopard, giraffe, buffalo, impala, gazelle, hyena and jackal. Given the national and local importance of Mbirikani’s forest, AWF embarked on a regional and local carbon offset programme with the community.

The Mbirikani REDD project has been designed to deliver positive climate change impacts by avoiding forest degradation and deforestation, while delivering numerous other livelihood and ecosystem benefits to the community.

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THE KILIMANJARO HEARTLAND

Kilimanjaro Heartland stretches from Amboseli National Park, to the Chyulu Hills and Tsavo West National Parks in Kenya, to Mt. Kilimanjaro National Park in Tanzania. Amboseli National Park, 312 km², forms the core of the ecosystem, while six surrounding community lands, known as group ranches, surround the park. While Amboseli National Park is world renowned for its elephants and magnificent views of Mt. Kilimanjaro, the park is too small to support viable populations of elephants, predators and ungulates. Wildlife is dependent upon the unprotected community lands outside the park.

While historically there have moved between Amboseli National Park and the Chyulu Mountains, this strategic linkage is critical to the viability of Amboseli’s elephant population and other mammals, including lion, cheetah, and a diversity of ungulates. The protection of this area would successfully link three of Kenya’s most celebrated national parks: Amboseli, Chyulu and Tsavo and help to ensure the parks’ long-term viability. AWF is working with partners to maintain a wildlife linkage, while providing incentives to the surrounding communities.

AWF will be seeking certification from the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS) and, Community Conservation and Biodiversity (CCB). The voluntary carbon market, while still under development, provides an excellent opportunity for communities to generate income to support their livelihoods and conservation efforts. In particular, communities that live in remote areas, such as the Mbirikani community, lack the financial incentives to protect their land. The ability of these communities to access carbon markets provides a potential source of revenue for forest conservation and livelihood improvement.

ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS

Alternative income generating mechanisms are critical to ensuring livelihoods in this area. The Mbirikani REDD project has been set up to:

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