

Impact Spotlight

Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project Q1 2022

**EVER
LAND**

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INTERNATIONAL**





SPOTLIGHT SUMMARY

Equitable, participatory, culturally relevant and transparent governance structures are key to achieving successful outcomes at a REDD+ project. The Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project (CHRP) is a model collaborative partnership between government, local communities and NGOs, paving the way for multi-partner, community led conservation in Kenya.

The Chyulu Hills Conservation Trust (CHCT) was officially established in June 2015 as the Project Proponent of the CHRP. The Board of Trustees is comprised of one representative from each of the 9 Project Partners, who have equal voting power as per the Deed of Trust. The CHCT Board is a unique and important representation of all the partners:

- ✔ 4 indigenous group ranches: Kuku, Kuku A, Rombo and Mbirikani;
- ✔ 3 NGOs: Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust (MWCT), Big Life Foundation and Sheldrick Wildlife Trust;
- ✔ 2 governmental agencies: Kenya Wildlife Service and Kenya Forest Service.

The Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust has also been positioned with the role of Project Office (PO) to oversee various functions of support to the project and its partners.

Community outreach in Langata to discuss progress of the Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project





KEY ACTIVITIES



An outreach event with the Imbirikani community

To provide effective management of the CHRP, the CHCT recognized the importance of having a Project Office (PO). The PO not only provides support to the partners and the project activities, while also serving as a place for community members to express their concerns and grievances and to interact with the Project Proponent in an open and transparent manner.

One of the most significant functions of the CHCT is to allocate future carbon revenues. The CHCT Board developed an agreed upon a revenue allocation (RAM) framework before any carbon sales took place through a fully participatory and transparent process. It is a rigorous model that promotes and maintains accountability and efficacy in the use of funds throughout the project area.



Board meeting carried out in March 2022

The CHCT members come together to discuss grants, project activity updates (challenges / successes), community feedback, credit sales, marketing, allocation, communications, emergency strategies, validation and verification process updates along with other critical needs the partners may have and need to address.

The PO provides overall coordination of the project activities, administration and logistics. This covers everything from board support, finances, grant management, REDD+ carbon marketing and sales, communications, as well as validation and verification protocols.



HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

Once a sale is achieved, the board meets (all 9 partners are trustees) and discusses fund allocation based on the revenue allocation model. 7 out of 9 partners have to agree on the allocation in order to move the process forward. When the allocation is final, the partners work with the community, their own team and the PO to develop impactful activities for the amount that were allocated to them.

Project activities fall within the predetermined activity framework of:

- ▼ forest and wildlife protection,
- ▼ livestock and range management,
- ▼ community engagement and support,
- ▼ reforestation and improved agriculture,
- ▼ biodiversity conservation and research,
- ▼ and CHCT governance and management

Through these activities, the project utilizes the long-term sustainable financing from VCU sales to manage and maintain the habitat for the bridge zone between the Tsavo and Amboseli Ecosystems whilst supporting the development and food security of local communities.

Rangers in the field





MILESTONES



The CCRP activities are all designed to enhance Community, Climate and Biodiversity (CCB) benefits beyond the Project's Lifetime. Implementing activities (put forth by the Board members and approved / facilitated by the PO) with a focus on education, poverty reduction and sustainable management of natural resources are designed to directly address the drivers of deforestation and degradation.

During the Project Lifetime, this will be achieved, for example, through training farmers in sustainable agriculture, facilitating better education, creating alternative income generating activities and raising awareness of the value of the habitat and its biodiversity.

Important milestones to date:

- ✔ Development of the Revenue Allocation Model, which was described as 'extremely innovative' by the Kenyan National REDD+ Focal Point and the CHCT anticipates it can serve as a model RAM for other projects
- ✔ More than 90% of the funds are directly reinvested in the project area
- ✔ 2,000,000 credits verified from 2013-2016 (nearly sold out by 2021)
- ✔ Approx. 3,000,000 credits being verified from 2017-2020 (final amount to be confirmed)

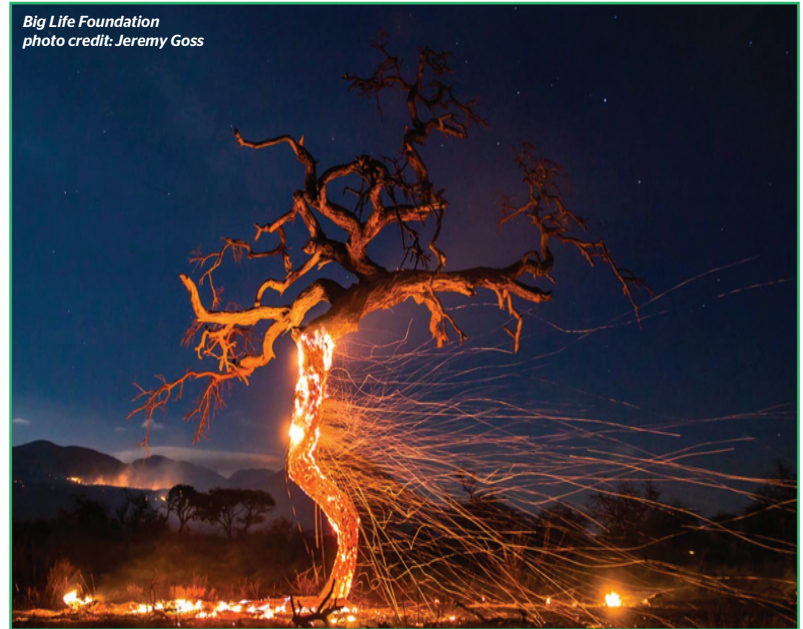


CURRENT NEWS

This unique and collaborative governance structure has made an important difference at the project. One of the most important achievements has been the allocation of emergency funds towards a fire management strategy with an arsenal of new equipment and ranger training that the area had not been able to afford in past years. Through allocation of the emergency grants, partners managed to achieve efficient coordination and allocation of the available resources and enable effective force deployment in the event of an emergency.

This past quarter:

- ✓ The CHCT had a Board Meeting which welcomed UN Goodwill Ambassador of Biodiversity, Edward Norton, to discuss the history of the project, the importance of the PO and its integral support to the project. The board also discussed the past, current and future of carbon sales for CHRP.
- ✓ The PO put together necessary all of the documents for verification. As a general procedure, the carbon standards verifiers team from Aster Global & South Pole have requested a list of findings pertaining to how the project is meeting specific indicators on climate, community, and biodiversity project design standards.





THE FUTURE

The ultimate goal of the project is to achieve a systematic solution to the deforestation problem. And its aim is to achieve this by actively engaging the local community and providing necessary capacity to establish transparency.

The CHCT and the CHRP are a prime example for successful application and implementation of carbon credit generated revenues, towards critical community-based conservation and forest protection in Kenya and community - nature based solutions. While the project partners have historically undertaken activities independently based on geographic region, CHCT has initiated more coordination across the entire project area to focus on critical needs with widespread impact (e.g. mitigating against wildfires). The project hopes to elevate this synergy achieved by working with the community and direct this towards more ambitious goals, to bring more protection and to expand forest enhancement efforts across the whole project area. For example, the current governance system could be utilized for future Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) endeavors in the project area, providing a well-functioning foundation for additional long-term sustainable funding opportunities.



The project will continue their engagement with communities and stakeholders, who are involved in decision-making and implementation from the outset. The role of the Project Partners is central to the CHRP, due to their close relationship with the communities. The project aims to continue to build on these structures, which makes it possible to disseminate information to the communities, encourage their involvement in the Project, reach our conservation goals and further expand our initiative outside of our project area. They want to maintain that community and partners being fully aligned to operate in a fully transparent manner, that every action/activity is community focused and biodiversity oriented.