

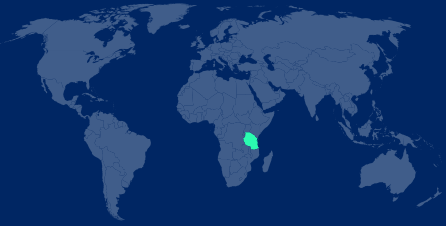
Natural  
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An NCS Lighthouse

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# Ntakata Mountains

<b>Project/Programme Type</b>	The Ntakata Mountains Project is a community-led REDD project that calculates carbon credits based on avoided deforestation. Its credits are verified by Verra.
<b>Description</b>	The project works with eight villages in the Ntakata Mountains region to protect forest reserves, develop land-use plans, build sustainable economies and fund the protection of important wildlife habitat, enhancing connectivity in the Greater Mahale ecosystem.
<b>Location</b>	The project borders Mahale Mountain National Park and is located across eight villages in Tanganyika District in western Tanzania.
<b>Scale</b>	The project covers 216,000 hectares of miombo woodland on steep hills. It includes an 11,000 hectare watershed and is a high-value habitat for the endangered eastern chimpanzee.
<b>Number of Credits Issued to Date</b>	2,800,812
<b>Project Proponent</b>	<a href="#">Carbon Tanzania</a>



# Impacts

## Impact To-Date

The project area includes 261 bird species, including the critical endangered white-headed vulture; and 38 species of mammal, including endangered eastern chimpanzees, wild dogs and elephants. As a result of natural resource protection activities, the eight project community partners have successfully protected high-value chimp habitat and reduced deforestation across 216,000 ha. The communities have earned over US\$1,736,300 in carbon revenue that has funded the building of hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, classrooms and teacher's accommodation, provides health cover to 26,400 people, feeds school children and provides school supplies, strengthens governance structures, pays salaries and provides training to Village Game Scouts, supports community education on forest protection and climate change and finances micro loans to support environmentally friendly businesses with over 50% of the start-ups owned by women.

## Projected Longer-Term Impact

The project is built upon land use plans that are agreed upon by all community members, contributing to a reduction in conflict and improving security in the region. The adherence to the land use plans results in reduced deforestation and improved connectivity throughout the greater Mahale ecosystem, securing the large landscapes required for the survival of the endangered chimpanzee and elephant. Carbon revenue has increased village budgets facilitating improved security, governance and livelihoods and strengthening community resilience to climate change. By protecting their forests, the communities can continue to enjoy the ecosystem services the forests provide and pursue their sustainable farming lifestyle. Carbon Tanzania is developing plans to expand the Ntakata Mountains REDD Project to include two neighboring forest reserves. It would become Africa's first Jurisdictional Nested Project.



# How REDD+ Gave Villages in Tanzania the Resources to Defend Sacred Forests

The fig trees called Mukuyu are sacred to indigenous people from the Ntakata Mountains of Tanzania. "Some community members still use Mukuyu trees as places where they go to ask for things from God," says Frank Kweka, who grew up and keeps a farm in the region. The forest provided fresh water, honey and herbal medicines for local people, and was home also to a rich fauna including elephants and eastern chimpanzees. For many people of the Ntakata Mountains, respecting the forest was simply a matter of tradition and faith.

But a decade ago, there was an influx of migrants to the Ntakata Mountains from other parts of Tanzania. They did not always share the local people's values and started to clear forest illegally to build farms. "Many of these people come from areas where land-use plans are enforced and see the forests of the Ntakata Mountains as easy to access land" says Jo Anderson, the co-founder and director of sales and finance of Carbon Tanzania. The local villages lacked the resources to develop and enforce their own land-use plans and struggled to protect forest. Deforestation in the region was nearly three times the average national rate in Tanzania, releasing tons of carbon dioxide emissions and putting the chimpanzee and other local wildlife populations at risk.

Through a carbon project called the Ntakata Mountains REDD Project, however, local villages earn money to enforce their own land-use plans, strengthen local governance and support regional

law enforcement to slow illegal encroachments on their lands. Deforestation in the project area's 216,000 woodland hectares has fallen by almost 90 percent as the communities sell carbon credits to companies seeking to counterbalance their unabated greenhouse gas emissions. The carbon revenue has created a stream of income for villages not only to enhance forest protections but also to expand local services and plan sustainable economies.



Jo Anderson  
Co-founder and  
Director of Sales  
and Finance  
Carbon Tanzania

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The Ntakata Mountains REDD Project started in 2017 as a partnership between Carbon Tanzania and eight villages. Carbon Tanzania had already established a successful project in another part of the country and was looking to expand. "We were thinking if we are going to make this meaningful, we need to try a few more areas," Anderson says. The district government for the Ntakata Mountains connected the company with the villages.



**135**  
businesses  
started with  
micro loans  
supported by  
carbon revenue



**50%**  
of start up  
businesses  
owned by  
women



**1.25**  
million  
trees  
protected in  
2021

**3**  
endangered  
species  
protected

Follow the  
progress







Carbon Tanzania hired Kweka, who had worked previously with the district council, as project manager; and worked with each village to designate a forest reserve and develop its own land-use plan. "We have set the areas for forest, agriculture and habitation," Kweka says.

Through carbon finance, the communities have hired 54 village game scouts to patrol their protected forest areas. The villages also pay some of the carbon income to the district government, which has legal authority, when necessary, to arrest and prosecute violators of village land-use plans. The scouts use mobile apps to monitor wildlife sightings and track the movements of chimps in the project area. The project has thwarted the deforestation of more than 5,500 hectares of chimpanzee habitat. "Now the wildlife in the area, especially the eastern chimpanzee, is increasing again," Kweka says.



Frank Kweka  
Project Manager  
Carbon Tanzania

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Half of the revenue from the sale of each carbon credit is available for the communities to spend on their own priorities. Every three months, each of the eight villages holds a meeting for all residents over 18 years of age where they decide how to invest their share. "The decision makers are the communities themselves," Kweka says. So far, the villages have spent more than \$1.7 million of carbon income on building classrooms, health-care clinics and teacher housing; providing health care to more than 26,000 people; and providing breakfast and lunch to the 8,000 schoolchildren living in the project area.

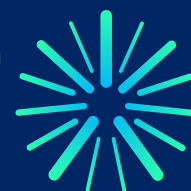


Jo Anderson  
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The villages have also used carbon revenue to support sustainable local businesses through Community Conservation Banks, or Cocoba groups. With carbon finance, the Cocoba groups have extended loans to restaurants, tailors and produce sellers. They have given more than half their loans to women. "The Ntakata Mountain REDD Project has provided money for each group to increase the capital of our groups so that we can benefit from borrowing and develop our production and economic activities in general," Anna Msome, a Cocoba group member, says.

The project has been so successful that Carbon Tanzania is developing a plan to start an additional project in the area to include two neighboring forest reserves badly in need of protection. The project will become Africa's first Jurisdictional and Nested REDD Project—integrating the project's carbon accounting with Tanzania's national climate strategy—and will cover up to 750,000 hectares of woodland. "The goodwill and relationships established in the Ntakata project provide a great foundation for the development of the next project in a forest reserve area managed by the same district government," Anderson says.



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## About the NCS Alliance

The NCS Alliance (NCSA) conveys the voice of businesses, NGOs and solution providers on the need to mobilize a high integrity demand for high quality Natural Climate Solutions (NCS). The Alliance focuses on identifying opportunities and barriers to investment in the NCS voluntary carbon market and serves as a forum for knowledge sharing and technical capacity building to ensure natural climate solutions reach their full potential in abating climate change, while also tackling nature loss and socio-economic issues. To build trust in high quality NCS, the NCSA has established the NCS Lighthouse programme.

For more information visit [www.naturalclimatesolutionsalliance.org](http://www.naturalclimatesolutionsalliance.org) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).



## About NCS Lighthouse Programme

The NCS Lighthouse Programme shines a light on projects and programmes that can be used as examples of good practice for supply and are a beacon in the path to developing trust in NCS for people, nature and climate. The NCS Lighthouses help elevate the successful human, environmental, and climate stories behind these initiatives.

The NCS Lighthouses, selected based on screening criteria developed by an NCSA Taskforce comprising NGOs, businesses and solution providers, have demonstrated alignment to the NCSA's quality principles for NCS credits, as presented within 'Natural Climate Solutions for Corporates'.

The NCS Lighthouse Programme is made possible with generous funding support from the We Mean Business Coalition.

## Disclaimer

Inclusion of an NCS project or programme in the NCS Lighthouse Programme does not imply a recommendation to purchase, trade or retire credits associated with the Lighthouse.

The NCS Alliance and its members take no responsibility for the purchase, trade or retirement of credits from these projects and programmes. Instead, it recommends that individuals, companies and other organisations procuring credits as part of their climate strategies conduct their own independent due diligence to validate the quality and environmental integrity of their purchases.

The NCS Alliance secretariat in no way benefits financially or by other means from the selection.

Author: Ben Crair

Project coordination: Giulia Carbone (WBCSD); Jennicca Gordon (WBCSD)

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