



PRESS RELEASE

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Zambian community forestry project sells carbon credits to Microsoft, supporting African communities

BioCarbon Group, BCP and Natural Capital Partners, formerly The Carbon Neutral Company, are pleased to announce a transaction of verified carbon reductions from a transformational community forestry project in Zambia. The purchase of the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Climate Community Biodiversity standard (CCB) carbon credits by Microsoft will enable the Lower Zambezi REDD+ Project to continue to implement and scale up work, improving the lives of farming communities in Zambia, in South-Eastern Africa.

The project engages more than 8,000 local community members to improve land-use practices and conserve forests and wildlife. It ensures the conservation of 39,000 hectares of valuable Miombo forest, creating a vital buffer for Lower Zambezi National Park, as part of a trans-frontier conservation area of global significance that is home to 23,000 elephants. The project area also provides valuable habitat for threatened species such as lions, ground hornbill and sable and roan antelopes. Threatened animal species are now returning to the forest, which is adjacent to a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Income levels in the project zone have historically been extremely low, and Zambia itself is a UN-designated Least Developed Country. To earn a living, local communities depend on charcoal production and inefficient slash-and-burn farming practices, both of which put significant pressure on shrinking forest resources. The project directly tackles the poverty-driven causes of deforestation. It does so, for example, by improving agricultural practices, boosting yields while conserving soils and diversifying production. The project also supports the establishment of village-based agro-businesses, such as poultry and honey. Furthermore, communities are now successfully producing “eco-charcoal” from sustainably managed community forests. All these activities directly support local incomes. In addition, the project directly supports local schools and healthcare and improves access to drinking water.

“We are proud of this sale to Microsoft, and very happy they are supporting the exceptional environmental and development benefits this project is creating,” says Jason Patrick, Managing Director of BioCarbon Group.

“We are working hard with local communities to achieve a meaningful transformation in land-use practices: increasing agricultural production and market access while safeguarding forest habitat,” explains Dr Hassan Sachedina, Managing Director of BCP. “Our successful approach is evidenced through triple Gold validation under the Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance Standard; the first project in Africa to achieve this level of recognition.”

Zubair Zakir, Global Carbon Sourcing Director of Natural Capital Partners, adds: “We're very pleased to add BioCarbon to our network of valued project partners with this key REDD+ project in Zambia, the country's first. Through its work to build sustainable livelihoods in one of Africa's least developed economies and to tackle urban demand for charcoal coming from the city of Lusaka, which is one of Africa's fastest growing cities, the project is meeting a demand which is very important to Microsoft and we are increasingly seeing from all our clients: one which combines emission reductions with delivering essential, long term sustainable impacts to communities, both urban and rural.”

Further details about this project can be found on the VCS website:

http://www.vcsprojectdatabase.org/#/project_details/1202

Notes to editors:

About BioCarbon Group

BioCarbon Group Pte Ltd is a leading international investor in land based carbon mitigation activities that offer transformational environmental and development benefits. With projects located in Africa, Australia and Latin America, BioCarbon works with experienced local project partners. Its shareholders are Global Forest Partners LP, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, and Macquarie Bank. www.biocarbongroup.com

About BCP

BioCarbon Partners (BCP) is an African-based and -owned social enterprise that develops and manages long-term forest carbon projects in globally significant biodiversity landscapes in Africa. BCP combines an entrepreneurial approach with a core philosophy of caring for people and environments to catalyze landscape-scale, community-based market driven solutions to deforestation. www.biocarbonpartners.com

About Natural Capital Partners, formerly The CarbonNeutral Company

Natural Capital Partners (naturalcapitalpartners.com) works with clients to combine business success with positive impact on the environment and society. Through collaboration with global project partners, the development of innovative solutions, and understanding the specific goals of its clients, the company delivers a broad range of products and services for carbon, energy, water, biodiversity and communities in direct operations, consumer markets and supply chains – the world’s natural capital. The company was founded in 1997 and currently works with more than 300 clients in 34 countries.

Press enquiries and further information

Please contact:

Jason Patrick, BioCarbon Group

Email: jpatrick@biocarbongroup.com

Or

Hassan Sachedina, BioCarbon Partners

Email: hassan@biocarbonpartners.com

Or

Rebecca Fay, Natural Capital Partners

Email: rfay@naturalcapitalpartners.com