
the Mpingo Conservation Project



Report for REDD Project Launch in Kilwa
10th April 2010

Public Report

For distribution to RNE, MCP stakeholders and all Partners.

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Introduction

Mpingo Conservation Project (MCP) has received a grant worth USD 1,948,123 from the Royal Norwegian Embassy to implement a pilot Project for Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) in Kilwa District. The title of this Project is 'combining REDD, PFM and FSC certification in South-Eastern Tanzania' and it is a four year project.

This is a consortium project where by MCP is a lead organization with other five national and international partners. MCP organised a public official launching ceremony which took place from 09:00 am, 10th of April 2010 at the Folks Development College (FDC) in Kilwa Masoko. The event was attended by more than fifty people. These were village representatives, representatives of local CBOs, District Councillors, District Heads of Departments, Regional Natural Resources Advisor for Lindi, District Commissioner for Kilwa, District Executive Director for Kilwa, Vice Chairman of Kilwa District Council, representatives from MCP Partner organizations and a range of other MCP stakeholders.

Other invited guests who could not make it due to transport problems caused by heavy rains were, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the National REDD Task Force, REDD Secretariat, Forest and Beekeeping Division and the Vice President's Office (Environment Division)

The launching Event

MCP National Coordinator Mr. Jasper Makala welcomed the guest of Honour, Lindi Regional Commissioner Hon. Mr. Said Sadick Meck, introduced the invited guests, the REDD Project Coordinator Mr. Mtemi Miya and apologised on behalf of the delegates from the VoP Environment Division, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Tanzania REDD Taskforce, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism and other invited guests who could not make it to the event due to bad condition of the road from Dar as well as other reasons.

Mr. Makala went on to give a short presentation and explanation of what REDD is in a national and international context, how is MCP involved in implementing the pilot project, who are the partners and their roles in the project, and where MCP is going to work in implementing the project. He also argued the participants to see this as an opportunity and to provide positive corporation with MCP in achieving the overall objective in poverty reduction among forest dependent communities in Kilwa District. He also asked the participants to be patient and should not give up when benefits from REDD takes longer and they should regard the benefits as long term benefits rather than short term for this generation and the coming generations. He also outlined challenges that are facing MCP in the overall implementation of its objectives.

This was followed by the MCP National Coordinator welcoming the District Commissioner for Kilwa Hon. Mr. Nurdin Babu who welcomed the guest of honour. In his welcoming speech, the DC informed the guest of honour on the good work that is being done by MCP and specifically he noted the success in setting up and completing the PFM process in some villages in Kilwa District. He was also very proud of MCP for obtaining the first Forest Stewardship Council Certificate (FSC) in the whole continent of Africa and putting Kilwa on the world map as the first district to have that type of certificate in Africa. MCP holds the first FSC certificate in Africa from community managed natural forests. He hailed MCP to keep up the good work and bring more villages into the group certificate scheme. He also asked the members of the District Council and staff of Kilwa District Council involved to cooperate fully with MCP and its partners in the implementation of this pilot project. He also to assured the guest of Honour that Kilwa District will work hand in hand with MCP and other institutions in conserving forests in Lindi Region as a whole and fight poverty among its citizen. Lastly he welcomed the guest of honour to give his remarks and officially launch the project.

Launching speech from Lindi Regional Commissioner (Guest of Honour)

The guest of Honour started by thanking MCP for giving him a privilege to be the guest of honour on officiating this important event, he noted that this is another opportunity brought by MCP in Lindi Region particularly in Kilwa District to use these kinds of mechanisms that involve forest conservation and providing incentives to fight against poverty and stimulate community development. He went on to say that Lindi region has lost a lot of its forests in the past twenty years due to illegal logging and shifting agriculture. These practices (logging and shifting agriculture) have not benefited the majority of people in Lindi, he said the value of the lost forests is very huge and have not helped improve the lives of local people and the region as a whole, so it is high time now for the local communities around these forests to get serious and conserve the forests and benefit from them. He insisted that District councils should set aside pieces of land to (re) establish District Forest Reserves, he noted that these reserves used to exist in previous years and were well managed but all of a sudden these forests disappeared and it seems there is no deliberate efforts to re establish them or properly manage the ones that are still left.

REDD is an international initiative and that it is up to the people of Kilwa to ensure that the pilot project work and bring more incentives particularly to the local communities. He outlined three major benefits that is to be reaped from projects like this; he said one is the overall objective of reducing Co2 emissions thus checking climate change, second the communities can benefit the various products from a well conserved forest such as timber and others (he stressed that REDD does not prohibit communities from harvesting from their forests but communities should harvest more sustainably) and lastly he said communities will receive incentives and money by selling the amount of Carbon stored in their forests. The guest of honour cautioned the participants that they should not look at the amount of fund set aside for the REDD pilot project which may seem to be a lot but practically it is not much given the amount of work that is involved and therefore they should not think that there is going to be easy money distributed by REDD.

The guest of honour challenged MCP to expand to more villages, come up with alternatives for the communities to earn a living while waiting for the benefits from REDD and their forests to come. He insisted that the main common problem that is facing forest conservation in Lindi is shifting cultivation. He said it has been the norm for farmers in this region to completely clear forest to prepare a piece of land for farming, an activity that takes place for two or three years and then they move on to another piece of forest. He said this is much more threatening than logging because shifting agriculture exposes the land to other destructive forces such as erosion. As a way to combat this MCP as a conservation partner should also advocate better farming practices especially the use of fertilizers (both industrial and compost) in order to enhance soil fertility to already cleared and farmed pieces of land to discourage farmers from moving to forests in search of fertile grounds. He also said he would like in the future MCP to arrange for him to visit the project areas in the villages.

The guest of honour then declared that the Project is officially launched and he will plant a memorial tree to mark the day of this event.

Later the Regional Commissioner for Lindi planted an indigenous tree locally known as **mkongo** or **mbambakofi** (*Azelia quanzensis*) a hardwood species that is found abundantly in Lindi Region and it is a high value timber tree.

After the tree was planted, all participants gathered for a group photo.

In the end refreshments were served and informal discussions took place before the event came to a close.

Launching ceremony photos



Figure 1. MCP National Coordinator Mr. Jasper Makala gives a presentation about REDD Pilot Project in Kilwa district.



Figure 2. Participants attentively follow Mr. Makala's Presentation



Figure 3. Kilwa District Commissioner gives a speech before welcoming the Guest of Honour



Figure 4. The Guest of Honour Lindi Regional Commissioner Mr. Said Sadick Meck gives his launching speech



Figure 5. The Guest of Honour prepares the memorial tree before planting



Figure 6. The guest of Honour plants the memorial tree



Figure 7. Some of the event participants in a group photo together with the Guest of Honour



Figure 8: Launching banner displayed at the entrance of the event Venue at FD College in Kilwa Masoko