



VANGA BLUE FOREST ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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Association for Coastal
Ecosystem Services

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Project Overview

Project overview	
Reporting period	1 st January 2021 - 31 December 2021
Geographical areas	Vanga Bay mangrove forest
Technical specifications in use	Vanga Blue Forest

	Historical	Added/issued this period	Total
No. of households with PES agreements (where applicable)	0	0	0
No. of community groups with PES agreements (where applicable)	1	0	1
Approximate number of households (or individuals) in these community groups (if known)	974 households	0	974
Area under management (ha) where PES agreements are in place	460	0	460
Total PES payments made to participants (USD)	0	27,604	27,604
Total sum held in trust for future PES payments (USD)	2,826		
Allocation to Plan vivo buffer (tCO ₂)	1,126	1,647	2,773
Saleable emission reductions achieved (tCO ₂)	4506	4692	9,198
Unsold stock at time of submission (PVC)	0	651	651
Total unsold stock (PVC)	0	651	651
Plan Vivo Certificates (PVCs) issued to date			4506
Plan Vivo Certificates requested for issuance			4692
Plan Vivo Certificates available for future issuance (REDD only)			0
Total PVCs issued (including this report)			9198

PART A: PROJECT UPDATES

A1 Key events

7th - 8th January 2021 - The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in collaboration with Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) held a mangrove carbon assessment training in Vanga for 24 community members through Blue Action Fund (BAF) project. The aim of the training was to enhance community understanding on the value of blue carbon ecosystems and the need to protect them and equip them with skills for assessing carbon stocks for carbon credit projects within the trans-boundary conservation area of Kenya and Tanzania.



Figure 1: (left) Community members familiarizing with monitoring tools (right) a community member measuring the diameter of a mangrove tree.

12th January 2021 - Vanga Blue Forest and Mikoko Pamoja CBO held a joint committee training on implementation of Blue Carbon projects and governance in Vanga, Kenya. In attendance were three officials from: Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) including; Dr. James G. Kairo, the Lungalunga Social service officer, Mr. Geoffrey Otundo, two village heads from Vanga and Gazi bay, twenty one committee members from VBF and MP. Participants were guided through good governance of mangrove carbon projects, their key roles and responsibilities, importance of adhering to regulations and following clear communication channels.



Figure 2: Committee members of VBF and MP projects, two (2) village heads and three (3) KMFRI officials at a committee training held at VBF office in Vanga.

5th June 2021 - Ecosystem restoration was the theme for the 2021 World Environmental Day. Vanga Blue Forest Community Based Organization together with VAJIKI CFA, Mchongo Self-help Group, Jitihada Environmental Group among other community environmental groups of the Vanga community, united to mark the 2021 World Environmental Day by cleaning the Vanga market area. Litter was sorted into three groups, that is; reusable, recyclable and reduce-able. With the help of a county rubbish collecting truck the waste was collected. Officials from the Vanga Blue Forest CBO, and the other community Environmental groups, gave out short speeches highlighting the importance of the World Environmental day and also the measures to be taken to protect the environment from pollution.

23rd July 2021 - VBF office was invited to showcase its project at the launch of Gogoni - Gazi Participatory Forest Management Plan 2021 - 2025 which was held at Makongeni in Kwale county, Kenya. During the project presentation it was highlighted by Ms. Mwanarusi Mwafrica, a VBF official, that one of the key challenges faced in project management was lack of clear boundaries within the Vanga mangrove forest which causes conflict amongst resource users. To which the Chief guest, Mr. Julius Kamau, the Ecosystem Conservator, Kwale County commented that the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) would soon resolve the issue through demarcation.



Figure 3: Project Coordinator, showcasing project activities to the Ecosystem Conservator, Kwale County, during launch of GOGACOFPA Participatory Forest Management Plan at Makongeni.

31st July - Mangrove Action Project Organized a global Children's Mangrove Art Contest of which a number of school children of age 6- 16 years old from the project area participated. The theme of the competition being, "Why Mangroves are important to the mangrove communities and the world".

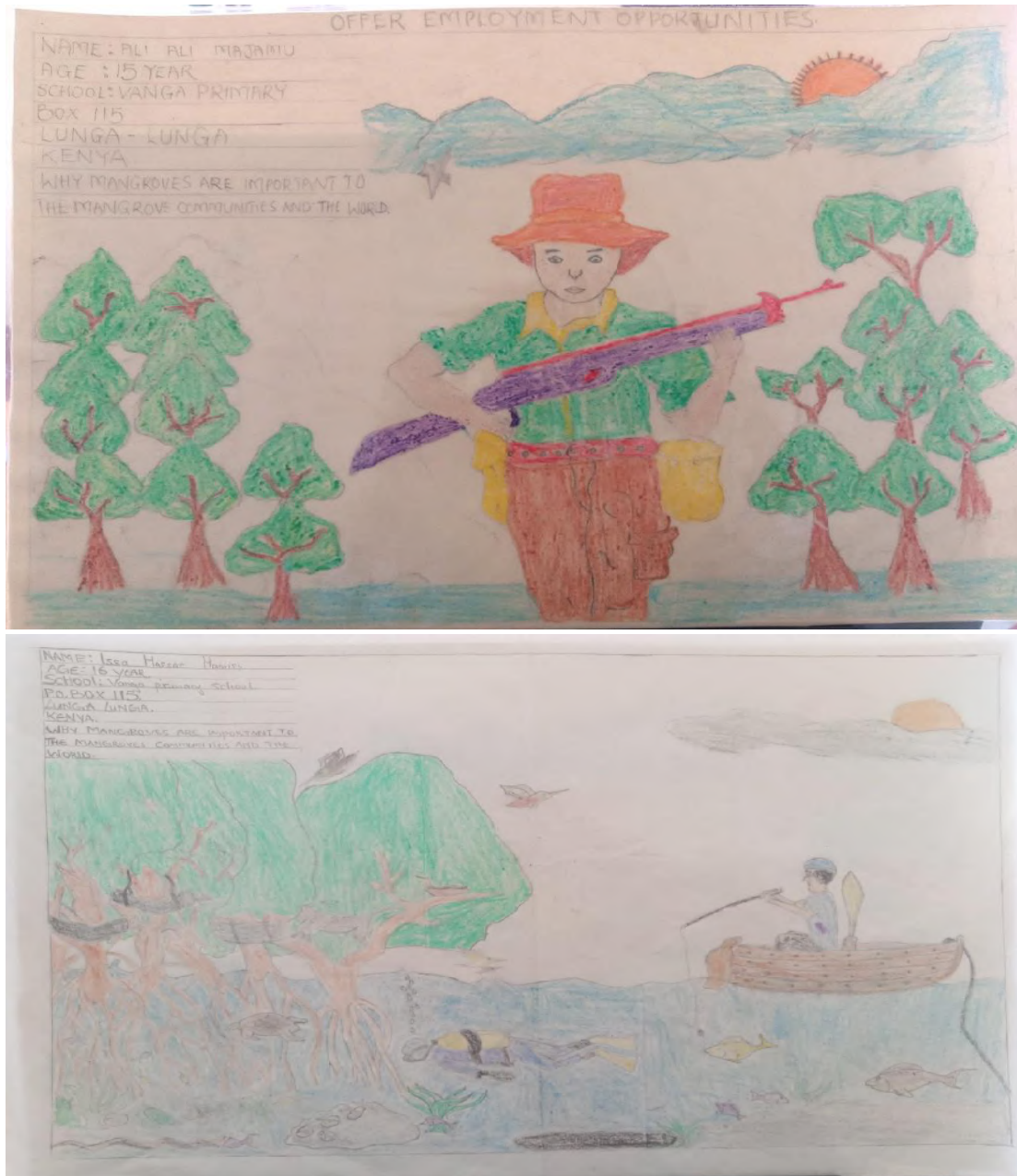


Figure 4: Art by school children during MAP contest. (Top) Image of a forest scout (Source of employment) and below shows fishing ground, divers and bee hives.

1st - 4th September 2021 - Demarcation of the Vanga Blue Forest project area was conducted involving 24 community members from Vanga, Jimbo, Kiwegu and Mkwiro, officials from Kenya

Marine Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) who offered technical support and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) who offered their expertise in forest demarcation and legal aspect. The initiative was funded by the Blue Action Fund (BAF) and it aimed at marking the boundaries and installing physical beacons to show the VBF carbon offset project area of operation so as to avoid conflict amongst other resource users. The demarcation activity took two approaches. One in-door planning with the stakeholder groups representatives, which took place in the VBF/VAJIKI office. The second approach was field based, in which the validation of the GPS point was done and the beacons concreted at the project area corners marked using GPS.



Figure 5: (left) Indoor planning of the demarcation activity (right) Installation of beacons at the project site by community members, KFS and KMFRI officials.

12th October 2021 - The Vanga Blue Forest executive committee members had an online meeting with their key partner organizations including; Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute and The Association of Coastal Ecosystem Services to discuss on the progress and governance of the project.

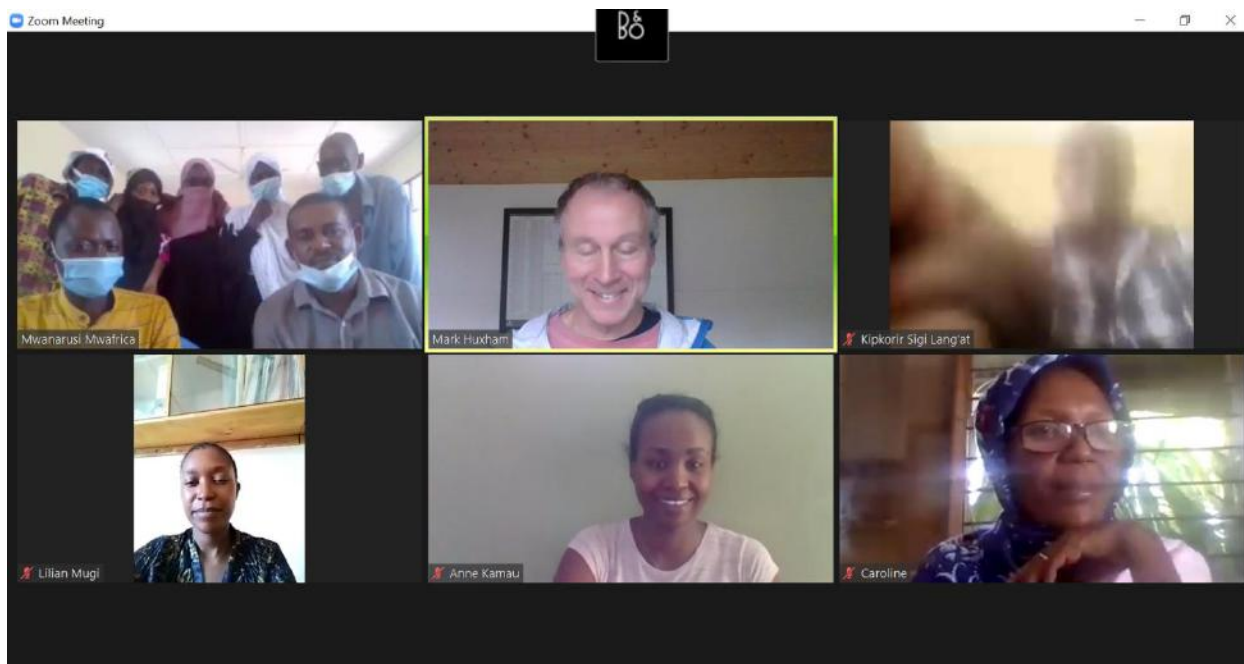


Figure 6: Ongoing zoom meeting with VBF executive committee members (top left), ACES director (top centre), KMFRI officials (top right and below).

18th October 2021 - One of our very own, the Project Coordinator won the 2021/22 Neville Shulman Earthwatch award. Through her accepted proposal, she seeks to empower the local community to enhance mangrove ecosystem sustainability in Vanga Bay, Kenya. For more information see (Annex 5d).

18th October 2021 - A representative of VBF participated in a National Dialogue Workshop on Marine Protected and Conserved Areas in Kenya which was held at Sarova Whitesands, Mombasa. The organizers were, The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Coastal Oceans Research and Development - Indian Ocean (CORDIO East Africa). This initiative aimed at strengthening governance of marine protected and conserved areas by influencing policy processes.



Figure 7: Participants of the workshop including officials from; IUCN, CORDIO, KMFRI, KWS, Technical University of Mombasa, VBF and BMU leaders.

24th November 2021 - The Project coordinator was invited as the guest speaker for the discussion on Kenyan women at the forefront of adaptation and mitigation against climate change which was held at Heron Portico Hotel (Nairobi). The initiative was organized by the French Media Development Agency, as a platform to discuss gender sensitive reporting training with an aim of building capacities of media and journalists to cover climate change issues in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, in order to influence public policy and debate.

29th November 2021 - The Coastal and Marine Resource Development (COMRED), in collaboration with Maliasili Africa, Adeso, Secure fisheries and Somali Greenpeace Association (SOGPA) visited Vanga Blue Forest Project. A total of 22 people were guests. The objectives of the visit was to; Understand how Community Forest Associations are formed, Comprehend the concept and process of implementation of Blue Carbon Projects and learn the Success, Challenges and opportunities created by Vanga Blue Forest Project.



Figure 8: A representative from Secure fisheries contributing towards an ongoing discussion during a VBF project visit.

1st - 7th November 2021 - The project coordinator attended the COP 26 held in Glasgow city. One of the sessions that she participated in was a sitting on a Blue Venture panel discussing; “The vital role of mangroves for climate change mitigation and adaptation.” In attendance were other global practitioners including Ambassador Peter Thomson, United Nations Secretary General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean. During her visit, she was also honored to meet the **Association of Coastal Ecosystem Services (ACES)** who are our key partners in project coordination and selling of carbon credits and **The Plan Vivo Foundation** who certify the project.



Figure 9: The project coordinator (third left) contributing on a blue carbon discussion session during COP 26 (credit Nick Piludu, BlueVentures)

A2 Success and challenges

Successes: The sale of carbon credits has earned the project a total of USD 46,555 which has been used for a range of community benefits as documented in section F.

We were able to move ahead with the establishment of woodlots, as described in the PDD, and conducted independent research on local support and perceptions of the project. Results will be fully analyzed in 2022 but initial readings show wide support for the project and understanding of what it aims to do, as reflected in support for expansion of project areas and activities in 2022.

Challenges: Covid 19 remained a challenge, limiting field work and the ability of supporting teams from KMFRI to travel to the field. This made field sampling harder than expected, especially for Sii Island. Some objectives of the PDD remain to be fulfilled, in particular we need to begin restoration activities in area 4 and establish formal monitoring for area 3, the informal plantation area already established by villagers. As a result, we will suffer a 5% forfeit in credits, as happened last year, but hope to rectify this by imitating these activities early in 2022.

A3 Project developments

Formal demarcation of the Vanga Blue Forest project area was conducted on 1st to 4th of September 2021 involving community members from Vanga, Jimbo, Kiwegu, officials from Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) who offered technical support and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) who offered their expertise in forest demarcation and legal aspects. The initiative aimed at marking the boundaries and installing physical beacons to show the VBF carbon offset project area of operation to avoid conflict amongst other resource users. The demarcation activity took two approaches. One in-door planning with the stakeholder groups representatives, which took place in the VBF office. The second approach was field based, in which the validation of the GPS point was done, and the beacons concreted at the project area corners marked using GPS.



Figure 10: (left) Indoor planning of the demarcation activity (right) Installation of beacons at the project site by community members, KFS and KMFRI officials.

A4 Future developments

Expanding Project Area

Given the successful launch and initial operation of the project along with broad community support we seek to generate more benefits on climate, biodiversity and community. In order to achieve this, VBF looks forward to expanding the project area by 200ha; the total area of degraded woodland will easily accommodate this expansion without implying leakage. This will be achieved by prior consultation and engagement of the VAJIKI (Vanga, Jimbo and Kiwegu) community.

Seagrass

Plans for inclusion of seagrass continue, with the intention of launching a protected area of 300 ha in March. This will involve a ‘carbon plus’ model of financing and will involve working with the fisheries department and the local BMU.

Wood Lots

VBF has established initial woodlots, according to our PDD, and will seek to expand these to a 2ha plantation of fast growing trees in order to reduce the pressure of over harvesting mangroves.

Restoration

Rehabilitation of Area 4 will commence in February 2022.

Installation Of Energy Saving Stoves

The project is to start by January 2022 as project funds have already been channeled to the VBF account.

Part B: Project activities

B1 Project activities generating plan vivo certificates

Vanga Blue Forest has a single technical specification that covers four activity areas, involving avoided deforestation/forest recovery in areas 1 and 2 and mangrove reforestation and ecosystem rehabilitation in areas 3 and 4 respectively. The responsibilities for and benefits from these activities are shared communally within the single project community organization.

Table B1: Project activity summary

Name of technical specification	Area (Ha)	No. Of small holder household	No of community groups
Avoided degradation Area 1 (Sii island)	199*		1
Avoided degradation Area 2 (mainland)	247.5*		1
Mangrove reforestation Area 3	5		1
Ecosystem rehabilitation (Area 4)	5		1

*Initial areas of forest are 200 (area 1) and 250 (area 2) ha. In order to take a conservative approach, reduced degradation of 80% due to project interventions is assumed. These lower values of 199 and 247.5ha will be given throughout the project accreditation period as an average accounting for forest shrinkage.

B2 Project activities in addition to those generating plan vivo certificates

Publicity and awareness raising

Vanga Blue Forest Project showcased and presented its activities at local, national and international events such as the World mangroves Day and COP 26 in Glasgow. The platforms used to publicize the project are Twitter, Youtube and Facebook.

PART C Plan Vivo Certificate issuance submission

Table C1: Statement of tCO2 reductions available for issuance as Plan Vivo Certificates based on activity for reporting period 01/2021– 12/2021

Area ID	Total area (ha)	Tech. Spec	tCO2 available from previous periods	Total tCO2 Achieved this period	% Buffer ¹	No. of PVCs allocated to the buffer account	No. PVCs requested for issuance from saleable carbon	tCO2 available for future issuances
Project area 1	199	VBF	0	1,811	25	453	1359	0
Project area 2	247.5	VBF	0	4,774	25	1,194	3583	0
Project area 3	5	VBF	0	0	25	0	0	0
Project Area 4	0.25	VBF	0	0	25	0	0	0
TOTAL	451.75		0	6585		1,646	4,692²	0

¹Buffer includes 20% for risk and 5% for leakage

²This final sum is the amount from areas 1 and 2, after subtraction of buffer and then with an additional 5% forfeit due to not meeting monitoring targets in areas 3 and 4 (see table A1.1).

This issuance is based on a signed PES agreement with Vanga Blue Forest Community Based Organisation, as the relevant user group of Vajiki Community Forest Association, complying with all the minimum requirements stated in this agreement.

Table C2: Allocation of issuance request for this reporting period

Buyer name/ Unsold Stock	No. PVCs transacted	Registry ID (if available)	Tech spec
Zero Mission	1500	N/A (transfer)	Vanga Blue Forest
Superflex	50	PV PVC KE 104000000026945 01012020 31122020 6997871 6997920 MER O P	Vanga Blue Forest
The Safari Collection Footprint	222	PV PVC KE 104000000026945 01012020 31122020 6996149 6996370 MER O P	Vanga Blue Forest
Himaya	12	PV PVC KE 104000000026945 01012020 31122020 6997921 6997932 MER O P	Vanga Blue Forest
James Hagan	3	PV PVC KE 104000000026945 01012020 31122020 6996146 6996148 MER O P	Vanga Blue Forest
Cambridge Conservation Forum	14	PV PVC KE 104000000026945 01012020 31122020 6996132 6996145 MER O P	Vanga Blue Forest
Zero Mission	2050	N/A (transfer)	Vanga Blue Forest
Citizen Zoo	4	PV PVC KE 104000000026945 01012020 31122020 6997933 6997936 MER O P	Vanga Blue Forest
TOTAL	3,855		

PART D Sales of Plan Vivo certificates

All sales of Plan Vivo Certificates to date (including forward sold certificates for current issuance request) are presented in table D1.

Table D1: Sales of Plan Vivo Certificates

Vintage	Buyer	No of PVCs	Price per PVC (\$)*	Total sale amount (\$)*	Price to participants per PVC (\$)*	% average sale price received by participants
SALES 2021						
2020	Zero Mission	1500				59.3*
2020	Superflex	50				59.3*
2020	The Safari Collection Footprint	222				59.3*

2020	Himaya	12				59.3*
2020	James Hagan	3				59.3*
2020	Cambridge Conservation Forum	14				59.3*
2020	Zero Mission	2050				59.3*
2020	Citizen Zoo	4				59.3*
3,855						59.3

*Note that although this is slightly below target of 60%, this is because a pending sale in December 2021 is taking longer than expected to process. 100% of this sale (651 credits) will be transferred to VBFCO, raising the average % to participants to 66%.

Table D2: Unsold stock of Plan Vivo Certificates

Vintage	No of PVCs	Price to participants
2020	651	n/a

PART E Monitoring results

E1: Ecosystem services monitoring results

Monitoring results that support the request for new issuance are presented in annex 1.

E2: Maintaining commitments

No participant has resigned from the project this year.

E3: Socioeconomic monitoring

An independent research project focused on justice in blue carbon projects and led by Dr Anne Kairu took place this year, in which focus groups involving committee members, technical stakeholders and beneficiaries were conducted. Full details of this research will be available in 2022 but initial results show strong support for and understanding of the project.

E4: Environmental monitoring

See Annex 1 for monitoring results.

PART F Impacts

Evidence of outcomes

During the reporting period Vanga, Jimbo and Kiwegu communities successfully implemented the community projects they prioritized during late 2020 with start up funds amounting to USD 4744 (Approximately Ksh. 500,000). **Vanga** community did prioritize on construction of flooding pathway. Through the project the social aspect of the community improved due to; a) Enhanced accessibility to rice farms during floods and, b) Enhanced accessibility to schools by children from neighboring communities. **Jimbo** community, prioritized on building of a perimeter wall and land filling of a waterlogged nursery school and **Kiwegu** community prioritized on supporting a dispensary with furniture set, including a maternity workbench. (See images below). Funds derived from 2021 carbon sales are to be disbursed early January 2022 as agreed by committee members.



Figure 11: (left) Before image of flooded pathway. (Right) after image of pathway



Figure 12: (left) Before image of nursery school (right) After wall construction of nursery school



Figure 13: Furniture set distributed to Kiwegu dispensary

PART G Payments for Ecosystem Services

Table G1: Summary of payments made and held in trust

1. Reporting year (2020-2021)	2. Total payments received (USD)	3. Total payments made (USD)	4. Value retained by ACES* (USD)	5. Total payments held in trust (USD)
1/20 - 12/21	0	0	2,694**	0
1/21 - 12/21	46,555.00	27,604.04	12,177.25	2,823.00***
TOTAL	46,555.00	27,604.04	14,871.25	2,823.00

* Includes operating costs for ACES, Plan Vivo issuance fees and funds ringfenced for verification.

** Funds were retained by ACES prior to income being received to contribute to a verification fund (an annual transfer).

***Numbers do not exactly add up due to fluctuations in exchange rates between USD and GBP

Before transfer to the VBF Community Organization, funds are held by the charity The Association for Coastal Ecosystem Services (ACES)

PART H Ongoing Participation

H1: Recruitment

No recruitment occurred in this reporting period.

H2: Project potential

We do not anticipate recruiting any additional user groups in 2022.

H3: Community participation

A committee of 13 volunteer community members from Vanga, Jimbo and Kiwegu villages governs Vanga Blue Forest project (see meetings held this year in annex 2). Through a participatory approach, the committee is elected democratically biannually during village meetings with close involvement and supervision of the Department of Social Development, among other stakeholders. The committee team comprises four members from Vanga, four from Jimbo and five from Kiwegu villages. With regards to gender, four are women and nine are men.

The committee ensures that the annual work plan is implemented in a timely manner, engages in project activities like monitoring, engages community members in prioritization of local development projects through funds obtained from the sale of carbon credits, ensures allocated community funds are used for intended purpose and also addresses arising grievances. In cases where no resolution is arrived at, village heads intervene.

Vanga Blue Forest held a number of meetings during this reporting period to plan for the annual activities including monitoring, planting and woodlot establishment (Annex 2).

Table H3: Meetings held by VBF-CBO 2021

No.	DATE	MEMBERS	No. OF MEMBERS	REMARKS
1.	12/01/2021	Committee	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee training on project governance
2.	28/01/2021	Committee	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making of VBF work plan Allocation of community Project Supervisors allowance rate
3.	04/05/2021	Committee	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeting of VBF activities
4.	20/05/2021	Committee	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodlot establishment. Discussing forest monitoring results. Benefits obtained from sale of Carbon credits
5.	16-18/06/2021	VBF & 3 school committees of Vanga , Jimbo & Kiwegu villages.	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding on Woodlot establishment between VBF and the 3 schools of Vanga, Jimbo and Kiwegu villages.
6.	22/07/2021	Committee	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning on World Mangroves Day activities
7.	24/09/2021	Committee	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing changes in the PDD
8.	19/10/2021	Committee	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing way-forward from the online meeting held amongst VBF team, KMFRI and ACES. Implementation of Usawa work and Energy saving cooking stoves (Jikos)
9.	17/11/2021	Committee	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing what's COP 26 and its importance? Vanga blue forest PDD clarification meeting
10.	22/12/2021	VBF & VAJIKI CFA committee	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing progress and challenges faced by VBF in the year 2021 and setting aspirations for the year 2022.

PART I Project operating costs

Allocation of costs

Expense	Narrative	Amount (Ksh): USD in brackets	Contribution from sale of PVCs (Ksh)	Contribution from other sources
Community development projects		Ksh 500,000 (USD 4733)		100%
Labour	Work teams for planting and monitoring	Kshs. 249,676 (USD 2208)	100%	
Project workers salary (all staff)	-	Ksh. 986,160 (USD 8723)	100%	
Expense for committee and office	-	Ksh. 120,287 (USD 1064)	100%	

Annexes

Annex 1. Monitoring results for issuance request

Vanga Blue Forest operates on four main project areas. Areas 1 (Sii Island) and 2 (Vanga forest mainland) deliver PVCs through avoided deforestation and forest conservation activities. Areas 3 (mangrove plantation) and 4 (rehabilitation area) involve mangrove reforestation and ecosystem rehabilitation within the project site.

Our methodology involves ex-post claims for carbon accumulated, provided we meet key threshold measures of stump counts and absence of clear fell, as summarized in table A1.2

Table A1.1. Key indicators reporting

Activity area	Forest attribute	Quantity/ ha	Measure last year	Baseline	Remarks	Monitoring target met? (Y/N)
1	AGB	294	332	261	AGB showed a slight decrease	Y

	(t dw)				(but consistent with sampling error) and stumps decreased. No evidence of new cutting or removal	
	Stump Count	75	200	200		Y
2	AGB (t dw)	78	77.5	75	AGB increased/stayed the same and stumps declined. No evidence of new cutting or removal	Y
	Stump count	1136	1291	1364		Y
3	Stump count	Not known	Not known	Not known	Unable to start on this area due to Covid 19	N
4	Trajectory towards recovery	Not known	Not known	2 trees month ⁻¹ 23% areal cover	Remote sensing research conducted to show rate of natural regeneration over past 10 years i.e to establish baseline.	N

Table A1.2. VBF Annual Report Carbon Benefits Summary Table

Variable	Indicators and measures	Outcome
Threshold measures	Stump counts	No significant increase
	Evidence of clear felling	No evidence of clear felling
Avoided degradation area 1	Default measure of 8.65 t CO ₂ ha ⁻¹ yr ⁻¹	199*8.65 = 1721
Avoided degradation area 2	Default measure of 17.3 t CO ₂ ha ⁻¹ yr ⁻¹	247.5*17.3 = 4282
Avoided deforestation ABG areas 1 and 2	5 year satellite information; annual on-ground surveys and threshold measures. 309 t CO ₂ yr ⁻¹ if met.	309 t CO ₂
Avoided deforestation soil carbon areas 1 and 2	5 year satellite information; annual on-ground surveys and threshold measures.	273t CO ₂

	273 t CO ₂ yr ⁻¹ if met.	
Reforestation area 3	Stump counts and growth increments. Will accumulate 102 t CO ₂ yr ⁻¹	Not measured
Ecosystem rehabilitation area 4	Meeting longer term targets of natural recovery 1 t CO ₂ yr ⁻¹	Not measured
TOTAL (t CO₂)		6,585
TOTAL AFTER FORFEIT (but before risk buffer subtraction)	Area 3 and 4 not measured hence 5% forfeit	6,259

Annex 4: Copies of receipts on expenditure – provided to Plan Vivo

Annex 5: Media

- a) <https://youtu.be/NVmE47UDNJQ>
- b) https://youtu.be/x_23c5rl1hc
- c) https://twitter.com/haddington_prim/status/1456616750053724163?t=vIpENfP1wGfheD_3B10osw&s=19
- d) <https://earthwatch.org.uk/news/blogs/569-meet-the-2021-22-neville-shulman-award-winners>