

Annual Report 2016

2016 was a big year for Climate Stewards. We're delighted to report that after 10 years most of our sites in Ghana have formed a tree canopy and are ready to be handed over into the long-term care of the local community. Meanwhile, we have continued to support tree planting and cookstove projects in Mexico and Kenya and are developing exciting new projects in other areas.

Ghana

In 2016, Climate Stewards continued to support our partner A Rocha Ghana to manage small-scale tree planting projects on 15 sites in central and northern Ghana. All trees are indigenous species, and include mahogany, kapok, dawadawa and ebony. The majority of the 40,000 trees at these sites were planted in 2007 and 2008, with smaller numbers planted in subsequent years on some sites. Most of the sites have now reached the stage where the tree canopy has closed and weeding is not required.

In 2016, Climate Stewards funded the weeding of 10 hectares of indigenous trees at Nyinahin and Nsutaman Secondary Schools near Kumasi, which had been planted in 2014. In addition, we continued to fund the eleven Site Coordinators who play a crucial role in training and supporting farmers and school students in managing the trees, and School Environment Clubs at six of the school sites. Here, students learn to care for the young trees and use the sites as outdoor classrooms to learn about indigenous tree species and environmental sustainability. They also gain new skills from income-generating schemes including beekeeping, fishponds and rearing rabbits and cane rats.



Climate Stewards Site Coordinators workshop, Dec 16



Site handover, Nyinahin Secondary School, Dec 16

2016 saw preparations for the handover of management of all our sites in Ghana to the schools and communities where they are located. At workshops in December 2016, the Site Coordinators were trained to form management teams which will ensure the sustainable management and protection of these new mini-forests, and the fair distribution of any forest products such as timber, fruits, seeds, bark etc. as well as the profits from the beekeeping, fishponds and small animal production. Some handover ceremonies have already taken place, giving an opportunity to celebrate what has been achieved. In 2017 we will fund the final weeding at the newer sites, together with oversight from project staff to ensure a smooth and sustainable transition to schools and communities.

Mexico

Our partner Scolel'te works with smallholders in southern Mexico. Farmers are paid to create, restore and preserve indigenous trees on their own land. Using 25 different tree species, this project creates new habitat, protects watersheds and helps build resilient local communities. In 2016 Climate Stewards purchased 2,599 tonnes of carbon credits from Scolel'te (accredited with Plan Vivo).

Kenya

Our partner Paradigm works in Kenya supplying fuel-efficient cookstoves, water filters and solar lights at subsidised prices. These technologies all reduce the amount of carbon being released into the atmosphere, and bring numerous other benefits including saving money and time spent collecting wood and boiling water, and improving health. In 2016 we bought 1,000 tonnes of carbon credits from Paradigm (accredited with Gold Standard).

UK, Europe and North America

In March 2016, Climate Stewards launched its lifestyle calculator, completing the trio of activities (alongside travel and household bills) which enables people to work out the carbon footprint of everything they do. Alongside an update of our main **carbon calculator**, this has led to a growth in income of 12% from individual offsetting over 2016.

Climate Stewards ran talks, workshops and stands at 16 Christian events over the year, including New Wine. We also met the Archbishop of Canterbury and discussed creation care and carbon offsetting with him on his visit to Somerset in November. Over the year we have developed a number of new partnerships with churches and Christian organisations wishing to take responsibility for their carbon footprint and offset what they can't reduce.

A new partnership with A Rocha in Switzerland has led to collaboration with Stop Armut (Micah Challenge) to launch their "**flight calculator**" which helps organisations decide whether flying is justified for particular trips.

2016 also saw Climate Stewards running a stand at a Christian conference in the USA, with increasing support from these countries and plans for further growth in the USA and Canada in 2017.



Climate Stewards stand at New Wine, July 2016

CS Seal of Approval

During 2016, we invested a considerable amount of time in researching and developing the Climate Stewards Seal of Approval (SoA). This new tool will enable Climate Stewards to support partners in the developing world to design and implement carbon mitigation projects, and to gain funding from Climate Stewards and others. In contrast to expensive third party accreditation schemes, the SoA will provide a simple, accessible and low-cost means of calculating the carbon offset potential of projects and will require that they bring co-benefits to local biodiversity, health and livelihoods. The SoA can be used for afforestation/reforestation/avoided deforestation projects, as well as fossil fuel displacement projects, including clean cookstoves; small scale solar power; water filters; and micro-hydro schemes. Discussions are already taking place with a number of potential partners including A Rocha national organisations and other Christian NGOs across Africa, Asia and South America.

Plans for 2017

2017 will be our final year for funding the work in Ghana, which will be fully self-supporting by 2018. 2017 will also see the launch of at least 3 pilot projects under the SoA, enabling us to support smaller scale Christian projects embodying a number of different carbon mitigation technologies.

We will continue to advocate for climate justice, and provide resources and talks for churches, conferences, organisations and individuals about the causes of climate change, the biblical basis for creation care, and practical advice on cutting their carbon footprints. We will continue to develop partnerships with churches, dioceses, mission agencies and Christian NGOs in the UK and beyond, and encourage people to "Reduce what you can and offset the rest".