



Climate Stewards

F O R T O M O R R O W T O D A Y

Annual Report 2020

Climate Stewards started 2020 on a high, expecting significant growth in our income and activities after a huge rise in awareness and action around climate change in 2019, and anticipating the UN climate talks (COP26) in Glasgow later in the year.

It wasn't to be, but we had a busy and productive year, developing new project partnerships and building capacity to do what we do best – helping individuals and organisations to understand, measure and reduce their carbon footprint.

In 2020, Climate Stewards' funding enabled our eight partner projects in seven countries to mitigate 15,467 tonnes of CO₂ while bringing tangible local benefits to some of our global neighbours and the places where they live.

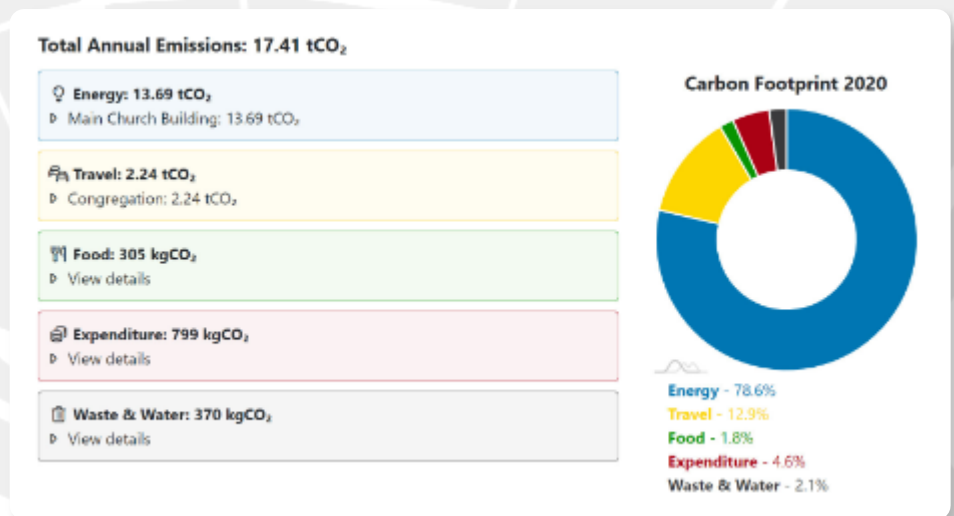
Helping people measure and reduce their carbon footprint

2020 saw the launch of our carbon footprint calculator for churches, 360°carbon. This web-based tool enables churches to measure their carbon footprint from energy, travel, food, waste, water and other expenditure so that they can identify and reduce their carbon emissions. 360°carbon was developed in collaboration with A Rocha UK and the Church of England.



360°carbon is free to use and works for all church denominations. It links to the Eco Church website and the Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool (part of the Parish Returns system).

By the end of 2020 there were 209 churches from 18 denominations signed up to 360°carbon, with increasing numbers joining every day.



338
Users

18
Denominations

209
Churches

137
Footprints started

Consultancy

In 2020 Climate Stewards worked on carbon footprint audits for the Bible Society, USPG and the Baptist Missionary Society. We also advised a number of organisations on their environmental policies and strategies to reduce their carbon footprint and/or reach Net Zero.

Seal of Approval licences

We have also worked closely with the Baptist Missionary Society to assess the carbon mitigation from two projects – a solar installation on Bardai Mission Hospital in Chad, and community tree planting in Gulu, northern Uganda. Both have been awarded Seal of Approval licences and are being funded by offsetting income from BMS and its supporters.

Approval for the Seal of Approval

The Climate Stewards Seal of Approval (SoA) framework enables organisations to assess the carbon mitigation potential of community projects in the developing world. The SoA can be used for small scale forestry projects, as well as renewable technologies such as fuel-efficient cookstoves, fireless cookers, water filters and small-scale solar power. In order to gain a Seal of Approval, local partner projects need to demonstrate local benefits to health, household income, biodiversity, and local climate resilience.



By relying on existing project data and publicly available data, working through trusted partners, and using local organisations to verify reporting information, the SoA framework is simpler and cheaper than existing third party accreditation schemes. This ensures that as much as possible of the offsetting income goes to local communities while delivering high standards of design, implementation and accountability.

In Spring 2020, we appointed environmental auditors Aster Global Environmental Solutions Inc. to carry out a comprehensive review of our Seal of Approval methodology and process. After many hours of reading, questions and conversations with CS staff and partners around the world, and some minor modifications to the SoA procedures, Aster Global produced their final report which concluded:

“Aster Global ascertained the SoA standard is an effective, streamlined standard assessing net carbon mitigation for community-based projects in the developing world”

Advocating for creation care – via Zoom

Over the year, Climate Stewards staff connected directly with over 1,100 people, mostly through online workshops, seminars and conferences. Topics included how to use 360° carbon, what is carbon offsetting, why care for creation, and Eco Church. Although we missed getting out and about, we were able to reach more people and save a lot of time and carbon emissions.

In 2020 Climate Stewards played an active role on the steering group of Climate Sunday, encouraging all UK churches to speak up, commit to action, and hold a climate-focused service before 5th September, building momentum towards COP26 in November.

New project partnerships

Safer, Healthier & Greener Cooking in Peru

Despite delays due to Covid lockdowns, our partner A Rocha Peru built 20 cookstoves in Jacanta, northern Peru. Each cookstove gives a family a safer, cleaner and more efficient way to cook, reducing pressure on the local dry forest, and bringing financial and health benefits to families. Stoves are built from mud and sand bricks and mortar, and a steel chimney manufactured in the local town.

Based on monitoring data from stoves built in 2019, each stove will use less than 50% of the



firewood used previously and save 2.65 tonnes of CO₂ per year. We will continue to monitor these stoves to verify our calculations. Our analysis demonstrates that the “embedded emissions” of these stoves are less than 0.1% of the carbon emissions savings generated by their use.

Increasing local resilience to climate change in Ghana

With schools closed in Ghana for almost all of the year, and little or no possibility of online engagement, the School Environment Clubs were put on hold. Our budget for supporting these clubs has been carried forward to 2021.

However, 2020 saw the start of a new project near Lake Bosomtwe in central Ghana. The lake is situated within an ancient impact crater located in semi-deciduous rainforest to the south-east of Kumasi. It is an area with significant biodiversity and the communities that live around the lake are reliant on farming and fishing. Climate change is threatening their livelihoods as rainfall patterns become increasingly erratic. Our partner, A Rocha Ghana, has been supporting the lakeside communities for a number of years with sustainable agriculture, fishery and livelihoods programmes.

A Rocha Ghana worked with local smallholder farmers in April 2020, planting a total of 3,405 indigenous and fruit trees across six sites near the lake. These were planted using an agro-forestry model, where the young trees are inter-planted with cassava and banana crops, providing shade for the trees in the early years of growth. Results from monitoring in October are encouraging, with good survival rates of trees. Any losses will be replaced in the spring 2021 rainy season.

Our calculations show that over the next 15 years, these trees should lock up an impressive 2,767 tonnes of CO₂. They will also bring many local benefits including erosion control, income from sale of fruit (avocado, mango, coconut), firewood from pruning and thinning, and periodic payments based on continuing survival of the trees.



Mr Blay with a 6 month old Ofram tree amongst cassava plants



New partner, new country – Tanzania!

2020 saw the start of a new partnership with TanzDev Trust and Mboni Ya Vijana Group (MVG) in the Kigoma region of Tanzania. Delayed by the Covid lockdown, planting took place in the autumn rainy season, with over 13,000 indigenous trees planted at Zeze Secondary School and community land nearby. The project budget includes training and equipment to provide 30 bee hives among the young trees, ensuring that community and school members pay close attention to the trees, and providing new sources of income.

One of the students representing the Zeze Secondary School says...

“Trees are all about lives. Animals, insects and birds get fodders and habitats. Human gets fuel wood, construction materials, and shades. On the environment, trees regulate weather, oxygen and carbon dioxide, reduces erosion and allow water conservation. I and my fellow students here, we are proud of having tree planting scheme in our school. Our project will provide lesson to other schools and individuals on tree planting and management for the future of our universe.”

Greening church compounds in Kenya



Church elder Isaac Nduuti and Pastor James Mwanja with one of their *Melia* trees.

In 2020 Climate Stewards supported Watersheds Ecosystem Conservation (WEC) to plant trees with three churches near Kitui in south-eastern Kenya. The seedlings were raised in WEC's nursery (which had been partly funded by Climate Stewards in 2019) during lockdown, ready to plant out later in the year. A total of 1,350 native trees were planted, which we calculate will lock up 511 tonnes of CO₂ during the first ten years of their lives. WEC is planting *Melia volkensii*, a native hardwood which often grows as fast or faster than exotic species such as Eucalyptus, together with other native species which are well-suited to the relatively dry climate of south-eastern Kenya.

Monitoring of trees planted at 5 school and church sites in 2019 showed good survival and growth of trees overall. Very erratic rains soon after planting necessitated the purchase of water to ensure survival of the trees. All our project budgets include contingencies to cover replanting within the first year (known as 'beating up') to take account of these risks.

Greening church compounds in Uganda

In 2020 Climate Stewards and the African Pastors Fellowship supported the Baptist Union of Uganda to help a further 5 churches plant a total of 1,970 indigenous and fruit trees in church compounds. Due to the lockdown restrictions, the seedlings were held in nurseries until the second rainy season in October. Community forestry expert, Bernadette Kabonesa, ran a training session in August to help churches to get ready for tree-planting during the autumn rainy season. Fifteen pastors and church members attended, learning about appropriate spacing, correct planting methods and the environmental and community benefits of the project.

Together, these trees are projected to sequester 270 tons of CO₂ over the lifetime of the project.

Clean cookstoves in Nepal

In 2020 Climate Stewards funded the manufacture and installation of 120 new Smokeless Metal Stoves (SMSs) in the villages of Yanghu and Lekha. Due to Covid-related shutdowns, the stove manufacture was delayed. 27 stoves have been installed and the remaining stoves are expected to be completed and installed in spring 2021. Climate Stewards will fund ongoing support and monitoring of the project for the next ten years, ensuring that the stoves are well used and maintained to maximise carbon savings.



Bhachkali Shahi lives in Yanghu village and received an SMS stove in 2020. She used to cook food on an open metal frame stove. The walls inside the house were black due to the thick smoke in the kitchen. She has asthma and was coughing a lot due to the smoke-filled house. She told us, "I used to think about the harm all the smoke in my kitchen causes, but now, my SMS has transformed life in my kitchen. The SMS helps protect us from smoke-related diseases such as eye irritation, respiratory infections, asthma, sinusitis, and pneumonia. It also uses a lot less firewood to cook and therefore helps conserve the environment. I am now quite relieved from coughing".



Clean water, clean hands and slow cookers in Uganda

Uganda experienced a very severe lockdown throughout much of 2020. In September we funded our long-term partner A Rocha Uganda, to deliver a package of a biosand water filter, fireless cooker and “tippy tap” to 60 households in Kiteezi parish, beside Kampala’s municipal landfill. Members of the households attended training sessions and built their own filters, fireless cookers and tippy taps, learning how to use, maintain and repair them as they went along.

Families with a water filter no longer need to boil water for drinking. Fireless cookers act like a slow cooker to continue to cook food in an insulated basket. Tippy taps allow families to wash their hands regularly using minimal water. These three technologies combined bring many benefits including reduced CO₂ emissions, savings on money spent on fuel, improved health as there is less smoke in the house, improved hygiene with access to clean water and handwashing, and reduced deforestation as less wood or charcoal is needed. We estimate that this project will save around 120 tonnes of CO₂ each year.



Eseza’s story

Eseza Katumba a 74-year-old grandmother who lives with her husband, Edward Katumba and two grandchildren, tells us, *“Ever since I got my fireless cooker I save time, water and fuel. I no longer get too tired because I spend less time in the kitchen, I also get time to visit my neighbours and friends. Before I got a fireless cooker, we used to spend UGX 2,000 (39p) daily to buy firewood but currently we spend UGX 1,500 or less. The money saved is used for other household needs. My husband and I are very grateful”.*

Creating community

One of the unexpected benefits of lockdown has been the increased ability to communicate with our partners around the world, and to make connections between them. In November we were delighted to hold our first ever virtual Global Gathering. Representatives from all our partner organisations came together with trustees, staff, advisors and potential future partners to share best practice and encouragement from around the world. The conference included 30 people from ten countries and six time zones.

The highlight of the conference was hearing from our project partners, who each gave a short presentation of their work, sharing practical experiences and knowledge.



New Colleagues



Alice Corrie joined Climate Stewards as a part time intern in September. She is a recent graduate from the University of Exeter with an MSc in Mechanical Engineering. Alice is also part of the Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) and a keen vegan cook.

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Becky Rhodes took over the management of our finance and admin from Claire Mitchell in October. She has an engineering degree and considerable experience in admin roles in business, charity and education sectors, and is active in her local church.



Climate Stewards USA



Brittany Michalski was recruited in October to build Climate Stewards (as a project of A Rocha) in the USA. She is trained as a conservation ecologist and previously worked for Care of Creation, assisting mission organisations in becoming more sustainable. Her first task has been to welcome Climate Caretakers members to the Climate Stewards network.

2021

We expect that 2021 will see a gradual return to a 'new normal', where people begin to travel again, but are increasingly aware of the environmental cost. We anticipate a rise in demand for offsetting as part of reaching Net Zero. This year we are planning:

Continual improvements to our Seal of Approval monitoring systems to ensure robust, transparent reporting of carbon savings and other benefits for our partner projects



Investment in a capacity fund and a new staff member based in Africa to support existing and potential future partners to deliver high quality carbon mitigation projects

To raise awareness of the climate crisis with and through our partners in the UK and overseas, and help build momentum towards meaningful decisions at COP26



A refreshed website, with seamless payment process and integration with our US and Dutch websites

To further develop our online tools to help more organisations measure and reduce their carbon footprint



Finally...

We end this report with a prayer from Adrine Musiime, manager of A Rocha Uganda. She prayed this with us in March 2020, and it remains true as we write in March 2021.

As the world is being shaken, we earnestly seek the mercy of God to stop the spread of the virus, restore and heal those that are already infected and that God will comfort the families that have lost their loved ones.

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in times of trouble”

Although there is anxiety, life has to continue and we give God the glory who has kept us safe!

2020 Financial Breakdown

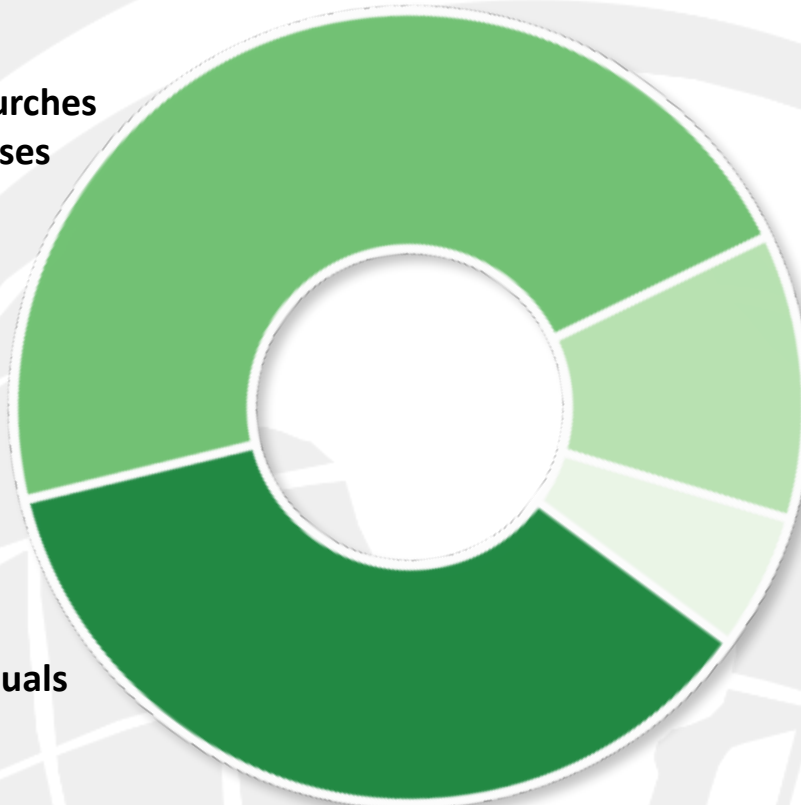
Income

**NGOs, churches
& businesses**
47%

Consultancy
12%

Gift Aid
6%

Individuals
36%



Expenditure

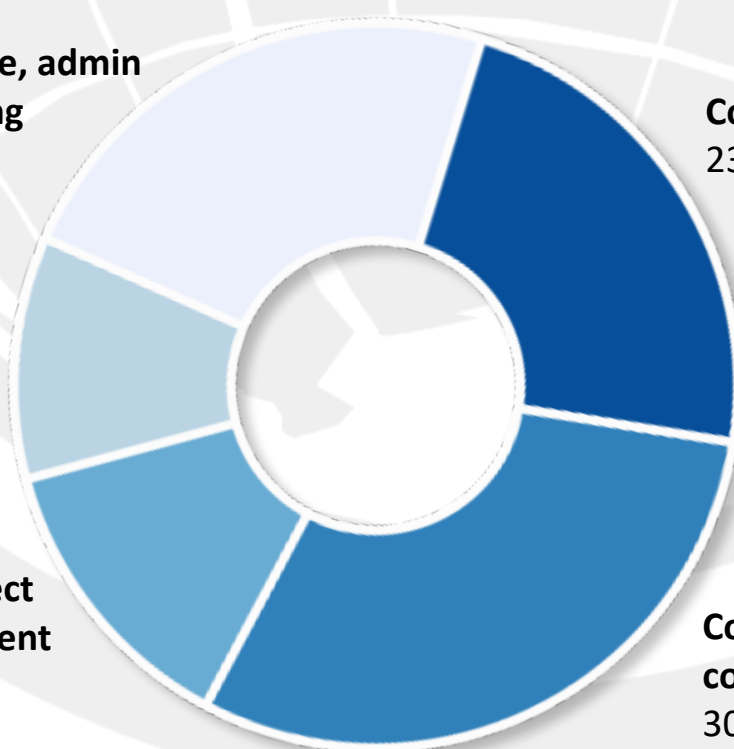
**Governance, admin
& marketing**
23%

Community forestry
23%

**Advocacy
& education**
11%

**New project
development**
13%

**Cookstoves, fireless
cookers & water filters**
30%



With thanks to our offsetters and partners, including...



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Part of the INTERNATIONAL **A ROCHA** network
Conservation and Hope

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