

Massive carbon credit sale announced in Madagascar

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Makira Forest: a 400,000 hectare landscape containing one percent of the world's biodiversity. Credit: WCS

The Government of Madagascar and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) announced today that 705,588 carbon credits are certified for sale from the Makira Forest REDD+ Project. WCS estimates that it will prevent the release of more than 32 million tons of CO₂ over the next thirty years.

The Makira REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation "plus" conservation) Project is the first sale of government-owned, government-led REDD+ credits in Africa.

Through carbon credit sales from avoided [deforestation](#), the Makira REDD+ Project will finance the long-term conservation of one of Madagascar's most pristine remaining rainforest ecosystems harboring rare and threatened [plants and animals](#) while improving community land stewardship and governance along with supporting the livelihoods of the local people.

"This sale is a major step forward for the Government of Madagascar in advancing the use of [carbon credits](#) to fight [climate change](#) while protecting biodiversity and human livelihoods," said WCS president and CEO Cristián Samper. "WCS congratulates Madagascar and is proud to partner with them on the Makira REDD+ project."

REDD+ is an international framework that assigns a financial value to the carbon stored in forests, offering compensation to developing countries for reducing emissions from deforestation and [forest degradation](#) while investing in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. REDD+ additionally includes the role of conservation, [sustainable management](#) of forests, and enhancement of [forest carbon stocks](#).

The project aims to safeguard the Makira Natural Park, Madagascar's newest and largest protected area, which contains an estimated one percent of the world's biodiversity including 20 [lemur](#) species, hundreds of [species of birds](#), and thousands of plant varieties, including many found nowhere else on earth. WCS, which has worked in Makira since 2001, is the delegated manager of the park and responsible for implementing the REDD+ project.

Along with its benefits to wildlife, the sale will directly benefit local communities living around the protected area by allocating 50 percent of the net revenues of carbon sales to improve local infrastructure, provide health and education services, and support training, inputs, and technical

assistance for sustainable agriculture.

The Makira forest spans nearly 400,000 hectares (more than 1,500 square miles), making it one of the largest remaining intact blocks of rainforest in Madagascar. In addition, Makira's forests serve as a zone of watershed protection, providing clean water to over 250,000 people in the surrounding landscape.

According to the Secretaire General of the Ministry of Environment and Forests of the Republic of Madagascar, Pierre Manganirina Randrianarisoa, "Green growth is the fruit of a green economy within the context of sustainable development realized through the implementation of an appropriate management of natural resources and the valuing of biodiversity. Thus, the sale of carbon stored in the protected forests of Makira Natural Park provides a significant financial opportunity for Madagascar."

"The sale of these carbon credits has triple bottom-line benefits; it helps wildlife, local people, and fights climate change" said Todd Stevens, Vice President of the Makira Carbon Company, a non-profit subsidiary of WCS. "WCS is a proud partner with the government of Madagascar on the Makira Project, and looks forward to the world community participating in this exciting sale."

The Makira REDD+ Project is validated and verified by the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), and has received a 'Gold' level validation by the Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Alliance.

Avoided deforestation has been identified as a key mechanism for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Scientists estimate that up to 17 percent of annual carbon emissions – more that the entire U.S. generates each year – are caused by destruction of forests, especially in tropical areas. In Madagascar, burning for agricultural land is leading to 100,000

hectares (386 square miles) of forest being lost each year.

More information: www.wcs.org/conservation-challenge-carbon-credit-sale

Provided by Wildlife Conservation Society

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