

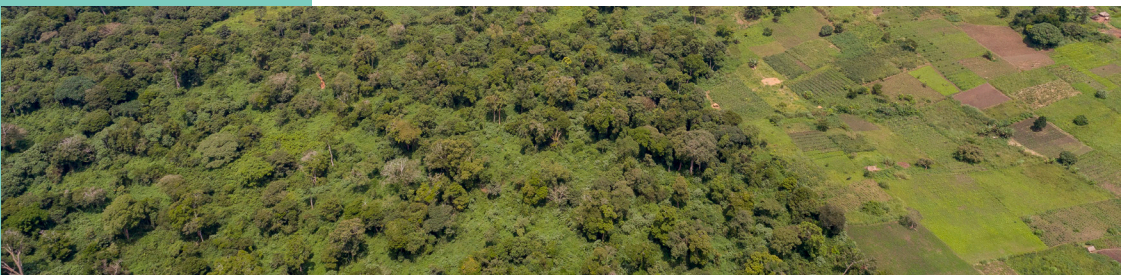


**WORLD
LAND
TRUST**

ECOTRUST
The Environmental Governance Trust of Uganda



TREES FOR GLOBAL BENEFITS



Country

Uganda

Partner/ Organisation

The Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda (ECOTRUST)

Biome

Tropical & Subtropical Moist Broadleaf Forests

Ecoregion

Albertine Rift montane forests

Habitats

Set within the northern mountain ranges of the Albertine Rift are the tropical montane rainforest systems of west Uganda. Fed by streams and rivers that flow down into the Great Lakes of central Africa, the medium and high-altitude forests have a cool climate home to a rich variety of Afrotropical flora and fauna. This project area encompasses several reserves including the Bugoma–Wambabya corridor, supported by WLT since 2021, where riverine forest forms the backbone of the Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) corridors set against a backdrop of agricultural fields.

Project summary

Uganda's Albertine Rift area's unique geology creates a stunning landscape of rivers, crater lakes, wide valleys, and montane forests. It is a hotspot for endemism and its importance and recognition as a refuge for primates in particular has led to the creation of many protected areas and reserves across the Rift's forests. However, outside of these areas, deforestation of native trees for agriculture and timber has encroached into the reserves themselves, as well as fragmenting the wider landscape and threatening the ecological connectivity vital for countless species.

ECOTRUST's Trees for Global Benefits programme (TGB) is a long-term, carbon sequestration project working with rural farmers in three areas of Uganda. Trees for Global Benefits supports farmers to move to alternative farming practices and plant native trees to support agroforestry activities, improve livelihoods, and bolster resilience and adaptability to climate change. Essential maintenance of the trees also provides ample timber, fruits, and firewood to lighten the pressure of deforestation on the nearby protected forests. The cover provided by the trees also connects habitats for wildlife to move throughout the area, all while absorbing carbon. The amount of carbon captured by these trees is calculated, verified by Plan Vivo under the PV Climate Standard, and sold as carbon credits on the voluntary carbon market, providing another reliable source of income for the farmers involved. The success of the project so far speaks for itself; having begun with 33 farmers, ECOTRUST now partners with more than 50,000, with over two million trees planted to date.

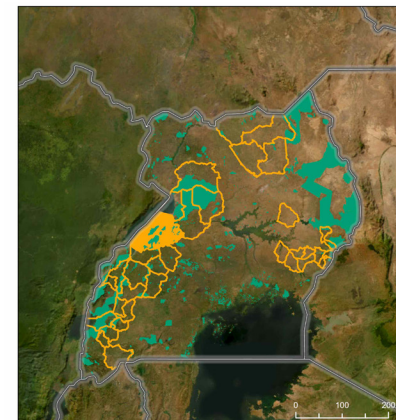
TGB supports improved, sustainable livelihoods for the farmers of the region through a range of alternative sources of income. These include coffee, honey, and herb sales, as well as direct carbon payments for the successful growth of native trees. TGB offers financial advice and support to farmers to help their businesses grow, including a Community Carbon Fund for community development projects and alternative income-generating activities to both support the people of the area and protect the natural landscape.

Main threats to the area

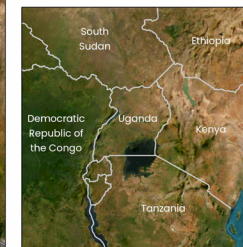
The forests and woodlands of the area are at risk of being converted into agricultural land and suffer from the unsustainable harvesting of wood for timber, firewood, and charcoal.

Global prioritisation

The three regions in which TGB works contain multiple protected areas including national parks, wildlife reserves, forest reserves, Ramsar sites, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and a UNESCO World Heritage site. One of the three regions, the Albertine Rift, is a biodiversity hotspot, Endemic Bird Area, and a priority Eco-Region.



- Hoima and Kikuube districts containing Budongo-Bugoma landscape
- Other 35 districts within which ECOTRUST's Trees for Global Benefits programme operates
- Designated protected areas in Uganda
- International borders



Biodiversity

The Albertine Rift is an area of exceptional endemism, and contains many species threatened with global extinction, particularly within the mountain forest habitats. Within the project area, the native forests that make up the wider Bugoma–Budongo corridor are home to a staggering 52% of Africa's bird species, 19% of its amphibians, 14% of its reptiles, and 14% of its plants. But what makes these forests so singularly important is the home they provide to primates. Here, the last remaining 5,000 Chimpanzees of Uganda's wild population live alongside Blue, Red-tailed, Vervet, and Black and White Colobus Monkeys, as well as Olive Baboons. The surrounding landscape is a roaming ground for iconic large mammals including African Elephant, Giraffe and Lion.

Key species¹

Eastern Chimpanzee, (*Pan troglodytes*, EN), Grey-cheeked Mangabey (*Lophocebus albigena*, VU), African Savannah Elephant, (*Loxodonta Africana*, EN), Black-and-white Colobus (*Colobus guereza*, LC), Black & White Casqued Hornbill (*Bycanistes subcylindricus*, LC), Nahan's Partridge (*Ptilopachus nahani*, VU), Grey Parrot (*Psittacus Erithacus*, EN), Yellow-footed Flycatcher (*Muscicapa sethsmithi*, LC internationally but "biome-restricted" in Uganda), and Puvell's illadopsis (*Illadopsis puvelli*, LC).

¹The Red List of Threatened Species, maintained by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), includes categories of Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT), Least Concern (LC) and Data Deficient (DD).





Local communities

The communities of the Albertine Rift are a myriad of small family-run farms typically less than a hectare (2.5 acres) in size, with only a few larger plots of no more than 2.5 hectares (6.2 acres), growing a range of crops from maize, beans, and sweet potatoes to bananas, citrus fruits, and pineapples for markets and to feed their families. The landscape is also used to grow sugarcane as farmland is often rented to outside companies, and natural forest replaced with fast-growing exotics such as eucalyptus for both local use and sale.

Farmers partnered with TGB have developed a diverse range of businesses and services within their local

communities to secure their own income and supply goods and services to local people. TGB also strengthens land rights by supporting local community groups to acquire formal titles of communal forest ownership, or panels in their villages.

Main methods for land protection

The planting of native trees on small-scale farms contributes to overall landscape connectivity and protects standing forests by providing alternative sources of firewood and timber, thus reducing the deforestation of protected habitats.

Partner/Organisation

Established in 1999, ECOTRUST is a non-governmental conservation

organisation that strives to combine the conservation of natural resources with the improvement of local livelihoods. Their work brings together different communities and stakeholders to build partnerships between local, national, international, private and public institutions, all with the shared goal of conserving natural resources and biodiversity. As well as carrying out direct conservation activities, ECOTRUST provides financial services and development schemes that might be otherwise inaccessible to local people.

UN Sustainable Development Goals directly advanced by this project:



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