

Copperbelt Zambia

Mid-Year Update 2023





2023 is an exciting year for our Copperbelt project: it is evolving into a larger landscape-scale approach, with a new community forest restoration component carried out in partnership with BirdWatch Zambia. In the first six months of the year, the boundaries of the new Imanda Community Conservation Area have been mapped, and a preliminary baseline inventory conducted.

122 men and 52 women farmers from all three Farmers' Associations have received training in land use, agroforestry, Assisted Natural Regeneration and beekeeping to join our beekeeping livelihood scheme and miombo conservation programme with their very own Forests on Farms. This means we've already nearly met our annual target to enrol 200 farmers this year.

Read on to learn more about what's been happening in the Copperbelt project!

In response to climate change and the high levels of deforestation in the country, the National Assembly of Zambia has been rolling out a tree planting programme in all the constituencies in the country. In April, it was the turn of one of Copperbelt project's three districts: Mpongwe. The Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly, Nelly Mutti (below), planted a total of 100 assorted tree seedlings during the launch, and 78 pine trees were planted at Bilima Primary School in the Imanda Community Forest Area Catchment area.



The Copperbelt project team, four community forest rangers and the chair of Imanda Community Forest Management Group carried out a bird identification exercise in Imanda Community Forest Area in celebration of this year's '<u>Global Big Day</u>', an annual celebration held on 15th May to raise awareness of the important role that birds play in the environment, and the urgent need to conserve bird species and their habitats. Data

from this day and future surveys will be used as an indicator for the health and proper functioning of the ecosystem as our restoration progresses. Among the 28 species they spotted was the blackheaded oriole (above), more often heard than seen.

The Schools Outreach programme in Mpongwe saw the students of Nachitalo Community School plant 100 pine seedlings provided to them from the nursery at our sister project in Katanino in February (left). A preliminary baseline inventory in Imanda was conducted jointly with the Forestry Department and Community Forest Management Group representatives, and the results are being processed to provide early estimates on carbon biomass. Data from four permanent monitoring plots, all of them in dense mushitu patches, show that 15 species of trees are growing in these areas. More sample plots that cover the other types of vegetation in Imanda – grassland with some tree cover, and dambo (shallow wetland) – will be surveyed immediately after the rainy season to make sure all the vegetation present is captured.



At the time of writing, 489 farmers in Mpongwe, Luanshya, and Ndola have harvested 33,468.93 kg of honey from 1665 beehives. With some farmers still harvesting, we are likely to reach our target of 35,000 kg this season! With the honey selling at ZMW20 (US \$1) per kilo, this will mean a net average income of US \$45 per family – \$5 more than last year.



Community forest rangers patrol the Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) plots to provide regular advice to participating farmers and monitor their forest regeneration status. Between January and June, they visited 601 miombo conservation plots, covering 4226 km! This photo (above) was taken in Malembeka village, where this particular farmer, Bernadet M., was found to be following all ANR practices, including fire and apiary management, perfectly. She's shown here standing by a ring-weeded tree where one of her 10 beehives is installed. Two news stories about the Copperbelt project have been featured on Mpongwe Radio since January, and the team is planning to collaborate with this supportive radio station to start a new weekly programme, 'Green Talk'. Through this regular community service programme, listeners will learn more about the causes and consequences of climate change and other environmental-related problems in a local context, with the chance to call in and talk about issues directly affecting them. The goal is for listeners to better understand climate change mitigation and adaptation, including best practices that they can adopt such as the Copperbelt project's on-farm sustainable agriculture and forest management practices. Mpongwe Radio station, one of the most listened to stations in other districts. including Luanshya, and also reaches as far as our Copperbelt's sister project in Katanino.



How do we know our restored forests are growing and making an impact?

Every hectare under restoration is mapped with GPS points to generate polygons (areas on a map) that are assigned to sponsors. Permanent monitoring plots are established in our sites and our forestry and science teams conduct surveys to monitor progress of biomass growth, tree density, survival rate and species diversity, among other indicators. Where social impacts are also critical, we measure socio-economic indicators such as the number of individuals or families directly benefiting, people trained, and income generated from forest-friendly livelihood activities.

Please visit our What We Do webpage for more information.



You'll receive an annual update in March. Meanwhile, stay up-to-date with our interactive **Copperbelt map**, and check out the **photos** on Flickr.

Here you'll find all information about how to communicate about this project and your partnership with WeForest.