

Press Release**The Kampala Aeroclub and Flight Training Centre goes carbon neutral**

The Kampala Aeroclub and Flight Training Centre (KAFTC) is now the first aviation company in Africa to go carbon neutral.

The Kajjansi airfield based aviation company gained full carbon neutral status as part of its commitment to reduce and offset the greenhouse gas emissions that it emits into the atmosphere from its aviation operations. This covers all the energy use of the company – from its aircraft, vehicles and other ground operations.

With the effects of climate change now being experienced both locally and globally, more and more individuals and organisation worldwide are taking responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions from their day-to-day operations.

Rising levels of these greenhouse gases are largely responsible for warming of the planet, contributing to climate change. Increasing frequency of drought episodes, intensive rainfall, floods, landslides and change in planting seasons are among other obvious signs of climate change in Uganda.

By taking this important step, KAFTC sets itself apart from other companies in the aviation sector. Further KAFTC joins a growing list of organisation across East Africa who have gained carbon neutral status through the Uganda Carbon Bureau's Going Neutral service.

These include:

- Classic Africa Safaris -** the first company in Uganda to become carbon neutral.
- Nkuringo Gorilla Camp -** leading the way in the tourism sector.
- The International Lifeline Fund -** a Lira-based supplier of high quality, locally made improved cook stoves.
- The Sawlog Production Grant Scheme -** Africa's most successful promoter of tree growing, supported by the Government of Uganda, the EU and the Norwegian Government.
- G&C Tours/Wild Frontiers Uganda -** one of Uganda's most successful safari companies.
- KALIP & ALREP -** The Karamoja Livelihoods Programme & the North Uganda Agricultural Livelihoods Recovery Programme (ALREP), the major development programmes in Karamoja and northern Uganda being supported by the Government of Uganda and the EU.

Today (**18th July 2012**), they receive certificates and plaques issued by the Plan Vivo Foundation in the United Kingdom – an internationally renowned charity based in Scotland, which registers and reviews projects against the Plan Vivo voluntary carbon standard. Other companies and organisations that have already gained carbon neutral status and have received their certificates and plaques from the Plan Vivo Foundation are: **The Royal Danish Embassy in Uganda**, the first carbon neutral diplomatic mission and **Soft Power Education**, the internationally recognised education NGO in Jinja.

The Irish Embassy, Uganda Vanilla (Uvan) Ltd, WWF Uganda, Mihingo Lodge and GIZ are also at different stages in the Bureau's Going Neutral programme.

How they became carbon neutral

These companies and organisations were first given a free assessment of their 'carbon footprint' by Uganda Carbon Bureau. This free assessment is offered to all interested groups that contact the Bureau, and provides a quick estimate of annual emissions and the likely annual cost of being carbon neutral.

To join the programme, groups sign a simple 'Going Neutral Agreement' with the Bureau, and then provide basic information about their different energy uses over the past 12 month period. After auditing these figures, the Bureau uses the best practice international standards (i.e. the Greenhouse Gas Protocol) to calculate an organisation's carbon footprint.

The Bureau provides advice on how to reduce energy use and emissions, and information about sources of Ugandan carbon credits to offset their remaining carbon footprint. In each case they purchased an equivalent number of Plan Vivo carbon credits from the acclaimed **Trees for Global Benefits** project in Bushenyi, managed by ECOTRUST. This smallholder tree-growing scheme was initiated with support from the British Government's Department for International Development and complies with the respected Plan Vivo voluntary carbon credit standard, which is independently audited by the Rainforest Alliance.

What 'Going Carbon Neutral' means

By going carbon neutral and buying carbon credits from the Bushenyi tree growers, these carbon neutral organisations and companies are:

- Saving energy costs by undertaking energy saving measures in their day-to-day activities.
- Rewarding farmers for their effort in planting and growing trees that absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, mitigating climate change.
- Encouraging the farmers to grow more trees and contributing to the protection of the watershed, reducing soil erosion and biodiversity loss.
- Increasing the tree growers' incomes diversifying livelihoods and combating rural poverty.

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For more information on Going Neutral, please contact the Uganda Carbon Bureau on 0414 200 988 or +256 782 329038 or email: salomealweny@ugandacarbon.org