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KVTC SINCE 1992

From Irvine's desk

KVTC had a busy and successful 2022. 2023 has also started very well and we are confident the momentum will be maintained. This edition of our newsletter covers some of the projects that have kept us busy. Enjoy and let us have any feedback you might have.

High Conservation Areas Study At KVTC.

By Joseph John

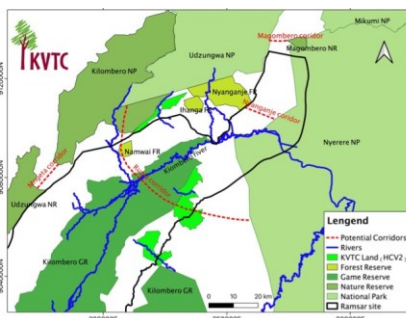
KVTC manages 28,132ha of land. About 28% of this is planted under teak and 70% is set aside for conservation purposes. KVTC's conservation land (about 20,000ha) plays an important role in the area and can act as a wildlife corridor between Udzungwa Mountains and Nyerere National Park. It also provides refuge to a lot of animals and is also of high bio-diversity value.

In September 2022 KVTC advertised for submission of proposals to carry out an assessment of high conservation value areas within its landholding. The study fulfils a compliance requirement against FSC standards.

The objective of the study was to (i) Identify areas of high conservation value based mainly on the HCVRN toolkit. (ii) Give guidance on how to manage the areas to either maintain or enhance their HCVA status. (iii) Give guidance on the methods and intervals of monitoring the status of the identified HCVA's.

In January 2023, identification of HCVA's was carried out by a team of experts from Environmental Forest Certification Limited (EFC). The study involved participatory mapping and field assessment of the High Conservation Value areas and geo referencing them through GIS system. The identification engaged a whole range of stakeholders from local communities to high level experts and intensive review of Best Available Information.

According to the study it was confirmed that, KVTC land has all the High Conservation Values (HCVs) based on categorization framework developed by the High Conservation Value Resource Network (HCVRN). The six distinct categories represent high levels of niche to be conserved, with all the inputs and efforts from the KVTC management and relevant stakeholders to save the last remaining high conservation values within KVTC land.



The study advised on strategies and monitoring programs to protect the six HCVs which will enhance the rare, threatened, and endangered species of flora and fauna, as well as provide refugia from unprotected land.

The full report of HCVA's study can be accessed on KVTC's website <https://www.kvtc.co.tz>.

KVTC Best Worker Awards

By James Njaala

KVTC recognizes its employees' performance and the effort they are putting towards achieving the company's annual strategic goals. The recognition goes far beyond a normal practice where KVTC does the exercise on valuing the performance inputs from each section of its core operations. Every year we have the 8 best workers, and each best worker is provided with a magnificent award. The best workers in each section in 2022 were **Shafii Tundua** - Operator, **Sadick Lidwaku** – Tallyman Clerk, **Msigwa R. Msigwa** – Nursery Team Leader, **Frank Mhomanga** – Drymill Attendant, **Stella William Kweka** – Accounts Assistant, **Sudi Mpandule** – Tradesman, **Japhet Nyamaru** – Logger Operator and **Mwajuma Kaswaga** – Timber sorting attendant.

Overall Best worker for the year 2022

A KVTC team of senior management pick the overall best worker of the year from the 8 listed above. The year 2022 overall best worker was **Stella William Kweka** – Assistant Accountant from the Finance department. Stella is a KVTC employee for over 6 years now. She is an absolute shining star. Her work ethic is unquestionable, no job is too big or too small. She has the best customer service of everyone, she is polite and respectful, making sure she has done her utmost to help the customer with any enquiry they have. She

will go out of her way to show them anything they ask and never make them feel rushed or a burden. When it comes to accounts and services, I can confidently say I have never worked with anyone who is so polite and well-mannered to our customers as Stella is. She is exceptional and deserves congratulations from everyone at KVTC.



Stella Kweka

KVTC- Nursery Upgrade Project.

By Jeremiah M. Gumadi

It has been 10 years since KVTC began a more focused quest for increased financial returns from forestry operations. Literature has it that high yielding germplasm with optimal silvicultural operations are critical to achieving significant increased returns with finite land resources.

KVTC has invested in one of the most extensive Teak tree improvement programs in Africa since 2013/14 after acquiring valuable lessons from year 2003/04 early genetic trials with a collection of Malaysian clones and existing local seedlots. The program was named **PROJECT PLUS 20** with the objective of boosting KVTC's financial returns by 20%.



Mother plants

PROJECT PLUS 20 involves clone and family genetic tests in seven trials with teak sourced

either as clones or seedlots from existing local sources within the KVTC (selected plus trees), Malaysia, Australia, Thailand, Brazil, Costa Rica and India. The trials are properly maintained with scheduled annual measurements for growth and scoring of other important characteristics for breeding like flowering, straightness, branch thickness and buttressing. Other important characteristics for breeding with a more focused market perspective like wood properties, heartwood colour and utilizable height are now also being introduced as the trials are at about half rotation age.

The realization of the **PROJECT PLUS 20** dream involves two key components:

- i. Careful scientific analysis of data from the genetic trials followed by ranking and finally selection of the best trees from the trials using pre-defined ranking criteria.
- ii. Capturing and mass production (via cloning) of the best selected trees for further field testing alongside gradual commercial deployment

KVTC with the support of an international tree breeder Dr. Andrew Callister from USA has achieved the first component and has recently sought support from another international tree breeder Prof. Olman Murillo from Costa Rica to commence the achievement of the second component.

The achievement of the second component is 100% linked to the nursery. It basically encompasses a transition from the current practice of producing and using around **600,000** improved seedlings or stumps to an international practice of producing and using carefully selected improved clones. This transition calls for major infrastructure upgrades at the nursery.

The major infrastructure upgrades to be implemented in phases in the next two (2) years include:

- i. Four new greenhouses with all the necessary utilities for keeping clonal mother plants and for rooting clonal cuttings.
- ii. Hardening-off and holding areas with all the necessary utilities for keeping clones as they prepare and wait for field planting.
- iii. Water harvesting and storage infrastructure.

- iv. Other important upgrades for nursery workers' better working environment.

The upgrades have begun and are on track. KVTC expects in three years to gradually phase out the production of seedlings or stumps and replace it with improved clones when the nursery infrastructure is upgraded to the capacity of producing over **600,000** improved clones per annum.



New Greenhouse

The physical infrastructure upgrades were preceded by technical capacity building. Last year the Chief Forestry Manager and Research Manager got an opportunity to travel to Costa Rica to look at different options for teak clonal nurseries, proper set up and management complimented by site visits to KVTC by the tree breeding consultants. Early this year the Assistant Nursery Manager got an opportunity for a two-week hands-on exposure and training in clonal nursery day to day management techniques in Costa Rica.

Tree improvement is a non-stop endeavour for a commercial forestry company committed to sustainably delivering high value Teak in the most productive manner like KVTC.

KVTC Harvesting -From Stump to Log Sales

By Geoffrey Isaac Kessy

KVTC harvests its forests in a sustainable way so that its biological footprint is not depleted for eternity. KVTC is currently harvesting between 35,000 to 40,000 cubic meters of logs a year and this will increase above 50,000 cubic meters in the coming years. This volume is harvested from all its four blocks located in Malinyi, Ulanga and Mlimba districts of the Morogoro region.

KVTC uses contractors for about 70% of its harvesting operations. Felling and

merchandising of trees is done using chainsaws. Seven different contractors are employed by the company to perform this operation. After felling, trees are merchandised in different log lengths from 2.5m, 2.3m to a minimum of 1.5m. 80% of the logs are extracted to roadside by KVTC’s own machinery, John Deere skidders, and about 20% is done manually by contractors when logs are smaller and can be carried by people.

One transport contractor, Master One with 8 trucks, is employed by KVTC to haul harvested logs from the forest to the mill. Each truck has a capacity of about 13 cubic meters of logs. Trucks are loaded using KVTC’s own Bell loggers at the compartment roadside. Logs are tallied during loading and are then ferried to the sawmill log yard at KVTC’s Mavimba industrial site.



Bell Logger loading haulage truck

All harvesting and log haulage is managed by the Harvesting Manager, Amidu Yahya who reports to the Chief Forestry Manager, Geoffrey Kessy.

Log deck and Log sales:

KVTC’s log yard has a team of 8 clerks and 3 Bell logger operators who are managed by the Log Yard Manager, Maria Mrema. The Bell loggers are used for unloading, sorting, and moving logs from tallying area to customers bays and feeding the company’s mill. On arrival at the sawmill the logs get offloaded and spread. The tally clerks grade each piece, measure, and record its length and diameter and the logs are then sorted into different classes depending on their diameters and grade and kept in separate piles.

Of the total harvested volume, KVTC currently sells about 60% of the volume to outside sawmills and about 40% is processed through its own mill. There are 6 sawmills that buy logs from KVTC. The log sales to external sawmills are conducted through an auction on a quarterly basis. All the 6 sawmills are given a chance to bid for the kvtc@kvtc-tz.com / <http://kvtc.co.tz/>

volume they require per log class. The highest bidders per log class are awarded the volume available (highest bidder first). This process is managed by a committee that comprises of KVTC CEO, the Chief Forest Manager and the Finance Manager. This new method of selling logs has proved very successful so far.

Photo Gallery



Tony Finch and Geoffrey Kessy dwarfed by an 18year old teak tree at KVTC.



Bandsaw sharpening



Nursery-pot filling



Wet mill



Workers of the Year-2022



Drymill



2022 Art contest participant-Iragua Sec School