

ETHIOPIA

SERET EXCLOSURE

AUGUST 2019



WeForest

Making Earth Cooler



Using exclosures (no-go zones) in Tigray started as a response to severe land degradation and frequent drought and it protects lands from agricultural practices and grazing. The main objective of this management approach is restoring and improving ecosystem services and functions while benefiting the local community. The Exclosure in Seret-Walta, the village where WeForest works, is an example of such an area where both human and livestock interventions have been forbidden so that the restoration of natural resources, such as the forest cover, and soil erosion reduction can be achieved.

Despite a significant effort, several hectares of exclosures in the hilly and mountainous landscapes of the Seret-Walta exclosure haven't yet shown the targeted success: most exclosures are still degraded. To fight this, WeForest, the local community, and local and international partners work on a systematic and well-thought-through intervention to bring back the original native tree species while delivering important social and economic needs of the local community. It does so using Forest Landscape Restoration approaches like framework native trees planting and Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) practices. The project also has a socio-economic improvement program to improve local community income through forest-friendly practices and training.



SCIENCE-BASED MEASUREMENTS AND VERIFICATION

Forestry survey: August 2018

Socio-economic survey: August 2018



Photo: WeForest

Project status

The Exclosure was restored in 2018 and our work is now to maintain and protect what was achieved last year.

Our activities are therefore very targeted and aim to increase community leadership and resolve specific challenges

Limited National Regeneration

To assist the vegetation succession and improve the vegetation cover of those areas that suffered intense grazing before the project implementation, WeForest is introducing a direct seeds-sowing program in addition to planting. Over the past 6 months, a total of 7 kg of native *Acacia abyssinica* and *R. natalensis* seeds were collected from the Exclosure and surroundings. These seeds were then sown on an area of 20 hectares, in June, right before the rainy season.

Planting bee fodder seedlings

This affected the honey yield the first year of its implementation and therefore, this year, we have identified two bee fodder species as dominant local bee forage scrubs in the area. Now, 1,000 seedlings have already been prepared for planting in the Seret-Walta Exclosure.

Expansion of the bee colonies

20 bee colonies accompanied by modern beehives were provided to user groups in Seret and Walta (10 to each cooperative)



Photo: WeForest

Entrepreneurship training to improve commitment

Over the past months, we have noticed an unequal commitment between cooperative members, affecting the overall performance of the group. To address this problem, WeForest organized an entrepreneurship training with 40 participants, which included workload sharing between members as well as ethics. The participating members of the cooperative and the model farmers from nearby communities ended the training with proper insights into their business plan, goals and outcomes. Going forward, additional trainings on leadership and continuous follow-up to ensure proper implementation of bylaws will be organized.



Photo: WeForest

Get everyone engaged

To increase the awareness of all community members on the benefits of the Exclosure practices, the project has developed a plan to work continuously on awareness creation activities to the local community (through participating in different social and government events).

ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST 6 MONTHS

- February 2019: Payment for Ecosystem Services Contract between WeForest and the participating communities of Seret and Walta in the Dogua Tembien district
- March 2019: Consultation meeting with user groups on their performance so far.
- March 2019: Bi-annual data collection on survival count of seedlings planted in the 2017 and 2018 planting season
- April 2019: Seed collection from some native species from within the Seret-Walta exclosure
- May 2019: Visit by BOS+ project coordinator on the performance of the project activities so far.
- June 2019: Training on developing entrepreneurial skill development to user groups (cooperative members) and other farmer entrepreneurs from the surrounding community. Positive feedback on the content of the training and the process, included requests for WeForest to organize similar trainings.
- June 2019: Direct seed sowing of three native tree species: *Acacia abyssinica*, *Acacia etbaica*, *R. natalensis* in 20 ha of Exclosure
- Jun 2019: Pit preparation for important bee fodder planting
- Jun 2019: Additional material support to user groups or cooperatives (10 modern hives with a colony for each user group)



Photo: WeForest

WeForest is an international non-profit that specializes in mobilizing companies to restore the World's forests and embark their stakeholders into a long-term journey towards environmental sustainability.

In order to achieve the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement, we need to start decreasing our global emissions by 2020 and achieve carbon neutrality by the second half of this century. While reducing carbon emissions is critical, research suggests that even if carbon dioxide emissions came to a sudden halt, the carbon dioxide already in the Earth's atmosphere could continue to warm our planet for hundreds of years. The challenge is to reduce future carbon emissions and actively remove the excess carbon from our atmosphere.

Forests are known as the best technology for that: they are an amazing carbon sink.

contact@weforest.org

THANK YOU

