WeForest
Making Earth Cooler

Copperbelt
Forests on Farms

Mid-year report 2021

Engaging smallholder farmers in reversing deforestation

Copperbelt: Forests on Farms is the new name for our six-year-old Luanshya project, which is now expanding into two new districts. Having met our goal to restore 3000 ha in Luanshya, one of the 10 districts that make up Zambia's Copperbelt Province, the project is expanding into Mpongwe and Ndola too, with the potential to eventually restore up to 7000 ha – that's 8.3 million trees!

Management of the Luanshya programme will gradually be handed over to the Luanshya Forest Commodities Association (LFCA), which has already taken over the livelihoods schemes and will continue to restore and protect the woodland and harvest sustainably, so that the work here can continue long into the future. WeForest's focus is now in the two new districts, bringing plots of miombo forest under sustainable management, training farmers and strengthening new farmers' associations, and identifying suitable alternative livelihood schemes that will reduce future pressure on the forests.

Our goals for the Copperbelt project:

In 2021 we plan to bring
100 ha
under restoration through Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR)

67 farmers trained; over one-third signed agreements to date

500 beehives distributed since January 2021

By 2030:

Protect and restore
6941 ha
8 329 000 trees

By the end of 2020, we were 45% of the way there, with
3155 ha
under restoration

What's new in Copperbelt?

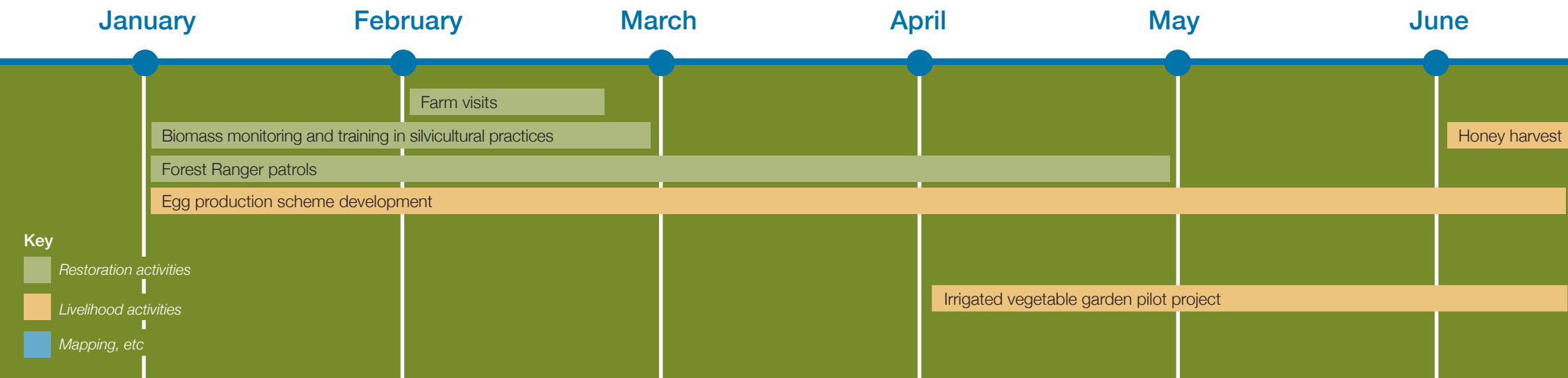
Recent highlights from the field

Assisted natural regeneration (ANR) is protecting and nurturing these degraded forests back to life through effective pruning, avoiding overgrazing, preventive fire management and protection of wild seedlings that are emerging. So far in 2021, 67 farmers have been trained in ANR, all in the new district of Mpongwe.

A new initiative started this year with the very proactive District Farmers Association in Mpongwe East to strengthen community forest ownership and biodiversity conservation in Imanda Forest, one of the largest examples of moist evergreen forest not only in this area but in the country as a whole. As well as ensuring that Imanda is well protected by the community themselves, this initiative will also contribute to alternative incomes with 50 beehives hanging in the forest. The project team met with Imanda headmen in March to promote the project, and the development and planning is ongoing.

The home-based nurseries of the Copperbelt project are supporting their new sister project in nearby Katanino. By January, around 11 000

Participating farmers are expected to commit a minimum of 0.5 ha of farm woodland to ANR, but current statistics show that, on average, farmers have committed about 1.5 ha of farm woodland to the programme. This means that once all the areas are mapped for the new 67 farmers, we expect to have another 100 ha under ANR!



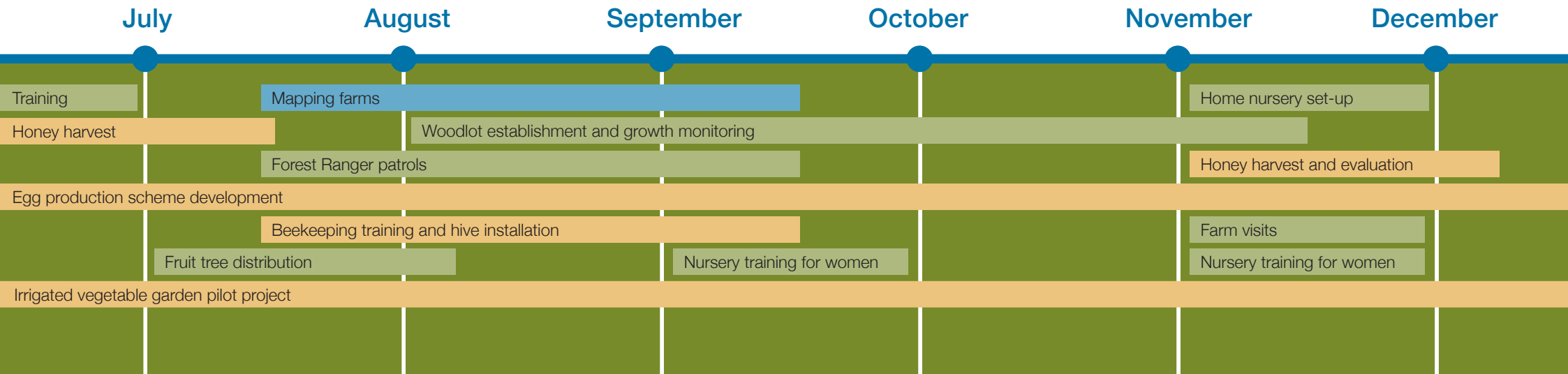
Out of the 14 farmers in the vegetable garden programme, Mrs Tembo performed the best; with the 850 cabbage seedlings she received, she earned the equivalent of a month's salary. Mrs Tembo hopes to eventually purchase the treadle pump for irrigation that helped her grow her produce.

seedlings had been sent to Katanino, although heavy rain meant there could only be one seedling transfer (of 3600) until activity could resume again in April, when the rains stopped. This unusual amount of rain has been a real challenge this year, meaning also that seed collection from the miombo woodlands couldn't begin until April.

The rain was more of a benefit than a challenge for some. The farmers who last year received their first seedlings in the vegetable garden pilot project have grown and sold their cabbages, so they're delighted!

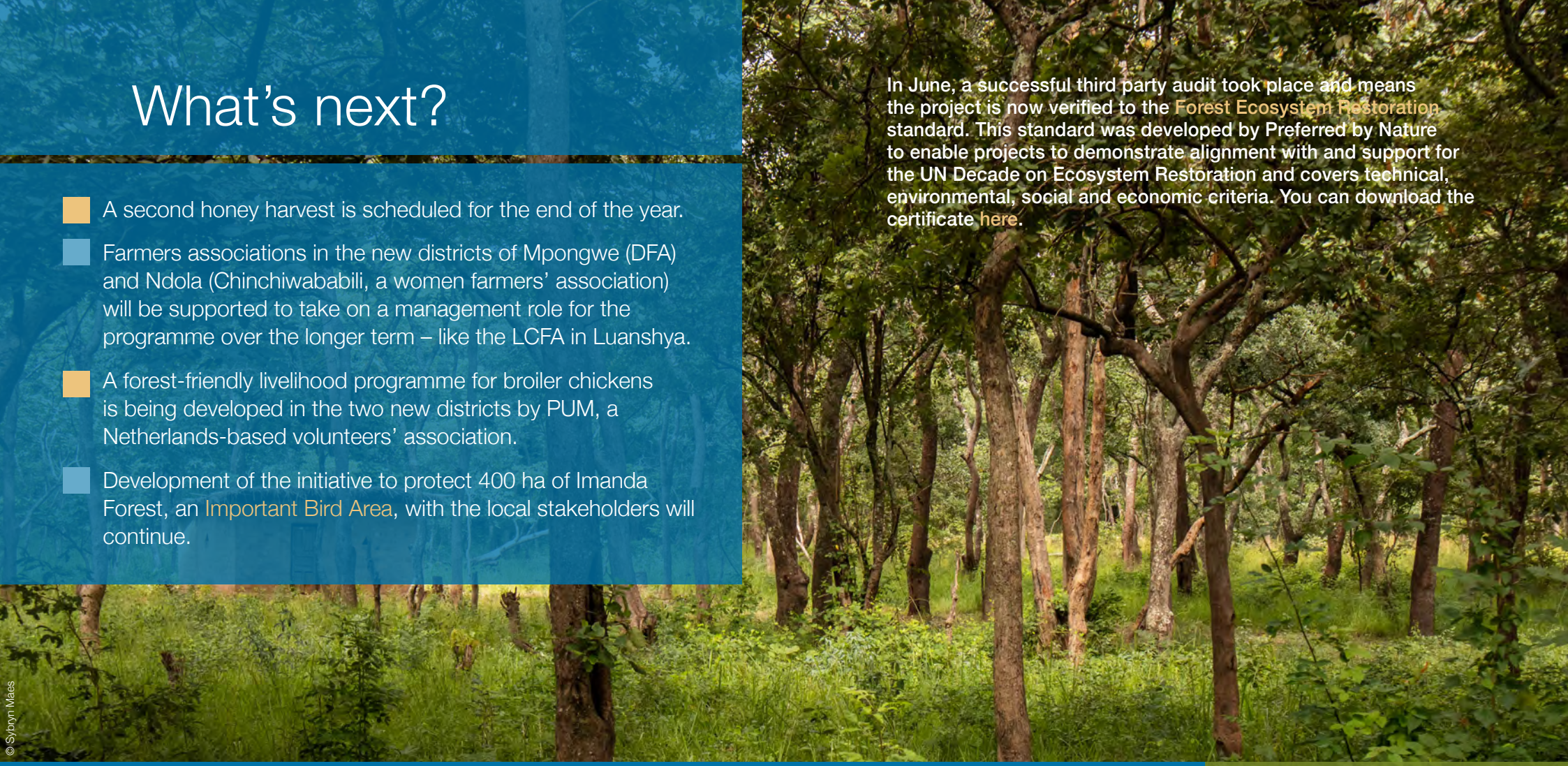
The honey harvest was underway at the time of writing. 5.3 tons of honey had been harvested from 70 farmers in Mpongwe, 1265 kg in Ndola from 64 farmers, and 12 tons harvested from 319 farmers in Luanshya. And we thought the first harvest in 2020 was a record-breaker! In addition, 130 beehives will be distributed to the new farmers in Mpongwe who are eligible for beekeeping after the honey harvesting and farmer retraining in August.

Three new community forest rangers have been recruited, one in Ndola and two in Mpongwe. Their main aims are to monitor the status of the regenerating forests on the participating farms, and to make sure the project's Rules of Engagement are being followed. There are now 7 rangers, 6 men and 1 woman.



What's next?

- A second honey harvest is scheduled for the end of the year.
- Farmers associations in the new districts of Mpongwe (DFA) and Ndola (Chinchiwababili, a women farmers' association) will be supported to take on a management role for the programme over the longer term – like the LCFA in Luanshya.
- A forest-friendly livelihood programme for broiler chickens is being developed in the two new districts by PUM, a Netherlands-based volunteers' association.
- Development of the initiative to protect 400 ha of Imanda Forest, an Important Bird Area, with the local stakeholders will continue.



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In June, a successful third party audit took place and means the project is now verified to the Forest Ecosystem Restoration standard. This standard was developed by Preferred by Nature to enable projects to demonstrate alignment with and support for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and covers technical, environmental, social and economic criteria. You can download the certificate here.

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 beneficiaries, people trained, and income generated from forest-friendly livelihood activities.

Please visit our **Why and How** webpage for more information.

Stay up-to-date with the new-look interactive **Copperbelt map**, and check out our great new photos from the project on **Flickr**!

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