

# ABCP NEWSLETTER

Red Rock, Texas

African Blackwood Conservation Project

Annual Report No. 13—Winter 2010



Sebastian Chuwa (2nd from rt.) poses with Young Laureates, Bruktawit Tigabu (left) of Ethiopia and Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu (3rd from rt.) of Nigeria.

## Young Rolex Awards

The Rolex Awards for Enterprise have supported a generation of talented and imaginative innovators, each of whom has helped bring forward evolutionary advance in one of five areas: science and health, applied technology, exploration, the environment, and cultural preservation. Since its beginnings in 1976, 110 laureates from 40 countries have been honored.

In 2002 Sebastian Chuwa won an Associate Laureate Award from Rolex that enabled him to build a large nursery at the ABCP Moshi Mpingo Plot and to purchase a vehicle that has been pivotal in advancing the project. This November, Sebastian renewed some old friendships, as he was invited to attend awards ceremonies for a new Rolex initiative

held in Switzerland.

Called the Young Laureates Programme, it was established to support the work of visionary young women and men under the age of 30. Five Laureates each received \$50,000 to expand and support their projects. Rebecca Irvin, director of the Rolex Awards describes the objective, "By providing project support at a critical juncture in the careers of young people, the Young Laureates Programme will reward bright new ideas and encourage the next generation to meet the challenges of the future."

Ceremonies were held in Lausanne, Switzerland at the new Rolex Learning Center, located in one of Europe's most prestigious institutes for technology and computer science, the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL).

Rolex has long-standing ties with the EPFL through collaboration on research. Many engineers who produce Rolex timepieces are graduates of the Institute.

The five 2010 Young Laureates were: Jacob Colker/USA for a project to enable Smartphone users to donate spare minutes to charitable organizations; Reese Fernandez/Philippines for helping impoverished women earn a living wage by creating elegant products from garment factory rejects; Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu/Nigeria, for developing an interactive rural radio service to improve the lives of farmers in Nigeria; Piyush Tewari/India, for training a network of police and volunteers to provide rapid medical care in road accidents; and Bruktawit Tigabu/Ethiopia, for developing a health-education program for pre-school children in Ethiopia.

See Young Rolex Awards at:  
<http://young.rolexawards.com/>

## Good Gifts Catalogue

The work of the ABCP has been funded by supporters of the Good Gifts Catalogue since 2006. Their contributions have funded major planting efforts in Tanzania, mainly at Makuyuni, east of Mt. Kilimanjaro, where land set aside by the Village Council is now home to over 25,000 mpingo trees. The villagers have been so enthusiastic about the project that last year the Village Council dedicated another 5 acres. [*Continued on page 3*]

— *John Madison*

## Friends of the ABCP

*The ABCP would like to recognize the support of several individuals and groups committed to African development who have contributed their energies, expertise, and resources to the work of Sebastian Chuwa and the ABCP in Tanzania.*



Craig Samuel has supported the environmental work of Sebastian and the humanitarian work of his brother, Fr. Paul Chuwa, who is a Catholic priest. Craig (left) with his son, Callum, and Fr. Paul.

### Craig Samuel

Craig Samuel became involved in development work for Tanzania in 2007, when he met Fr. Paul Chuwa (Sebastian Chuwa's brother), who was the parish priest at Mtu wa Mbu, a town that is the gateway to Lake Manyara National Park. Fr. Paul gave him a tour of the church grounds and Craig noticed foundation stones for a hospital that had been planned for 25 years prior, but was still unbuilt. Thus began a plan for construction, instrumentation, and staffing of a regional hospital of 6 wards for 35 patients to administer to the needs of the Manyara community. By December, 2009, it was 95% complete and operating. Craig has also provided funding for a lab technician to attend college, bicycles for the hospital staff and a satellite

TV for the hospital Nuns.

Craig has likewise helped Sebastian's environmental work in a number of ways. In 2009, when Sebastian and Elizabeth travelled to Ireland for a World Forum conference, he supported all travel expenses for the trip. Additionally, he arranged for Sebastian to address academics from the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Aberdeen, the institution where Craig had received a degree in Geology, Mineralogy and Geophysics. This connection has led to one student conducting research on carbon capture in the Kilimanjaro area,

and another doing a research project on the work of the ABCP/Tanzania, investigating the attitude of local communities toward tree planting.

Craig has also provided various infrastructure items for the ABCP and funding to build a modern, steel framed greenhouse with high-grade shade cloth for a nursery run by Sebastian in association with the Kilimanjaro Environmental Education Group (KEEG). This nursery produces indigenous trees for reforestation on Mt. Kilimanjaro and disease resistant coffee trees for the coffee farmers who live on the mountain.

Craig is a Senior Partner and technological consultant at Turnstone Capital, an investment management firm that provides resources to industries in the

fields of clean technology, communications, and financial services. He is also a philanthropist, having assisted programs in the US, the UK and in East Africa.

The ABCP offers its commendation for the important work that Craig has done to uplift lives in Tanzania.

### The Sunderland Partnership

The Sunderland Partnership, headed by Reverend Stephen Taylor, rector of the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, is a coalition of citizens from Sunderland, UK, with a mission to improve life for all those living in their community. The Partnership works on many levels — they have established Sunder-



Reverend Stephen Taylor, Sunderland, UK, presents a check to Sebastian on behalf of the Sunderland Partnership, a coalition group that climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro to raise funding for Sebastian's tree planting.

land as a Fairtrade city, are making digital access more widely available, and are investing time and resources into charitable projects, national and international.

In 2009, member organizations em-

barked on an ambitious plan to select certain members to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro, using the adventure as a way to raise funding for targeted UK charities and the ABCP. Nineteen members were select as participants in the climb.

Group members organized such activities as charity events and raffles and raised over £30,000 (US \$47,000). Local companies offered fitness training, and sports gear,

When the 19 selected climbers arrived in Tanzania, Sebastian met with them before their ascent. After the climb some members of the group met with him again to plant trees for reforestation of the mountain. The also presented him with a check for £10,000 (US \$15,000), funding targeted for the reforestation of Kilimanjaro. Sebastian will be able to plant 13,000 trees with this funding.

Canon Stephen Taylor, who led this charitable endeavor, commented: “The challenge represents an active expression of the Sunderland Partnership at work, strengthening the links and networks between organisations that make up Sunderland. It is a huge honour for



The best friend on Earth of man is the tree. When we use the tree respectfully and economically, we have one of the greatest resources of the earth.

—Frank Lloyd Wright



those individuals taking part and will represent a major effort in terms of fundraising and support for the teams they work in and the organisations they represent.

“By committing to this challenge we aim to raise as much money as possible for our chosen charities both here and in Tanzania.”

The ABCP extends its gratitude to members of the Sunderland Partnership, who are working not only for their own community for the betterment of world.

See the Sunderland website at: [www.sunderlandpartnership.org.uk/](http://www.sunderlandpartnership.org.uk/).

### Trees of Kilimanjaro

“Trees of Kilimanjaro” is a photo documentary aired on French TV that tells the story of Sebastian Chuwa’s environmental work in Tanzania. It was produced by French freelance journalist, Luc Ihaddadene and filmmaker David Castello-Lopes. The film chronicles Sebastian’s life, fueled by his desire to restore his native land to the natural beauty of his childhood years. It documents his work to reforest the mountain, to save mpingo, and to educate children about their responsibility as stewards of the earth. The film is sub-titled in French with English and Kiswahili narration.

Inspiration for the project came when Luc participated in a UC Berkeley program called *The Africa Reporting Project*, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to educate students and international journalists about global food crisis issues, with an emphasis on agriculture in Africa.

Luc writes this: “Many stories about Africa published in the West are about wars, corruption, starvation, diseases and so on. I wanted to find a story about hope, rooted in everyday life. When I read about Sebastian Chuwa ... on the ABCP website, it reminded me about a famous short novel for kids written by French author Jean Giono in the 50’s about a patient man dedicated to reforesting alone a devastated area in Haute-Provence in order to bring life back to his native land. It sounded almost like a tale.

“I told my friend and colleague, David Castello-Lopes, who suggested we could use the multimedia techniques he knows to combine the personal story of Sebastian Chuwa with additional articles providing background information. Both of us were attracted by Sebastian Chuwa’s credo to not only protect and restore the natural resources of his native region but also improve people’s livelihoods. We believe that nature should not be regarded as a ‘jewel’ that must be protected at any price. Attention should be given to humans first, and I feel this is what Sebastian Chuwa always did.”

Watch video (French titles) at: <http://tiny.cc/880n2>

That each day I may walk unceasingly on the banks of my water, that my soul may repose on the branches of the trees which I planted, that I may refresh myself under the shadow of my sycamore.

— Egyptian tomb inscription, circa 1400 BC

### Good Gifts Catalogue

[Continued from page 1]

Mr. Gladstone Mariki, who supervises the project locally, organized the planting of over 5,000 trees on the new acreage.

Planning for long-range support of the trees, workers at Makuyuni took the extraordinary step of digging, by hand, a one and a half-mile long trench to lay down water pipe to the mpingo orchard. This will enable workers to plant trees year round and ensure their survival during times of drought.

Also with Good Gifts funding, workers from Makuyuni travelled to the ABCP Moshi Mpingo Plot (where most of our trees are grown to transplant stage) and planted 2,400 mpingo in the new 2-acre extension, land that was awarded to the ABCP several years ago by the local village of Mijongweni because of its conservation efforts in northern Tanzania. 20,000 mpingo trees will ultimately be planted on this acreage.

Seeds for all trees for ABCP replanting efforts have been gathered from many locations in northern Tanzania to insure genetic diversity.

Good Gifts money also funded several planting projects on private land at the request of people who have heard of the project. Trees were planted at Rundugai, Uchira, and locations near Karatu. URL for GG.: <http://www.goodgifts.org/> For a map of Good Gifts planting locations, see our 2009 Newsletter at: <http://www.blackwoodconservation.org/09nl-p2.html>.

Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth.

— Herman Hesse



## Good Gifts Catalogue — Scenes from Makuyuni



Villagers from Makuyuni give a wave of 'thanks' as they rest from their work of land clearing and tree planting in the shade of a canopy of African indigenous trees. With the support of the Good Gifts Catalogue, they have planted over 25,000 trees.



Salum and his wife Amina transport by bicycle, mpingo seedlings funded by the Good Gifts Catalogue, to plant on a privately owned farm at Rundugai. Mpingo, a legume, acts as a soil enricher, can be used for fence-rows, and provides shade for agricultural crops.

Moonrise over Makuyuni: On the horizon can be seen the full moon ascending behind Kilimanjaro. In the foreground are mpingo trees planted by Makuyuni villagers.



### ABCP Donation Form

As our outreach continues to grow, we ask for your continuing generosity to support our infrastructure and ongoing needs. Mpingo is one of the world’s most precious wood resources, known since antiquity for its beauty and exquisite working properties. ABCP mpingo are planted in climatically-appropriate areas where they will be protected and therefore have an excellent chance of long-range survival. The ABCP Moshi Mpingo Plot now has two permanent full-time workers, who grow the large numbers of tree seedlings needed for all of our programs.

All donations collected in the US are used in direct support of the project in Africa. The US team works on a purely voluntary level and in addition underwrites many costs in this country to support our fundraising and publicity efforts and the ABCP website. Please consider a donation today and help us insure a viable future for African blackwood.

You may also find it convenient to make an online donation from the ABCP website using the PayPal system. Just visit the home page at blackwoodconservation.org and click the PayPal Donation button midway down the page.

During the 1800's the material of choice for woodwind instruments was cocuswood from the West Indies. Lacking any conservation measures to insure its future, that wood was so over harvested it became commercially extinct and only now is making a small comeback. Commercial users of cocuswood switched to mpingo because it had many similar fine qualities and subsequently it began to be heavily harvested in eastern Africa as a substitute.

The ABCP is the only group which presently has a major focus on replanting programs for African blackwood. In our opinion, this is vital if we want to see mpingo survive as a commercial species and not meet the same fate as cocuswood. We believe the pressure on mpingo will increase in the future because it is predicted that Africa will experience a decline in standard of living during the next 100 years. This will undoubtedly increase the pressure on the harvesting of African blackwood because it is a valuable source of foreign exchange, both as a raw material and as finished carvings, and also has important local economic value as charcoal.

With the growing concern about climate change, the planting of a tree is a positive step that any individual can take to have a positive personal impact. Trees serve as carbon storehouses, sequestering carbon dioxide, one of the primary greenhouse gases responsible for rising global temperatures.

*If you would be interested in receiving this newsletter by electronic means only, and thus saving the paper and postage necessary to mail out a printed hardcopy, please send a blank email to ABCP at info@blackwoodconservation.org with the subject line "E-newsletter only". We will then send you an email notice each year when the newsletter is published with links to the ABCP website where the PDF hardcopy version is available as well as a HTML version with color photos. Please update us if you change email addresses.*



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**AFRICAN BLACKWOOD CONSERVATION PROJECT**



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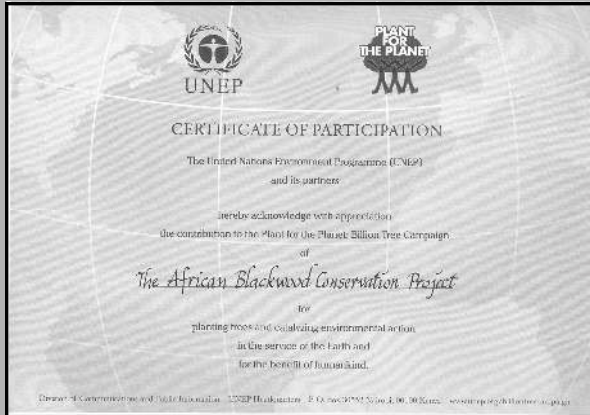
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make check or money order payable to ABCP.  
Thank you for your support

• **DONATION FORM** •  
Mail this form and donation to:  
**ABCP c/o James Harris**  
**P.O. Box 26**  
**Red Rock, TX 78662 USA**

## Plant for the Planet UNEP Billion Tree Campaign



In 2007, Kenyan Professor Wangari Maathai, Noble Peace Prize Laureate who campaigned for human rights and inspired the planting of 30 million trees in Africa, teamed up with the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) to start a tree planting campaign that was to sweep the planet. The idea was born when Maathai was told by a US corporate group that it had plans to plant a million trees. Her response was: "That's great, but what we really need is to plant a *billion* trees." Thus was born the *Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign*. Co-patron with Maathai, is Albert II, Sovereign Prince of Monaco, who has launched initiatives in his homeland to combat pollution, protect biodiversity, and save marine life.

The ABCP and Sebastian Chuwa are registered participants in the Billion Tree Campaign, having planted over 2 million trees. Through the outreach of the Campaign, people, communities, organizations, business and industry, civil society, and governments

are being encouraged to plant trees and enter their tree planting pledges on the UNEP sponsored website. The original objective was to plant at least one billion trees worldwide each year. To date, a reported 10 billion trees have been planted in 185 countries, thereby far surpassing the stated goals of the initiative.

For additional information see: <http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/>

• SEE THIS NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT [WWW.BLACKWOODCONSERVATION.ORG/10REPORT.HTML](http://WWW.BLACKWOODCONSERVATION.ORG/10REPORT.HTML) •

### African Blackwood Conservation Project

P. O. Box 26 Red Rock, TX 78662 USA



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