Climate Stewards

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

During 2021, while the world remained on pause during successive Covid lockdowns, Climate Stewards focused on strengthening our capacity to work with organisations and individuals to measure, reduce and offset their carbon footprint. We've also been supporting the growth and development of our sister organisations Climate Stewards in the USA and Netherlands.

10,264
tonnes of CO_2 mitigated

With little travel taking place, our offsetting income remained lower than projected, and many of our project partners were limited in what they could do on the ground because of Covid restrictions. However, 2021 saw a growth in regular support from individuals and churches offsetting other sources of emissions (travel, energy and expenditure), in some cases even offsetting previous years' emissions. Over the year Climate Stewards' seven partner projects on three continents delivered 10,264 "carbos" (tonnes of carbon dioxide mitigated).

Through our successful online conference "Creation care for mission agencies", involvement in the leadership of the UK's "Climate Sunday" campaign and participation in the Christian Climate Observers Programme at COP26 in Glasgow, we contributed to raising the profile of climate change and climate justice to new audiences.

The most important meeting in human history?

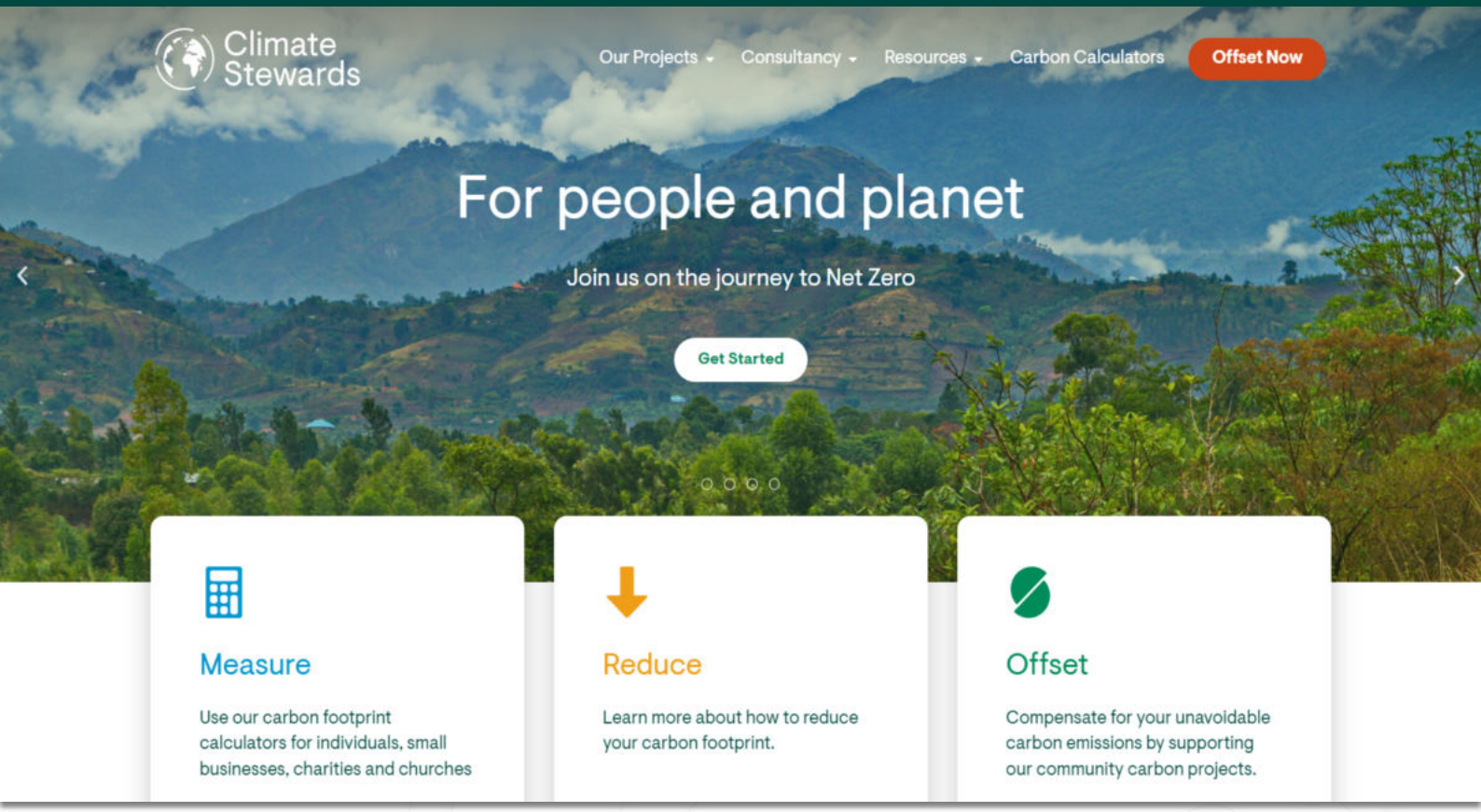
In November, Climate Stewards Director, Caroline, and Technical and Comms Officer, Alice, each spent a week at COP26 in Glasgow. With access to the "Blue Zone" they were able to observe the complex negotiations between delegates from over 190 nations. They worked with the A Rocha worldwide family to promote the A Rocha Position Paper on Nature-Based

Alice, Caroline and friends at the COP26 Climate March

Solutions to Climate Change, based on lessons learnt over the past 30 years by A Rocha and Climate Stewards projects around the world; and they also took part in the Climate Sunday and A Rocha Ghana stands in the Green Zone.

As part of the Christian Climate Observers Programme, they learnt from a broad range of inspirational climate leaders from around the world. They also joined an estimated 100,000 people marching for climate justice on a very wet Glasgow Saturday!

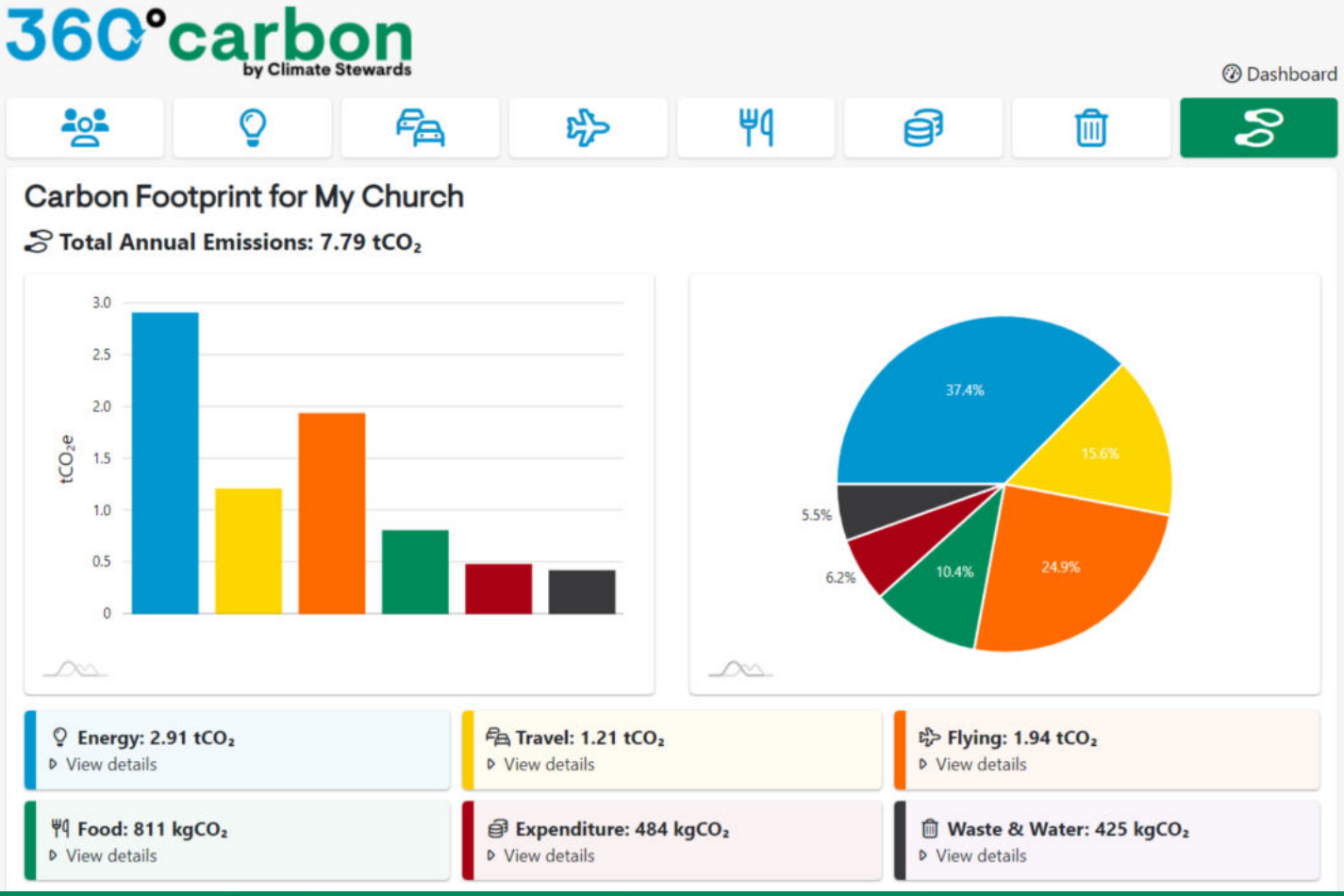
The outcome of the conference, the Glasgow Climate Pact, contains some causes for hope, but it's widely agreed that it does not go nearly far – or fast – enough. The success of COP27 (which takes place in Egypt in November 2022) will depend on governments keeping – or exceeding – their promises. The coming months are critical; those of us who care about climate justice will need to raise our voices even louder to ensure that COP27 delivers what COP26 failed to.



New brand, new website and better online tools

During 2021 the Climate Stewards teams in the UK, Netherlands and USA worked with designers and developers at Tusko to refresh the CS brand and create a new website with a clear focus on our call to measure, reduce and offset. The website brings together our carbon footprint calculators for individuals, churches, businesses and charities, and an exciting new feature allows you to explore an interactive map featuring our project partners around the world.

Tusko



360°carbon, our carbon calculator for churches and other small organisations, gathered over 1,200 users from 750 organisations during the year. Thanks to user feedback we have made numerous improvements to make it clearer to navigate and easier to use.

Climate Sunday

In 2021, Climate Stewards joined major UK denominations and Christian charities to promote Climate Sunday, an initiative which encouraged UK churches to worship, commit and speak up for the climate in the run-up to COP26. Over 2,000 churches hosted their own Climate Sunday, raising awareness and taking practical action to tackle climate change.

Virtual conference on creation care

In February 2021 Climate Stewards, Global Connections and A Rocha International hosted a virtual conference entitled “Creation care – an optional extra?” We were delighted to have 170 attendees from a wide range of mission agencies, NGOs and churches.

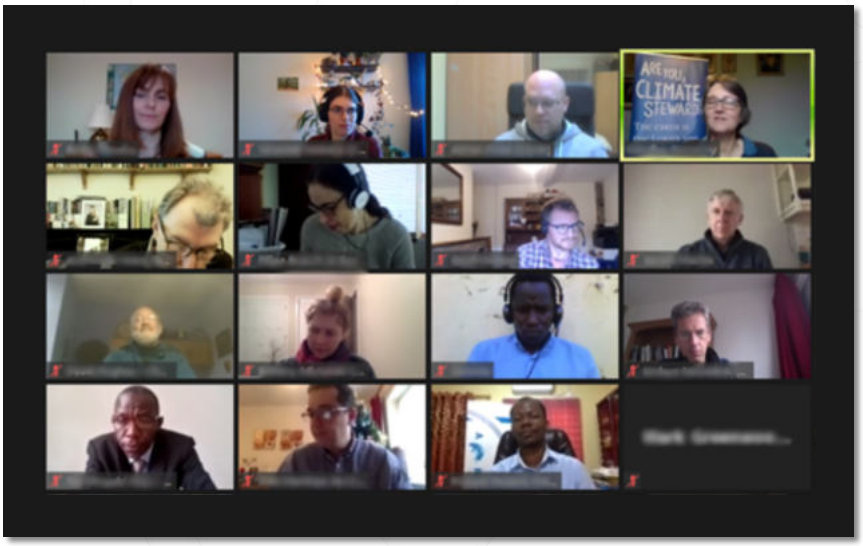
Keynote speakers Rev Dr Chris Wright (Langham Partnership) and Dr Rosalee Velloso Ewell (United Bible Societies) provided biblical wisdom on the theology of Creation Care, while

Seth Appiah-Kubi (A Rocha Ghana) and Bethanie Saint Louis (Tearfund Haiti) shared insights into putting creation care in practice. The afternoon consisted of eight workshop sessions covering topics such as embedding creation care in your mission agency, hearing from Gen Z, and a deep dive into carbon footprints.

Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive, with many people wanting to make personal lifestyle changes as well as influencing their church or organisation to be better stewards of creation.

Communicating our message

Over the year, Climate Stewards staff delivered 22 talks, webinars, podcasts etc. With lockdown many of our speaking engagements went online, but we estimate we reached more people via online events than we would have spoken to in person. You can find links to some of our talks and articles on the Resources page of the website.



Carbon footprint audits and advice

A growing part of our work during 2021 was carrying out carbon footprint audits for organisations including MAF, the Bible Society, BMS and USPG. We also delivered training for senior management to help develop and embed environmental policies and carbon reduction targets. In many cases, these organisations are committing to become carbon neutral.

An organisation can claim to be carbon neutral for an activity once it has measured the carbon footprint of that activity, reduced emissions where possible and offset the rest. During 2021 we provided advice, resources and support to our partners on each of these six steps.

Measure · Reduce · Offset

Carbon Neutral 2022

Climate Stewards

MEASURE

Your carbon footprint

PLAN

Your response

REDUCE

Your carbon emissions

OFFSET

What you can't reduce

TELL

Everybody!

REVIEW

Your progress each year

We don't often work with organisations who own their own planes, but in 2021 we were asked to help Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to calculate its carbon footprint. MAF enables aid, development, and mission organisations to bring medical care, emergency relief, long-term development and Christian hope to thousands of communities by providing light aircraft in remote areas of the world.

With a fleet of small aircraft flying for life in a dozen countries around the world, undertaking a baseline survey of our carbon footprint was no easy task. Climate Stewards did a fantastic job, walking us through the science, crunching our data and producing a clear and comprehensive report.

Their findings have already made a significant contribution to the journey which MAF is undertaking towards improved sustainability and care for creation.

Steve Machell, MAF

Climate Stewards has been supporting USPG in its thinking about its organisational carbon footprint since 2018. This has included support to undertake a baseline survey and subsequent annual carbon audits, as well as helping USPG think through how carbon neutrality can be integrated across all of our activities through policy and practice.

We have valued the technical expertise of the Climate Stewards team as well as their ability to connect us with additional specialists in areas including an energy audit for our office building. The Climate Stewards team are gifted communicators, explaining the carbon audit process in an accessible and engaging manner. This has enabled a deeper and greater conversation among staff within USPG, including those who have no or a limited background in climate science or sustainability.

The past couple of years has seen a rapid change in climate discourse within the UK, as well as a changing political and policy landscape. As a small staff team we have limited human resources to stay on top of these conversations, and as such we have appreciated being able to rely on Climate Stewards to ensure that USPG action is aligned with the most up-to-date thinking.

Rebecca Boardman
Regional Manager, USPG

USPG PARTNERS IN GLOBAL MISSION

Climate Stewards
Seal of Approval
for Carbon Offsetting Projects

Updates from our partners

Despite a tough year, our overseas partners have all weathered the Covid storm and we've received encouraging reports of trees growing, cookstoves and water filters in use - bringing multiple benefits to health, family finances and biodiversity.

Our Seal of Approval process is designed to help our partners develop and manage robust, sustainable and transparent community-based carbon mitigation projects, funded by offsetting. Project budgets last for between five and 15 years, with emphasis on training and ongoing support for beneficiaries to ensure high success rates. A key part of the process is regular monitoring of tree growth and fuel savings from technology projects.

A Rocha Uganda

Suzan Nakazi is married with four children. Before having a water filter, Suzan says she was increasingly worried about finding enough firewood to boil water to make it safe to drink. Her neighbourhood used to be very green with plentiful trees, but the population has increased due to rural-urban migration. This is causing forested areas to be built on for more housing, as well as increasing the demand on the remaining woodland. Suzan used to go into the forested areas and pick fallen branches for cooking and boiling water, but now they are hard to come by.

Suzan and her family have had a water filter since 2018 and are very grateful for it. The family is involved in brick-making which means they need to provide drinking water for lots of labourers, especially when they are doing heavy work in the hot weather. It used to be very challenging for the family to get enough clean water for everyone but now they are able to filter 60 litres of water every day for drinking. Suzan is so pleased that the filter saves not only money but time and there's plenty of clean water to go around.

A Rocha Peru

Climate Stewards works with A Rocha Peru to provide clean cookstoves to families in northern Peru. Smoke from open fires often causes health problems, especially eye and lung infections. The clean cookstoves have a chimney which takes smoke out of the house. Families are pleased that the cookstoves use around half the firewood to cook the same amount of food; this means they save a lot of time collecting firewood. María and her family are concerned about climate change and are pleased to be cutting down fewer trees.

I used to cook on an open fire with two adobe bricks on either side and my whole house was filled with smoke. Now with a new cookstove, I have heat within my house, I cook my food faster, the smoke no longer stays in my house and I use less firewood.

María Becerrera Pairazaman

Fabricating Smokeless Metal Stoves in Udhyog, Nepal

RIDS Nepal

Climate Stewards has been supporting our partner RIDS Nepal since 2017 to provide clean cookstoves known as Smokeless Metal Stoves or SMSs in a cluster of villages in the mountainous Humla region of north-western Nepal. The stoves are designed specifically for remote communities at high altitude in Nepal. Families use their fire to cook, boil water to make it safe to drink, and heat their homes. This means a lot of time is spent collecting firewood, a task that usually falls to women and girls in the household.

Having an open fire inside the house results in a build-up of smoke which causes a lot of health problems, most commonly lung and eye issues. The new stoves have a chimney which takes smoke straight out of the house, dramatically improving the families' health and quality of life.

The SMSs are made of steel and are carried up to the remote villages before being filled with mud for insulation. The stoves have spaces for three pots, a water heater on the side, and a slot to keep chapatis warm and crisp the edges. They use about half of the firewood compared to an open fire, helping reduce deforestation, freeing up women's time and enabling children to attend school more regularly.

Before

After

Farmer James Blay with a one year-old *Terminalia superba* (Ofram) tree

A Rocha Ghana

Recent monitoring reports from A Rocha Ghana show that the indigenous trees planted by smallholder farmers around Lake Bosomtwe in central Ghana are growing quickly with a very high survival rate; any trees that do die are quickly replanted. The project budget includes modest payments to compensate the smallholder farmers and communities for committing to plant and care for these trees in the long-term.

We are motivated to do more for the environment and our children yet unborn

Farmer Patrick Ofosu

Many of the farmers have been battling with Rhinoceros Beetle on their coconut trees. A consultant recommended the use of chemicals, but A Rocha Ghana staff and the farmers were not happy with this approach. Through a farmer learning and sharing event, the farmers started using nets to cover the central portion of the tree, which is proving to be an effective solution.

In 2021, Climate Stewards funded a second phase of planting with six more smallholders and an area of community land, adding over 3,800 new indigenous trees to the total.

Watersheds Ecosystem Conservation (WEC)

In 2021, our partner WEC supported an additional six churches in Kitui county in south-eastern Kenya to plant 3,200 trees on church compounds. This makes a total of 6,661 trees now being managed by 14 churches in the area.

Thanks to WEC's training, church leaders and members learn how to nurture seedlings and manage young trees, including weeding, thinning, pruning, soil health, tree management for both commercial purposes and for biodiversity, and climate change education. In some churches this training involves young people who are sponsored by Compassion International.

WEC has received many letters from church members in appreciation of the community forestry work that is being done. They love the fact that their churches are expressing creation care by working for environment and nature, and how in some cases neighbouring churches are inspired to do similar things after seeing the benefits to the environment.

The whole community gets involved

A young *Markhamia lutea* (Musave) tree at Zeze Secondary School

Mboni ya Vijana Group (MVG)

In 2021 Climate Stewards supported a pilot tree growing project with MVG in the community of Zeze, north-western Tanzania. MVG runs a tree nursery and planted 10,473 indigenous trees with a local secondary school and in the community. More than 95% of the transplanted tree seedlings have survived, with some growing almost 50cm in three months! MVG works closely with the school and community to involve them in planting and tree management, and now has 16 other local schools keen to join the project.

More projects awarded the Seal of Approval

2021 saw the Seal of Approval used to guarantee high quality offset projects managed and funded by other NGOs. We continued to verify BMS's solar project in Chad and tree planting in northern Uganda, and worked closely with Send a Cow to license a large-scale tree-planting project in Ethiopia, which will be funded by Riverford as part of their Planet Action commitment. This Seal of Approval licensing is a growing part of our work, helping to multiply the number of community carbon projects delivering local benefits to people and places.

Looking forward to 2022

While the past couple of years have taught us that nothing is certain, in 2022 we're already seeing more NGOs and mission agencies looking for carbon footprint audits and other advice on their Carbon Neutral journey.

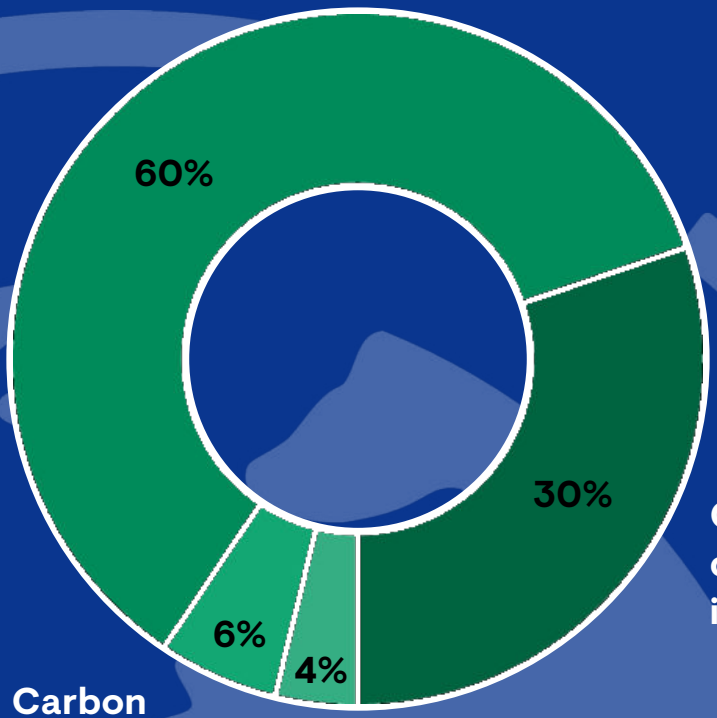
We are also in conversation with a number of potential new project partners in countries including Brazil, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Madagascar. We expect to undertake more Seal of Approval licensing, providing quality assurance for carbon projects managed and funded by other organisations.

We'll be launching our 360°carbon tool in the USA, Netherlands, New Zealand in the coming weeks and months. We will also soon be launching a version for use by synagogues in the UK and USA.

Finances

We are grateful to all our donors and offsetters, including those below. Our full audited accounts for 2020-21 are available on the Charity Commission website.

INCOME



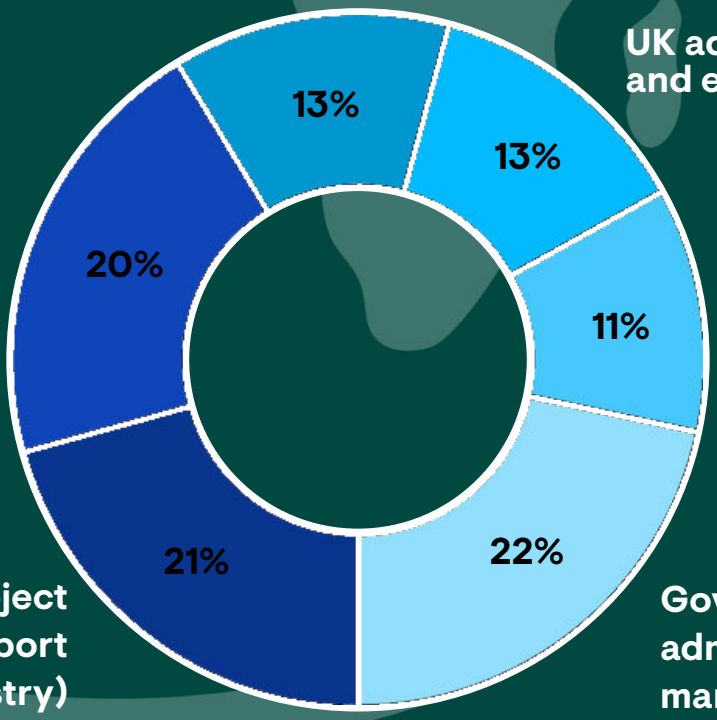
Offsetting and donations by: NGOs, Mission Agencies, Churches, and Businesses

Offsetting and donations by individuals

Carbon footprint audits

Gift Aid

EXPENDITURE



New overseas project development

UK advocacy and education

Overseas project support (Cookstoves, Fireless Cookers and Water Filters)

Carbon footprint audits and online tools

Overseas project support (Community Forestry)

Governance, admin and marketing

Contact Climate Stewards:

info@climatestewards.org

Rockfield House
Nunney
Frome
BA11 4NP

@climatestewards

Climate Stewards is part of the A Rocha worldwide family

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