

The Niassa Natural Capital Association (ACNN) is launched in Mozambique.



A tent was set up on the hilltop, under which a range of presentations introducing conservation and sustainable development took place

July saw Rift Valley host this significant event in Lichinga. The launch event was part of an ongoing conservation project that Rift Valley has led over the last two years. Assistance from UK Government's Partnerships for Forests programme has allowed the project to develop rapidly over the last few months.



His Excellency the Governor of Niassa opens the launch event in Lichinga

As a new initiative, with ambitions to work together with a range of Niassa stakeholders to achieve results, it was important to hold an event to bring the ACNN to the attention of a widespread audience. The event aimed to showcase the aims and objectives of the ACNN, whilst raising awareness of



The venue offered guests an extraordinary location to learn about a range of proposed methods of optimizing sustainable land use

current unsustainable land use scenarios and Niassa's natural capital values.

Over 80 people attended the two-day launch, representing a diverse range of organisations: local communities, government, NGO's and donors. A handful of guests traveled internationally to attend, including two guest speakers who contributed significantly to the depth of presentations made.

The second day of the event involved a field trip to a remote hilltop location overlooking a vast panorama of natural woodland. The field trip was planned as an important opportunity for attendees to see for themselves the scale of the natural forest. Additionally, the journey to the hilltop passed by numerous examples of unsustainable land use (i.e shifting agriculture and charcoal production) to illustrate first hand issues to be discussed. The experience proved a great success and was extremely enlightening for many of the attendees.



Over 80 people, from local communities to international donors attended the event, which was closely followed by local media..

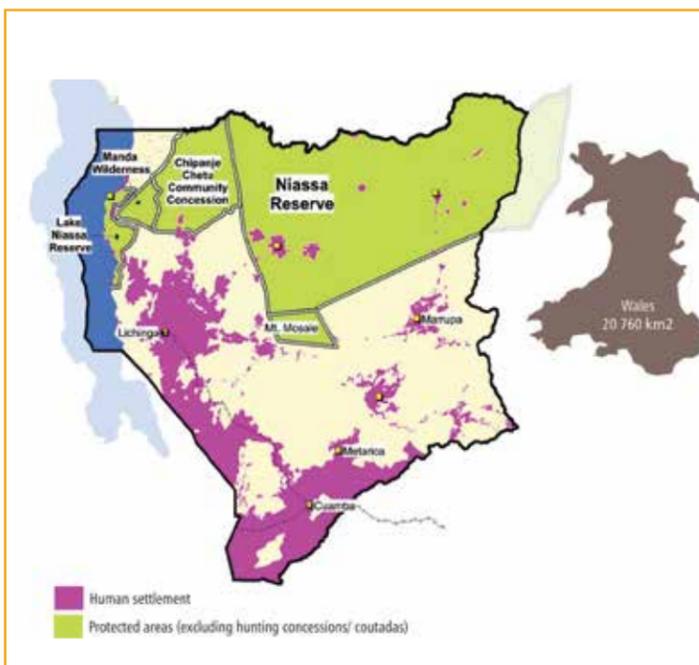
Following the event, the ACNN will continue to work with donors and a range of local stakeholders in its efforts to address sustainable land use challenges in Niassa.

Niassa's current landmass is 130,000 km².

Of that area, approximately 23,200 km² is settled by human populations, leaving 106,000 km² of natural habitat – an area five times the size of Wales.

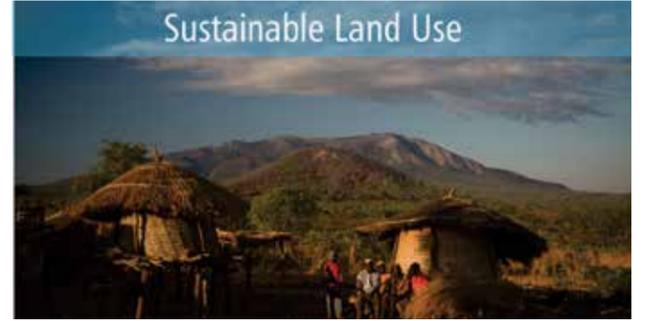
With approximately 10 million hectares of "natural" dryland forest habitat currently intact, Niassa boasts a Natural Capital asset of global significance. With nearly half Niassa's natural habitat currently enjoying "protected" status through various land use legislation, there remains as much as five million hectares of dryland forest in the province without any formal protection or management.

The ACNN sets out to provide a means and models of managing this asset, alongside those assets already under management, for the benefit of all stakeholders and long term prosperity of local communities.



PRIORITIES OF THE ACNN

Sustainable Land Use



Developing improved economic activity within rural communities by advancing sustainable agricultural methods and management of natural forest resources.

Agricultural Development & Food Security



Promoting Conservation Agriculture and training of improved agritechniques to improve yield volumes, quality and access to markets.

Natural Forest Management



Halting the destruction of natural forest habitats alongside the protection of wider Natural Capital within a region that includes extensive resources of global biodiversity interest and significance.

Rural Economic Development



Promoting the development of agriculture, community owned plantations and sustainable small businesses alongside the advancement of financial literacy, access to finance and the development of markets for improved commodity flows.

Wilderness & Wildlife preservation



Promoting the protection of core biodiversity and wilderness zones, including support for the Niassa Natural Reserve

Climate Change Mitigation



Protecting Niassa's natural forest assets as a 'carbon sink' of global significance, whilst disseminating climate smart agricultural techniques to help communities adapt to climate change