



In combatting climate change, today's children are tomorrow's future

The Greenmanjaro Foundation is hoping to engineer a generational shift in Tanzanians' understanding of climate change by involving youngsters living in the fragile ecosystem of Kilimanjaro in a series of eco-friendly projects. Paa takes a closer look at its work.

The year-round snow-capped peaks of Mt Kilimanjaro have for untold ages represented the iconic image of Tanzania, but in recent years those ice fields have been drastically shrinking and now the highest mountain in Africa has become the symbol for something very different: climate change.

Since 1912, when aerial photographers documented Kilimanjaro's glaciers, the area covered by the mountain's glaciers has shrunk by around 85 per cent. Start descending from its 5,895-metre summit and the story is not much better. The mountain's five distinct ecosystems

have also been depleted with the rainforest zone of the lower slopes having lost half of its tree cover. The deforestation releases trees' stored greenhouse gases to raise temperatures, creating a broiling climate that dries up streams and puts wildlife and vegetation at risk.

This is a serious issue in a region predominated by cattle and agricultural farming. Here water is life. More than a million people in Kilimanjaro depend on this frequent rainfall and the lush vegetation that it makes possible.

Children here can grow up seeing adults not setting a great

environmental example – much of the forest cover has been cut down by villagers for charcoal and open farmland, while among the around 35,000 climbers that take on the mountain each year many are more focused on reaching the summit than hanging on to their rubbish – yet as the innocent inheritors of the problem, they need to take action.

Encouraging the next generation in Kilimanjaro to become the future guardians of Africa is the mission of The Greenmanjaro Foundation. Working in schools and communities in and around Moshi, Arusha and Boma Ng'ombe in the Kilimanjaro

Community farm
Children working in the veggie garden



foothills, the Foundation looks to raise awareness of climate change among local children by engaging them in sustainable agricultural and recycling practises such as planting trees, growing veggie gardens, collecting plastic waste and learning to operate plastic recycling machines.

The aim of the foundation's educational programmes is to empower children to use sustainable methods to improve the environment in this special location and spread the word to their families and local communities.

Greenmanjaro was set up in the Netherlands and its team consists of Tanzania lovers, Kilimanjaro climbers and entrepreneurs united by a drive to contribute to a better environment and living conditions around Kilimanjaro.

Tree planting

So far the charity has planted 50,000 trees in the Kilimanjaro area. In July it piloted a trial using The Groasis Waterboxx – a device designed by a former Dutch flower exporter to help in growing trees in dry areas. It is also stepping up its tree planting in October as the wet season looms with school pupils and their communities getting involved. The hope is these trees will protect against flooding during heavy rainfall as well as improve the water quality and reserves for the dry season.

In August, selected pupils participated in a workshop with Arusha company Dunia Design to learn how to turn plastic waste into high-quality furniture. Schools in the region also have a third Greenmajaro workshop where collected plastic waste can be shredded and recycled.

Greenmanjaro partners with experienced organisations such as



the Jane Goodall Institute and FT Kilimanjaro – to carry out its projects. Funding comes entirely from donations and the charity is looking for companies that would like to make Greenmajaro part of their corporate social responsibility duty. Interested parties can connect via Instagram @greenmanjaro or on the website greenmanjaro.com

Tree planting 50,000 and counting



Greenmanjaro team member Penny Vosen will be climbing Kilimanjaro in January with her daughter to raise funds for the charity. The Kili Challenge will be launched on Instagram and Penny is hoping to attract donors to “sponsor our Kilimetres”.



GREEN MANJARO **KIDS FOR CLIMATE**

Greenmanjaro extracurricular activities

- Collection and recycling of plastic waste and creating new household plastic objects.
- Supplying child-proof recycling machinery and building school workshops.
- Planting veggie gardens on their school grounds, and thus adding vitamins to their lunches.
- Growing and nurturing tree seedlings for the neglected Rau Forest, one of the few urban forests in East Africa.
- Planting trees in school grounds and near water springs in Lower Moshi to combat drought.
- Cultivating toothbrush trees – 650 at last count – with schoolkids for oral hygiene.