



Forest Conservation



Helping to protect hundreds of sq km of forest

In Malawi, an area of forest the size of a football pitch is cut down every 10 minutes

All of the forests have been cut down in other parts of Malawi



These are the hills at Chikwawa in the south of Malawi. These hills have been deforested, soil has washed away, and now very little will grow here



Families have moved to the forested hills of Nkhata Bay District and, although they have already deforested other areas, they clear new farms here



This hill has been deforested by one family. People do what they want and no one is clear about the laws

The forested hills in Nkhata Bay District are now being deforested



When a farmer's land becomes exhausted, he will clear more forest and burn the trees where they fall, and then use this land for one to three years



When all the trees have been cut down and the grass burnt, there is nothing to hold the soil when the rains come (the hills receive 120cm of rain per year)

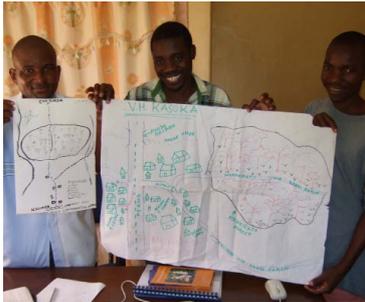


Much of the land in the forested hills of Nkhata Bay District is both steep and stony, and is not suitable for farming

We are working with the Chiefs, communities, and government departments



Each Chief sets up a Conservation Committee of 10 people, and RIPPLE Africa conducts awareness meetings



The Conservation Committees, RIPPLE Africa, and the Forestry Department staff establish areas to be protected



We are coordinating all interested parties — District Commissioner, District Forest Officer, Chiefs, and communities



In some areas, simple bylaws have been agreed and signed, thus establishing protected Village Forest Areas

How does the programme work?



We work with Chiefs and Conservation Committees to make people aware of the new bylaws



In the conservation areas, nobody is allowed to cut down trees, burn the bush, or open new farms



Natural regeneration of the deforested hills is encouraged



Local communities are keen for this project to be a success to preserve the environment and rainfall for the future