

Weekender

SOCIETY

Improved Stoves To Protect Biodiversity On Mt. Cameroon

BY AZORE OPIO

A fortnight ago, a team from Pro Climate International head-loaded 10 charcoal stoves to the savannah belt of Mt. Cameroon, in the Southwest Region; two at the intermediate Hut and eight at Hut 2.

MORE than 30 participants including officials from GTZ, WWF, GFA/KFW, Basketball for Development- Germany, Mount Cameroon Inter-communal Ecotourism Board (Mount CEO), Green Cameroon and young volunteers from the DED-Weltwaerts faced the challenge to trek from the Governor's Office (1010 m) to Hut 2 at 2850 m and install the stoves.

The stoves, which are eco-friendly - less fuel wood and less smoke - will serve tourists hiking up the mountain, while protecting the diverse animal, insect and plant species in the savannah belt.

Tourists climbing the mountain are, therefore, expected stop cutting wood in the savannah and instead use charcoal stocked in the huts.

According to Pro Climate Coordinator, Jean Claude Tsafack, sometimes there are as many as thirty tourists up the mountain and they may wish to make a fire at any spot to warm themselves or to cook, so they are forced to cut down some of the trees for firewood. But using these stoves will reduce the impact of the destruction of the plants in the savannah, thereby protecting the habitats of the other species.

"Groups of tourists and their guides usually spend the first night at Hut 2 in the savannah with very few trees in the surrounding. They cut these few trees to make fire for heating and cooking. Using improved charcoal stoves there will prevent tourists from cutting the trees which not only deco-

rate the savannah landscape but also serve as habitats for animals and plants. These represent natural attraction factors for the development of ecotourism in the Mt. Cameroon National Park," these were Tsafack's remarks in his office situated at Palapala Field in Buea Town.

He said they organised the "improved stove project" in conjunction with the Mt. Cameroon Eco-tourism office, which currently handles thousands of tourists going up the mountain.

"So, whenever they pass through that office, they will be sensitised on the use of the improved charcoal stoves and the need to protect the mountain as they enjoy its benefits."

In addition, the Pro Climate Coordinator says even the porters going up the mountain will be educated on the importance of conserving the biodiversity of the savannah by using the improved stoves.

In turn, they will sensitise the tourists.

Pro Climate International will also in the near future introduce the local population to improved stoves that is capable of using much less fuel and produce a lot less smoke than the conventional fire place.

Thus, the use of the improved stoves in kitchens



Pro Climate team after depositing improved stoves at Hut 2

would reduce indoor air pollution, save money, time and energy for cooking.

Pro Climate International is a civil society organisation based in Buea, Cameroon, working for better living conditions, climate change mitigation and adaptation.

It focuses on the promotion of the use of improved wood/charcoal stoves for energy efficiency, reforestation/forest conservation, sustainable ecotourism, environmental and social education.

Pro Climate International organised the evacuation of the improved stoves with financial support from GTZ- Buea, WWF-Limbe, GFA- Buea, Basketball for Development-Germany and the 350.org Team.

Nkong Hilltop Staff Drilled On Field Techniques

BY WALTER WILSON NANA

Staff of Buea-based Common Initiative Group, Nkong Hilltop, have received some field operations techniques.

For three days, Emile Singeh, a trainer from Global Stewardship Foundation for Africa, GSFA, taught the staff the processes of teaching adults and younger people.

According to Singeh, Nkong Hilltop staff will make the difference in the field if they understand that adults learn by doing, retain twenty percent of what they hear, retain thirty percent of what they see and retain fifty percent of what they may hear and see.

"Therefore, combining all these will make the adult learner efficient," he said.

Singeh explained that the training for trainers' workshop is relevant for Nkong Hilltop because the staff need the training so to effectively carry out their activities in the field.