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NABU, The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, has promoted the interests of people and nature for more than 120 years drawing on its unwavering commitment, specialised expertise and the backing of its 750,000 members and supporters. The NGO is the largest of its kind in Germany.

“Community Action for Biodiversity and Forest Conservation and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Wild Coffee Forests (CAFA)”



The project is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



Strengthening communities for forest conservation and sustainable development in Ethiopia



Jointly with the local communities concepts for conserving and sustainably managing the unique habitats and their biodiversity are being implemented.



Not only NABU's rangers but also local community and government representatives shall conduct regular monitoring of the forest and indicator species in future.

Community Action for Biodiversity and Forest Conservation and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Wild Coffee Forests (CAFA)



The forest coffee region of Kafa

Vast Afromontane cloud forests and rainforests, dense bamboo forests, wetlands, floodplains and peatlands characterise the Kafa Biosphere Reserve in south-west Ethiopia. The moist ever-green region is considered as one of the last intact high forest areas of Ethiopia. It serves as important water and carbon store and provides habitat for rare and endangered species. The area is of particular significance as it is the origin of wild Arabica coffee.

Over centuries, the approximately 900,000 people living in the communities at the biosphere reserve have adapted their lifestyle to their environment and use sustainable land use forms and harvest systems. Their livelihood is based on smallholder agriculture, the sale of wild coffee and the use of natural resources for food, fuel and construction. In addition, wild plants from forests and wetlands are being used.

Ever-growing challenges

Continuous population growth, a lack of jobs and means of income and the resulting threat of poverty are leading to growing pressure on natural resources. This in turn, is endangering important ecosystem services for the local population such as water, food, animal feed and building materials. The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident resulting in poor agricultural yields and a rise of pests. In particular the wild Arabica coffee has proven to be sensitive. At the same time, the loss of age-old knowledge about ecosystem connectivity and sustainable and traditional farming methods and crop species has been observed. The younger generation in particular is losing the traditional bond to the natural environment. However, this bond plays an important role in conserving nature, and especially in protecting the forests in Kafa Biosphere Reserve.

Together we can generate new opportunities and protect nature

NABU has been supporting the Kafa region since 2006 and cooperates closely with both authorities and local population. Together with smallholders, women's organisations and forest user groups, we are developing community-based approaches to sustainable land use while protecting ecosystems as well as reviving important traditions. Authorities such as the biosphere reserve administration, community organisations, cooperatives and civil society organisations are receiving training to develop their capacity. At the same time, children and young people are familiarised with the ecosystems in their home region. This will result in strong communities independently ensuring the preservation of key ecosystems in order to ensure the long-term provision of ecosystem services.

Here's how we do it:

- Long-term forest protection through improving and promoting participatory forest management in 10 communities
- Introduction of community-based management for 2,500 hectares of wetland with local user groups
- Adapting agriculture to climate change together with 750 local farmers
- Implementation of a customised monitoring system on biodiversity, carbon and forest degradation together with nature rangers, community and government representatives
- Marketing of regional natural products from the Kafa Biosphere Reserve in cooperation with local female farmers and environmentally-friendly producers
- Capacity building and organisational development for the local biosphere reserve administration and partner organisations in the region
- Embedding biodiversity and climate change into the curriculum for 50 schools in the region and carrying out intensive teacher training and support
- Information campaign

