Project Update: July 2018

Conservation is an evidence-based problem solving science. If a species or their habitats are under threat we have to work our best to safe from loss. Black crowned crane threats are not associated with single problems but due to a very complex mixture of land use changes, including wetland deterioration and intensified agriculture, deforestation and potential changes as a results of human activities which leads to climate change and species extinctions. Conservation activities can help us to work together and we can think about new ways to overcome the problems. Habitat destruction like wetlands, forest and other ecosystems are driven by human behaviour. People are destroying the world ecosystem for basic needs. Because of rapid population growth, people are cutting trees, clearing forests, and draining wetlands, driving species to loss and threats. If human activities are the main problems, we have the key to solve the problems. So, it is better to protect all natural habitats and its species in order to ensure our own future. People are the core point in conservation actions.

As per our agreements during project proposal reviewing process, planting trees was conducted with the consultation of the stakeholders and Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. In Ethiopia, it is recommend to plant trees starting from June onwards until mid-August each year (the best moment for planting seedlings). If seedling is planted in rainy season (June, July and August) roots will settle and adapt to the new environment and enhance resilience towards water scarcity during warmer temperature and dry season which will start in autumn and continue through winter particularly in south-western parts of Ethiopia.

We followed the following steps for our activities:

Step 1: Discussion Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and other stakeholders about the intention and purpose of planting seedlings. Site was also selected in consultation with the stakeholders.

Step 2: Tree seedling species selections (a tree that will grow well in the area and which will contribute for environmental conservation and beyond like economic values) which was conducted in consultation with experts, i.e., proper plant species was selected. All tree seedlings are native to the region (indigenous tree species).

Step 3: Planting-hole preparation (planting site preparation): hole was prepared in advance which is at least twice as wide as the root ball. The hole no deeper than the root ball which will help the roots from settling to deep while allowing them to penetrate the surrounding soil. A planting hole dug carefully in the presence of experts for advice. For plant hole preparation, 60 daily labourers and three experts, bus driver and its technician, total 65 people participated on July 11th 2018 at Merewa Village, Jimma Zone, Ethiopia.

Step 4: Purchasing tree seedlings from Frustale nursery site. Counting the number of tree seedlings to transport the seedlings to the selected site.

Jimma University College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine post on the website for the public. You can assess this report via http://cavm.ju.edu.et/content/strengthening-environmental-conservation-through-planting-trees


Step 5: Planting seedlings. Planting seedlings was conducted after 7 days of planting hole preparation on July 17th 2018, a total of 40 people (which included daily labourers, drivers and their supporter, and experts) participated in planting seedlings. All people were communicated and advised by experts to gently fill the hole with the same soil that came out of the hole to plant a tree seedling in the prepared hole. Seedlings were placed in planting bags, then a hand hoe was used to close the hole. Once the seedling was planted, the hole was resealed with the tool and foot and hand pressure to close soil air pockets. A total of 900 seedlings (600 *Giravila*, 200 *Cordia africana* and 100 acacia tree seedlings were planted.


We need planting trees for the following:

- Restoring degraded land.
- Providing food and shelter for wildlife.
- Reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations and improve air quality.
- Reducing water evaporation and improving water quality.
- Check soil erosion and maintain soil fertility.
- Reduce flooding and enhance the percentage of wetlands.
- Providing food, nesting and breeding grounds for threatened wildlife like black crowned cranes.