

Virunga Foundation, Aera Group launch carbon certification process in DRC

Virunga National Park and finance group Aera have launched a VCS carbon certification process for Matebe hydropower plant in the Democratic Republic of Congo. VCS is a voluntary greenhouse gas programme offering the possibility for further carbon certification in the country. This partnership is a first in eastern DRC for the Aera Group.



Matebe hydroelectric plant employees in Rutshuru.

© Katya Ermanuel — at Virunga National Park, DRC. Image source: [Facebook](#)

Matebe hydro-plant is part of a wider investment plan, called the [Virunga Alliance](#), initiated by the Virunga Foundation to provide access to energy for four million people who live and work in and around the Virunga National Park. Matebe will produce more than 13.6MW, supplying 600,000 people with clean electricity, kickstarting the green economy and providing over 12,000 jobs for those in the region of Rutshuru. Matebe avoids the use of heavy, polluting, fossil fuel generators thus saving an estimated 50,000-tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year.

Important environmental assets

The carbon credits awarded for the reduced CO₂ emissions will become important environmental assets which can be sold to corporates, individuals or states dedicated to achieving carbon neutrality. The VCS carbon certification is an effective tool to transparently track and account the CO₂ performance of Virunga's clean energy projects.

Director of Virunga National Park, Emmanuel de Merode said, "The fight against climate change is one of our key commitments. Protecting biodiversity, improving living conditions and preventing conflicts cannot be addressed without a sustainable pathway. We hope Virunga's offering will attract those with an equal commitment to clean energy and employment based on a green economy."

Said Alexandre Dunod, advisory manager at Aera Group, "Matebe is an outstanding 'run-of-river', micro-hydro project with strong impact and co-benefits. It is right in line with our portfolio policy focusing on least developed countries and charismatic African stories and activities. We expect a strong demand for high quality African offsets in the years to come and we build our supply accordingly."

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