



## **Barbets Duet**

*Barbets are tropical birds related to woodpeckers & toucans. Some Afrotropical barbets sing in duet, creating the sound of one voice.*

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## **BRIEF CONCEPT NOTE**

*A mature oak tree can support 284 species of insect, provide food and nests for birds, acorns for mice and squirrels, and habitat for fungi. Its 'life' value is very high; its economic value is only realised once it is dead. Today's environmental crisis is the consequence of this paradox.*

*The Barbets Duet will create new economic systems that reward the abundance of life.*

### **Rationale**

The Barbets Duet is a 20-year experiment to invent environmental markets and their supporting rules and institutions. It is named after tropical birds called Barbets who often sing in duet. This symbolises the need to harmonise the knowledge of competing cultures for this invention to succeed. The rationale behind the Barbets Duet experiment is as follows:

1. A sound business is part of a clearly defined value chain of goods and services which create economic value and are supported by accepted property rights, trading rules, financial systems and managerial structures.
2. Environmental businesses – whether they are trading in watersheds, carbon emissions, biodiversity or clean air and soils – require new ways to be valued economically, but do not have clearly defined value chains or the support of accepted rules and institutions.
3. The Barbets Duet is an experiment designed to appreciate existing and develop new institutional foundations for secure, valuable environmental businesses that will support local people and others who support the natural world.
4. This experiment is starting in East Africa because of the wealth of institutional models that has existed locally in African societies to create high social equity while also sustaining the diversity and resilience of the natural world.
5. The Barbets Duet is organised around Barbet Learning Sites. The first five learning sites were established in East Africa. The first UK Site, in Cornwall, joined the experiment in October 2009 and the first North American site, on the Hudson River, New York, joined in May 2010.

### **Working Assumptions**

The Barbets Duet is guided by several working assumptions. 1) The primary relationship is between people who manage the land (including marine resources) and those who manage markets. To increase healthy, bio-diverse landscapes, both types of managers need to learn new skills and develop new rules in the context of their practical affairs. 2) For this to occur, environmental managers (traditional and modern) and market managers need to engage directly with each other. 3) This engagement will be used to design multiple experiments at multiple Barbet Learning Sites to test different institutional arrangements based on cultural values that link peoples, land and markets. 4) In designing these experiments, both modern and traditional knowledge have something to contribute. 5) Each experiment will have people from different cultures working together equitably in practical settings. 6) Multiple experiments on multiple learning sites will stimulate rapid learning.

## Barbet Partners & Sites as of April 2011

### **Oby & Hilda Obyerodhyambo Seme & Nkoroi, Kenya**

Oby & Hilda Obyerodhyambo currently work with civil society in Kenya, but have a background in theatre and culture. They are working with family land on the shores of Lake Victoria in Seme, near Kisumu, Kenya. They are experimenting with water harvesting, tissue culture bananas, green house tomatoes, agro-forestry and the restoration of over-cropped and over-grazed. They are also investing in indigenous trees and medicinal plants.



### **Sammy Muvelah, Lukenya, Kenya**

Sammy Muvelah is an investment manager at Zimele Asset Management in Nairobi, Kenya. He has land in Lukenya, about 50 km outside of Nairobi, on a rocky hillside in dry rangeland. He is creating a woodland plantation of moringa to provide food and fuel, while also planting trees indigenous to the area. He is investing in water harvesting and selling excursions to Nairobi residents interested in the environment.

### **James Magode Ikuya, Molo, Uganda**

James Magode Ikuya was in charge of Rural Mobilisation and Youth in The Movement, Uganda's governing political party. His site is in Eastern Uganda where he is working with twelve families along 21km of the Kanginima stream. This is a badly deforested part of the Mt Elgon watershed in eastern Uganda. He is introducing high value cash crops (fish farming, bee keeping, fruit growing, oil seeds) and will also be replanting indigenous trees to restore lost watershed services and biodiversity.

### **Rose Lyimo, Rufiji, Tanzania**

Rose Lyimo was one of the co-founders of Akiba Commercial Bank in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, one of the first micro-lending banks in the country. She is hoping to acquire land in Rufiji, Tanzania, for eco-tourism and carbon trading and offers valuable experience relevant to financing the long term investments of Barbet Sites.

### **Mwajuma Masaiganah & Msi Choke Seaweed Growers Cooperative, Mlingotini, Tanzania**

Mwajuma Masaiganah worked in coastal development, but now runs two primary schools in Bagamoyo and Serengeti, Tanzania. She encouraged the Msi Choke Seaweed Farmers Cooperative to join the Barbets Duet. Msi Choke are looking for ways to improve their income from seaweed farming (e.g. through producing soap & shampoo). They also hope to develop environmental incomes from the protection of mangroves and carbon trading. Mwajuma Masaiganah may also establish her own learning site at the Mwasama Primary School in Bagamoyo. This site would offer an experiment in environmental education.

### **Chris Jones, Cornwall, UK**

Chris and Janet Jones manage Woodland Valley Farm in Ladock, Cornwall. It is an organic, low carbon farm producing beef and pork. They also have accommodation for visitors, allowing the farm to function as an outdoor classroom for school children and others. See <http://www.woodlandvalley.co.uk/index.php>

### **Barbara Heinzen, Hannacroix Creek, New York, USA**

Barbara Heinzen coordinates the activities of the Barbets Duet and works as an independent advisor in long term planning and scenario exercises for corporations and civil society. She moved from Central London to her own Barbet site at the junction of the Hannacroix Creek and Hudson River. The Hannacroix Creek site is about 20 miles south of Albany, NY and is largely swamp forest. It will be managed to maximize wild biodiversity. See [www.barbaraheinzen.com](http://www.barbaraheinzen.com).