

New Forests Company: doing business, doing good.

The New Forests Company currently operates in the East African countries of Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania.



NFC supports beekeeping projects.

The New Forests Company (NFC) is building a business in Africa that is socially responsible and environmentally sustainable, as well as profitable. This visionary approach is reaping rewards.

After several years of preparation and investment, the company has seen growth of over 30% in the past few years, says Chief Financial Officer Stephen Moore.

NFC has head offices in Johannesburg and currently operates in the East African countries of Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. The company spent considerable effort and time building good working relationships with the governments of these countries, in order to build a business that will endure.

Ten years ago, the company started investing in plantations in the three countries, to provide a sustainable source of local timber. The NFC sells poles for use in the three countries' large-scale electrification projects.

The company has built its own pole plants to process and treat the poles, and is currently building sawmills in all countries, to process timber into planks and added-value products such as pallets.

"Our strategy is to do the right thing for people, the planet and profit," Stephen says. "We create jobs in the areas where we operate - in Uganda, for example, we employ 1300 people. One of our key aims is to improve the lives of our workers. Recently we announced that we would double the wages of our lowest-paid workers over the next 5 years.

"We also support local communities to bring about the development objectives that they, themselves, establish. These range from building schools to starting beekeeping projects, which has been one of the most successful community initiatives."

The company invests a whopping 3% - 5% of its expenditure - rather than profit - in social and environmental programmes.

The NFC now has over 25 000 hectares of pine and eucalyptus trees in East Africa, about half of this in Uganda. These forests are managed sustainably and the plantations are accredited with the Forestry Stewardship Council. The company also works with

international institutions like the Development Bank, to ensure these organisations' investments in East Africa are sustainable.

Dolphin Bay started supplying NFC in 2013, and now supplies wood preservative to the company's operations in all three countries. This year, the volumes in our contract with the NFC increased.

"Dolphin Bay's service and responsiveness have always been excellent, and they provide high-quality products," says Stephen. "We have never had any problems with the company, and we have grown significantly together in the years we have been doing business together." Says Bertus: "We understand the difficulties of operating in Africa and are doing our best to help remove some of the hurdles that the NFC faces. We have worked hard to develop a relationship of trust over time, and we look forward to continue strengthening our relationship." "Business is all about sustainability, and when NFC does something, they do it properly. We are very proud to be associated with the company and their exemplary approach to doing business in Africa."

Source : **Dolphin Bay Chemicals**