

Case study

Sustainability at Catlin – driving internal engagement

Sector: Insurance / **Location:** Global

Catlin Group Limited, a global insurance and reinsurance company, recognises that businesses of the future need to make a meaningful commitment to corporate responsibility, ensuring that their impact on the environment is managed and reduced and that positive contributions are made to communities around the world. As a result, Catlin's Corporate Responsibility team manages a comprehensive programme which aligns corporate responsibility activities with business strategy. The programme is designed to build employee engagement, proactively manage environmental impact and demonstrate leadership in Catlin's industry.

A key part of the programme has been measurement and management of Catlin's carbon footprint. In addition to promoting energy efficiency in buildings, waste management and recycling, Catlin's programme has included a full review of the staff travel programme and substantial investment in video conferencing to reduce travel and enable virtual meetings. The programme has had a significant impact on global emissions, with the remaining air travel related emissions offset through the support of renewable energy and resource conservation projects around the world.

Driving internal engagement

A major component of Catlin's Corporate Responsibility activities is planning to

build internal interest, understanding and engagement in the programme.

Working with their marketing and internal communications colleagues, the CR team devised and launched a staff competition with a unique and exciting prize: a trip to visit the pioneering project in Kenya Catlin supports by offsetting their travel emissions.

Situated in the south east of the country, about three hours' drive from Mombasa, the Kasigau Corridor project reduces deforestation and degradation of tropical forests. Its fundamental goal is to balance the desire to protect the local wildlife and the environment with the need to create jobs and provide economic stability in rural communities. The project reduces carbon dioxide emissions by protecting the trees which provide natural carbon sinks and that, in the absence of the project, would have been deforested and/or degraded for subsistence agriculture, typically using slash and burn techniques to grow maize.

The competition offered Catlin employees a chance to win a truly unique 'once in a lifetime' experience to visit the project, seeing the work it is doing to combine environmental protection with social benefit, and meeting the communities who are involved.

Kasigau Corridor REDD+ Forestry, Kenya



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Developing a competition

- The competition was open to all staff globally and applicants were encouraged to be as creative as they wished and to explain how they could communicate the experience of the project visit to their colleagues.
- The company used its intranet 'Catwalk' to promote the competition, including two intranet announcements informing employees about the project, what someone could expect to get out of a visit to Kenya and how to apply.
- Entries were received from all departments across the company, from the underwriting team to receptionists, and from many different locations around the world, including Australia, UK, Bermuda, Switzerland, US & Canada. The applications ranged from creative self-produced videos to written stories showing exceptional commitment and engagement
- A sustainability committee judged the entries based on five categories: creativity, innovation, technical flair, journalistic style and suitability.

Daniela Jeck, Corporate Responsibility Officer, Catlin, commented "For our staff, the sustainability programme changed from something we write/tell our staff about to something with a real meaning. We have more than 2000 staff globally who we want to engage with. The competition proved to be a fantastic way to build interest in our sustainability efforts. We had a variety of creative entries and everyone who entered went to a huge effort."

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Daniela Jeck, Catlin



Competition winner Chase Toogood with local tribal people

The winner

Chase Toogood from the Bermuda office entered with a video he recorded which captured the attention of the judges. He explained how his passion for the environment was inspired by his daughter who, when she was nine years old, said she wanted to become an environmentalist and would like to change the world.

On learning of winning the competition, Chase said "I feel incredibly lucky and excited about the opportunity and experience that lies ahead."

The trip

Chase, accompanied by David Lloyd from The CarbonNeutral Company, was taken through an action packed itinerary which reflected the different aspects of the project – the environment, the community and the land. Led by their local guides, the trip included visits to greenhouses, tree nurseries, an organic cotton factory, a screen-printing facility, a children's nursery, and two water protection initiatives. The visitors met the rangers who protect wildlife against poaching activity, staff and pupils at the local school which is supported with equipment and bursaries from the project, tribal chiefs and community members, and people employed on the project's wide range of activities.

Chase wrote a daily journal while he was there, which later became two detailed blogs and a video diary of the trip. These gave his colleagues a sense of the scale of the activities and the real impact the project has on the region and the community.

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Chase said in one of his blogs: “Throughout the trip, we often hear in passing references that this project is not only one of the longest running environment impact programmes, but that it is also one of the most effective and respected carbon forestry projects in Africa. The project’s primary focus is to improve local agriculture methods to reduce deforestation and degradation. The problems really began in the late 1980s, when local farmers from the Taita and Duruma Tribes moved into the area, mainly because the more fertile areas where they had been farming on the hilltop lands could no longer support their growing tribes.

Willy, the head of the greenhouse where the project developer employs nearly 30 people, speaks to us about the many studies they are doing to encourage the local community to move away from subsistence agriculture and other methods of crop production (slash and burn) and land use that contribute to deforestation and degradation. We see a coordinated effort across many fronts - where everyone involved with the project is working to simultaneously develop a sustainable ecosystem along with a sustainable economy.”

A memorable visit

The project is based in a corridor of land between the Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks in Kenya, and plays an essential role in protecting this space for the movement of wildlife. Chase talked to the Head Game Warden to understand the never-ending challenge from commercial poachers who are trafficking ivory.



Local school children from the school funded by the project

“I felt during our game drive that I was now seeing the animals and the park through a different lens. The whole idea of a game drive carried new meaning, and I approached it from a more informed perspective. It was a good day for animal sightings; experiencing three separate lion sightings in one day was something remarkable.”

Building global interest

The blogs and video were distributed globally via the company intranet, giving staff around the world the opportunity to comment and ask questions and helping drive further interest in the company’s sustainability efforts.

Nathan Wimble, Commercial Director, The CarbonNeutral Company, remarked “Catlin is a fantastic example of how to build an innovative staff engagement programme. The work they have done sets a great benchmark for our clients and we are excited to continue working closely with Catlin going forward.”

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