**Divine Bamboo [WWF Ventures – Uganda]**

**Problem Statement**

With an annual net loss of 2.6%, Uganda is among the 5 countries in the world with the highest deforestation rate, losing over 232,925 acres of forest cover every year. This devastates Uganda’s unique bio diversity, and contributes to climate change through the forests’ reduced capacity for absorbing Co2 emissions. The major cause of this trend is that over 98% of Ugandans still fully depend on fuel wood in the form of charcoal and firewood for their daily cooking needs.

**Our Solution**

Divine Bamboo is an innovative forestry and clean energy company, using fast-growing bamboo to produce clean-cooking fuel in the form of briquettes. Bamboo is a native species in Uganda, grows fast (harvest after 4-5 years) and can be sold in the interim as seedlings. Divine Bamboo’s briquettes are cheaper, cook for longer and burn cleaner than charcoal. The advantage of bamboo over traditional wood is that bamboo is a fast-growing plant with the first harvest at just 3 years. Bamboo also rapidly regenerates every year after harvest.

**Impact**

In 2016, Divine Bamboo planted 11,000 bamboo seedlings during an official attempt for the Guinness world book of records title for “Most bamboos planted in an hour,” and have propagated about 70,000 seedlings to date.

**Looking Forward**

Divine Bamboo looks forward to growing and expanding their team and activities, recruiting more smallholder farmers and providing them with the necessary training and services so they can begin planting bamboo. We plan on widening and developing our network through partnerships with both government and non-government agencies in forestry for greater market access and the promotion of bamboo as an alternative source of fuel.