How ecorated properties are responding to climate change

From next week 31st October to 12th November 2021, the world will be gathered in Glasgow for the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties, commonly referred to as COP26. Glasgow known for its beautiful architecture and rich history will play host to this global event at a time when calls for urgent action on climate are getting louder and louder. Climate change advocates, scientists and global leaders have opined on this global challenge, painting a very gloomy picture of the devastating impacts the world will face if we do not raise our ambition in the fight against climate change.

192 countries across the world have signed the Paris Agreement so far, and committed to take specific actions to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and also adapt to the impacts of climate change. However, the response so far can be termed as “lethargic”. While it may be infuriating to see countries including the highest greenhouse gas emitters not doing enough, it is worth highlighting what businesses including those in the tourism industry are doing to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. Ecorated properties in Kenya have made great strides in this front. Therefore, this week we will highlight some of these efforts and measures.

Tree planting

Tree planting, whether afforestation or reforestation is commonly known for offering a wide range of benefits such as: Reducing soil erosion, making our homes look beautiful and also providing us with shade. Did you know that tree planting also helps in fighting climate change? When we plant trees and as they grow they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and use it to make their
food, while releasing oxygen. By taking away carbon dioxide, trees help reduce the carbon that is in the atmosphere which is likely to have been caused by human activities such as operating industrial plants, driving of vehicles and running of power generators among others. Many ecorated properties have been involved in tree planting for decades, either within their premises or at the local community such as schools. The picture below is a tree nursery at the Gold-rated Emboo River Camp.

Use of renewable energy

While it is true that the demand for energy to facilitate economic and social growth is increasing, the desire to ensure that energy generation does not lead to increase in carbon emissions remains an enduring challenge for the business world and society. As we continue to use energy in meeting our basic needs such as lighting and cooking, the biggest question on the table is how do we reduce our carbon emissions? The good news is that in the recent years, solar energy has emerged as an alternative source of energy to fossil fuels which are to blame for the increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

It is important to acknowledge that installation of solar requires massive capital investment but the long term benefits are immense, particularly for businesses located in areas with no connection to the national electricity grid. Besides the fact that harvesting of solar energy is simple compared to fossil fuels such as diesel, it has zero emissions to the environment and leads to financial savings.
Consequently, many ecorated properties in conservancies and parks are adopting the use of solar for powering their operations. The picture below is a solar water heating system installed at Naboisho Camp.

![Solar water heating system](image)

**Electric vehicles**

Currently, there is a global surge in purchase and use of electric vehicles. This is due to the fact that they have a lower carbon footprint over the course of their lifetime than vehicles that use traditional internal combustion engines. It may be hard to imagine going on a game drive while in an electric vehicle or travelling to work using one, but this is now changing. Ecorated properties in Kenya have started using electric vehicles, providing a unique and really exciting guest experience. One of the few properties that currently have electric vehicle is Emboo River. The camp is proud to have ventured in this area, and has realized great benefits. Besides generating very minimal noise when on a game drive making the animals completely unperturbed, it reduces operating costs in terms of fuel purchase, and even more importantly the carbon footprint. The picture below is an electric vehicle used by the property.
Climate change is indeed a defining issue of our time. Instead of countries patting themselves on the back for having submitted targets and shown good intentions, there is an urgent to deliver at the speed and scale that science demands. We hope that you have been inspired through this article and will be part of the solution that shapes the future of the planet we live in!