

# V I R U N G A N A T I O N A L P A R K C O F F E E S

SPECIALTY ARABICAS  
FROM NORTH KIVU ON THE BORDERS OF THE  
VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK,  
DR CONGO



# WELCOME TO EASTERN CONGO, THE LAST MAJOR UNDEVELOPED SOURCE OF FINEST QUALITY ARABICA

Unknown until a decade ago, Kivu arabicas are starting to become established on the global speciality coffee map, with stunning cup profiles. Now, there is an opportunity to discover these coffees through a partnership between coffee farmers, Farm Africa and the Virunga National Park.



- Accommodation
- City
- Village
- Patrol Post
- Virunga Park
- Kawa Kanzururu Cooperative
- Coopade Cooperative

# THE VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK COFFEES

The borders of the Virunga National Park, including the slopes of the Rwenzori Mountains and the uplands to the north-west of Lake Edward, contain some of the finest Arabica coffee growing land in the world. The climate is temperate with plentiful rainfall and sunshine, volcanic soils, as well as altitudes rising to over 2,000 metres. Smallholder farmers here have long grown heirloom bourbon varieties, but until very recently post-harvest processing was very basic and the only buyers were informal traders, mainly coming from neighbouring Uganda.

The aim of the Virunga National Park coffee programme is to enable farmers to realise the full potential of their coffees. The farmers are already organised at village level, around small-scale coffee washing stations, and are affiliated to two vibrant young cooperatives, Kawa Kanzururu and Coopade, based close to Beni and Butembo respectively, for milling and export. Already these cooperatives are producing extraordinary coffees, as testified by Kyle Tush, a Coffee Quality Specialist with leading US speciality coffee roaster Counter Culture Coffee.

# THE PARK AND NORTH KIVU COMMUNITIES

Virunga is Africa's oldest National Park. Established in 1925, it's one of the last refuges of the mountain gorilla, and is also home to highly endangered lowland gorillas as well as savannah elephants, chimpanzees, lions, leopards and antelopes. It has the largest diversity of birdlife in the world.

Due to its situation in eastern Congo, the park faces many existential challenges, as chronicled in the 2014 film *Virunga* (available on Netflix).

For Virunga National Park the conservation of its extraordinary wildlife, and the promotion of the social and economic well-being of the people of North Kivu who live around the park, go hand in hand. Through the Virunga Alliance, which is supported by the provincial authorities,

civil society and the private sector, the National Park is investing in a number of initiatives to promote economic regeneration, most notably a major hydro-electric generation and distribution venture. This is already bringing employment opportunities as well as access to electricity for thousands of households.

Virunga National Park is embarking on a major agriculture programme, with the vision of boosting the livelihoods of smallholder farmers who live around the park by investing in the production and marketing of their food crops and their cash crops, including coffee. In this way the pressures on farmers to encroach on the park to extract wood for charcoal will be reduced, and farmers will see positive benefits from the park's presence.



*"Coffees we've tasted from the Virunga National Park project in North Kivu have impressed us greatly, to say the least. Not only do they have the potential to stand with the best Arabicas produced in the DRC, but also some of the best produced in East Africa."*

**Kyle Tush, Counter Culture Coffee**



# VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK'S COFFEE PROJECT WITH FARM AFRICA

The programme will boost the livelihoods of more than 7,000 coffee farming families living on the border of Virunga National Park. The farmers are organised in two co-operatives, Coopade and Kawa Kanzururu. The project, which is financed by the European Union, will strengthen their business at each level, from farm management to production and business systems, while building a strong profile and presence in international markets.

The project approach is based on implementing a holistic and sustainable farming model, including crop diversification, establishing a balance between food security and cash generation. The programme includes training on good agricultural practices and the establishment of nurseries for coffee as well as other trees.

There is a strong emphasis on increasing

the quantity and quality of the fully washed Arabica produced by the cooperatives. This will be achieved through upgrading processing and storage capacity, installing cupping labs, and through training in quality management, evaluation and control at each level from farmer to export.

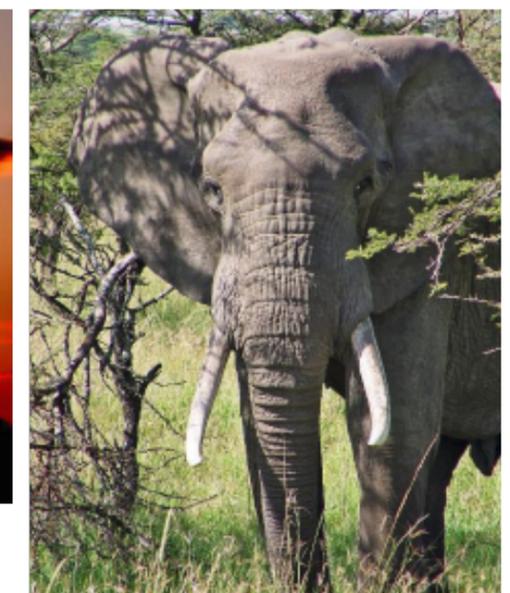
The business management capacities of the cooperatives will be strengthened, including the governance issues entailed in operating a complex business, and the cooperatives' ability to secure working capital.

The cooperatives will be supported to understand and operate successfully in international markets, with the aim of establishing linkages with importers, roasters, brands and retailers through long-term business partnerships. This approach involves direct outreach, attending trade fairs and using social media.

## FARM AFRICA

Farm Africa is an innovative charity that reduces poverty by unleashing African farmers' abilities to grow their incomes in an environmentally sustainable way. Farm Africa helps smallholders to not only boost yields, but also gain access to markets, while protecting the environment for generations to come.

From forest communities in Ethiopia to commercial smallholders in western Uganda, Farm Africa has deep and diverse experience in helping communities harness coffee's income-generating potential. Farm Africa provides tools and training in improving coffee quality, productivity, business practices and market integration to help farmers lift themselves out of poverty.



# KAWA KANZURURU COOPERATIVE

**Founded:** June 2014

**Location:** Farms are located on the slopes of the Rwenzori Mountains, bordering Virunga National Park

**Headquarters:** Quartier Mwangaza, Commune Rurale Lume, Territoire de Beni, Province du Nord-Kivu

**Altitude:** 1,000m to 1,800m

**Membership:** 1,642 producers (350 women and 1292 men)

**Varieties:** Blue Mountain, Rumangabo

**Certification:** Organic and

Fairtrade planned for 2019

**Average size of land per farmer:** 0.37 hectares

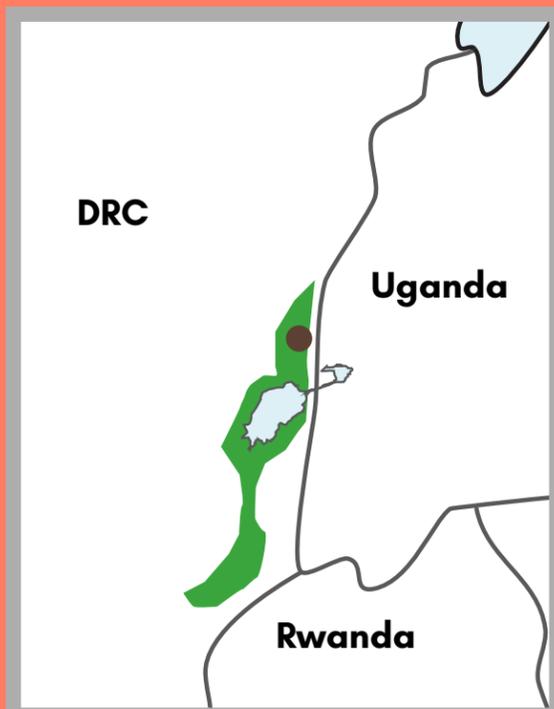
**Infrastructure:** 22 micro-washing stations. Two washing stations are run by the women's section.

**Main harvest period:** August to November

**Export Period:** December to March

**Sales:** Ex Beni or FOB Mombasa

**Volumes sold in 2017:** 48MT



● Kawa kanzururu cooperative

● Virunga National Park

# COOPA COOPERATIVE

**Founded:** June 2014

**Location:** Farms are located in Lubero area, bordering Virunga National Park

**Headquarters:** Commune MUSUSA, Ville de Butembo, Province du Nord-Kivu

**Altitude:** 1,300m to 2,100m

**Membership:** 4,159 producers (1276 women and 2883 men)

**Varieties:** Blue Mountain (mainly), Katwai, Rumangabo

**Certification:** UTZ & organic, Fairtrade planned for 2019

**Average size of land per farmer:** 0.37 hectares

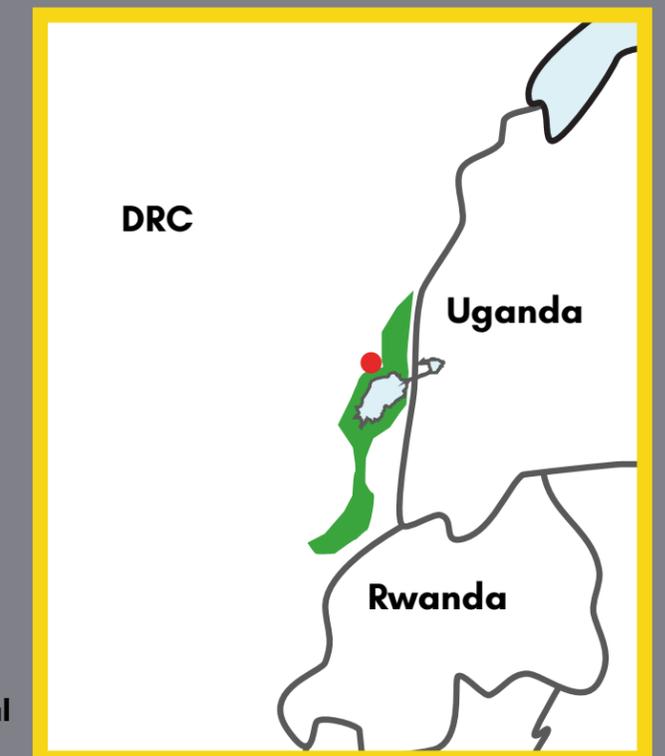
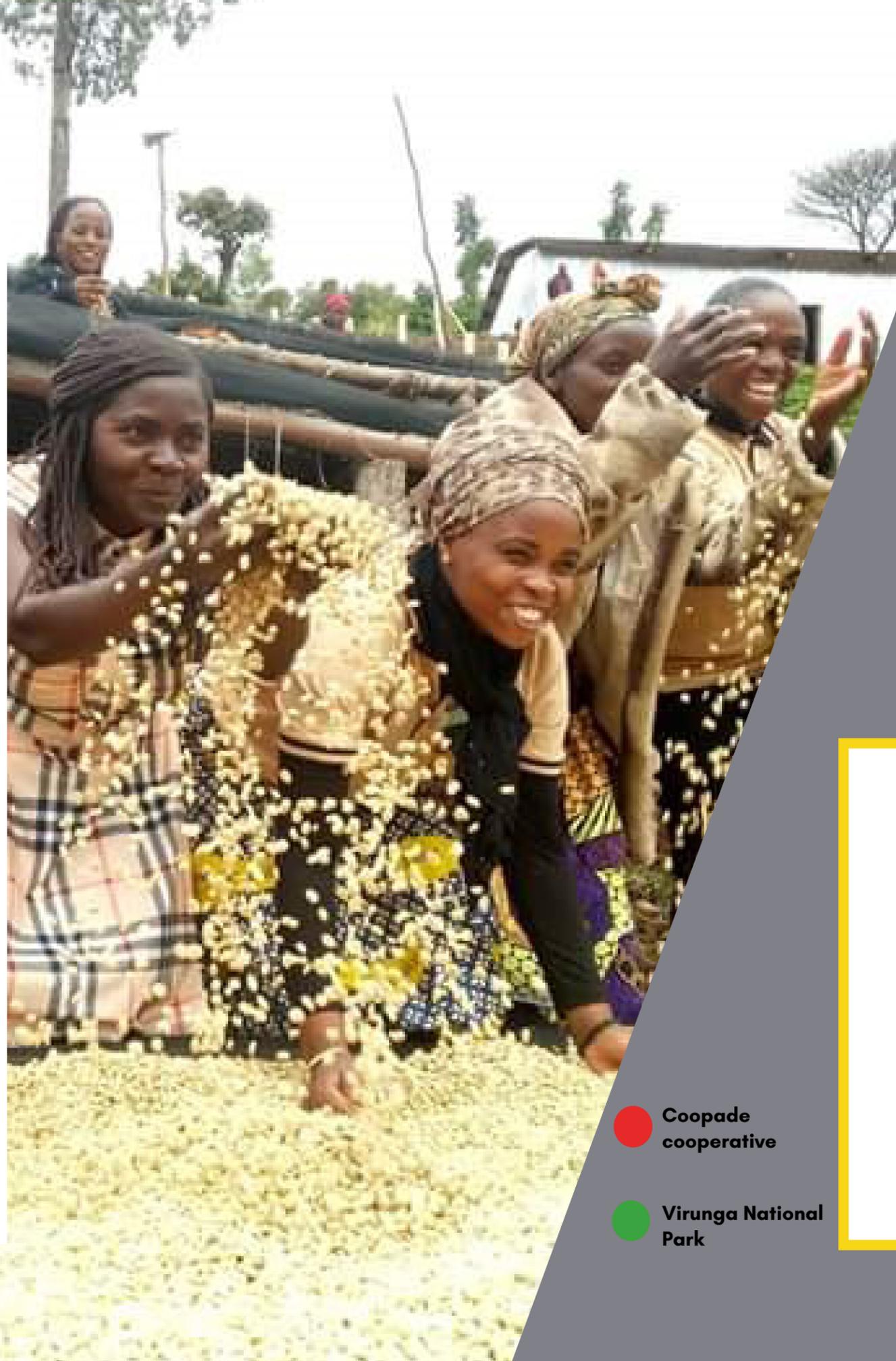
**Infrastructure:** 11 micro-washing stations. Four washing stations are run by the women's section. 14 additional microwashing stations are planned.

**Main harvest period:** September to November

**Export Period:** December to March.

**Sales:** Ex Butembo or FOB Mombasa.

**Volumes sold in 2017:** 134MT



● Coopade cooperative

● Virunga National Park

# GET IN CONTACT

To learn more about opportunities to source these fine coffees, and so to become a partner in this exciting initiative, please get in contact.

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Adelard Palata has worked with most of the local coffee sector's key players. Between 2001 to 2005, Adelard managed a coffee plantation in Dunda for Copratex. Between 2010 and 2012, he represented Schluter's Northern Kivu operations. Since 2012, he has worked with cooperatives to develop high quality coffees.

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