

First payment for forest carbon stocks

BY PORENI UMAU

THE Koroi Kabiawai clan in Namatanai, New Ireland Province, is the first in the country to receive K85,000 project funds for conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+).

Members of the clan were in Kokopo, last week, and were shocked to find that their clan account was credited with the funds.

Niht chief executive officer Esrom Toligur Jr, who has partnered with the Namatanai clan, among many others in the saving of forest projects for carbon credits confirmed the payment.

Nerius Toarbusai, secretary and clan spokesman said the clan has a membership of 270 to 300 and includes those from Siar, Bereutar, Matkamlagir, Rei and Vilo villages.

He said their clan joined the project in 2017 when it was introduced in their area at Silur station and were one of the first clans to join.

"Instead of logging, we chose to save our forests. It is a new project and we did not know how it would go but it sounded good to save our forests instead of logging them. Many doubted and left but some of us pursued the concept and met the requirements, even so many legal issues involved. Many said it was a scam or cult. We were shock to see that last Wednesday we saw K85,000 in our account. It brought joy to our people," Mr Toarbusai said.

He said that with the project funds, they can now mobilise and venture into small businesses to help their people. He said they believe and stand firm in the REDD+ project because it is about preserving the environment.

Mr Toligur said that the project funds is just one of other benefits that would be paid to clans involved in the project.

He also confirmed a second payment of K85,000 project funds to Kamrai lat clan who also received their share last week.