



MARA Region is hosting a unique Environmental Education Centre (EEC) tipped to be best environmental training centre for secondary school students across East and Central African states.

Strategically located in western Serengeti, EEC targets secondary students, who come from Serengeti and Bunda districts in the lake zone region. The districts host a large part of the world heritage of Serengeti National Park.

The major aim of EEC, which started accommodating students from the two districts in August 2009 is to impart both theoretical and practical skills on conservation to young men and women pursuing secondary education.

The facility was officially opened on 12 June 2009 by the former Minister of State in the Vice-Presidents Office in charge of Environment, Dr Batilda Burian who is currently serving as the Tanzanian Ambassador in the neighbouring Kenya. Since then it has enrolled 12 youths, who are accompanied by teachers after every five days.

So far a total 707 students have benefited from the environmental trainings offered at the centre which is designed to provide environmental and conservation education to youths in the two districts with some villages bordering Serengeti -ecosystem.

It was established by Singita Grumeti Fund (SGF) four years ago. The SGF is a non-profit making conservation and community development organization that receives funding from Singita Grumeti Reserves (SGR), which operates luxurious lodges in western Serengeti.

"We have managed to bring over 700 students and more than 200 teachers at the centre to date and we believe they are becoming good ambassadors of environmental conservation in their respective communities," said head of SGF's Outreach Community Department(COP) Mr Richard Ndaskoi. SGF has provided the visiting students and teachers with accommodation and food, according to Mr Ndaskoi.

Secondary school teachers have hailed SGF for establishing the centre predicting that it will turn hundreds of bright youths into good environmentalists in the districts. "The students have, for instance established a nursery for production of trees seedlings and a tree farms within our school compound after attending a training at the SGF centre," Mr James Sunge, the school headmaster of Rubana Secondary School in Bunda district said.