

Aspiration

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT SERVICES

Reforestation Programs Q&A

FAQ

Why plant trees?

Tree planting has been identified as one of the leading ways to combat CO₂, with one study estimating that planting 1 trillion trees could offset up to 1/6 to 1/4 of human produced carbon emissions. It is also the #1 climate intervention favored by Americans, regardless of political party affiliation, with 90% in favor of tree planting -- and, in an Aspiration-sponsored survey, tree planting as a purchase incentive was 4x more likely to drive consumer interest, when compared to a charitable donation

How effective is tree planting?

Tree planting can provide a range of benefits, not only including CO₂ sequestration but also “co-benefits” such as enhancement of ecosystem biodiversity, support for plant and animal species, agroforestry and local employment. Our planned tree planting programs will support the hiring of hundreds of additional laborers, of which 60% or more are typically women.

What practices and procedures help drive long-term, net negative climate impact?

Tree planting programs are designed to plant new trees and augment existing forests, making them typically additional by design. We further work with tree planting partners that have policies and procedures in place to help ensure tree planting projects provide long-term, net additive contributions to carbon sequestration. These policies and procedures can include:

Location and Species-Specific Planting Methods. The various planting methods include: singling or farmer-managed natural regeneration, seed balls, seedling nursery, bare root transfers, and mangrove propagule planting. Each nation uses one or more of these methods depending on the trees native to the region. Native species are used in planting, and many seeds can often be recovered locally.

Natural Processes to Enhance Net Survival. Our partners emphasize survival rates, boosted by natural generation. At mangrove sites, for example, natural regeneration can exceed 200% of the original number planted.

Site Planning for Protection. Procedures include working with local governments to secure written agreements designating the restoration sites as protected in perpetuity; and not planting in logging areas. There is never a 100% guarantee that some form of illegal harvest will not occur, however, we work to ensure the restoration sites are guaranteed to stand in perpetuity.

Providing Income and Community Opportunities. A minimum number of trees to be planted are agroforestry species (fruit, fodder and construction species designated to provide food and security and benefit legitimate human needs). Over time, these trees become a source of sustainable income. Working with local populations ensures long-term employment and program sustainability.

Improving the Ecosystem. Tree planting is often effective in restoring parts of natural ecosystems, with co-benefits that make the reforestation programs valuable to the community. These benefits could include for example improving soil stability, reducing the likelihood of future erosion or landslides, and restoring natural habitats and biodiversity which may provide not only food sources but also potentially medicinal benefits.

Engaging Security and Protection. Forest security and guards are included as part of the labor force, and funds are set aside for long-term protection of planting sites. Depending on the planting location, private or public entities may be further involved in helping protect and preserve the planting sites.

How do you verify that trees are planted?

We start by rigorously ensuring that we have reputable partners, including by conducting due diligence of the partner organizations and by reviewing relevant 3rd party analyses and certifications by independent nonprofit rating organizations. We further require updates on tree planting progress, to include regular updates on trees planted by country along with documentation of planting. We obtain coordinates for our planting sites (polygons) including geo-tagged imagery, and we also receive progress images from our planting sites. With our largest programs, we also have periodic audit and inspection rights which will be exercised as appropriate. We may also engage 3rd party auditors or site inspectors from time to time to supplement our own efforts.

Which countries do you plant in?

We have planted trees in Africa, and North, Central and South America. Specifically, planting countries to date include Kenya, Honduras, Madagascar, the Amazon Rainforest and the United States. We are continually evaluating our planting locations and plan to add additional planting partners and countries over time while also expanding our planting in existing locations.



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