

VERIFIED EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

direct from





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Why Buy Credits?

Like every other organisation and whatever your efforts to eliminate your carbon emissions at source, you will be responsible for some greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. You can choose to ignore the emissions that you've been unable to reduce, or you can take action by funding the absorption of an equivalent amount of carbon elsewhere in the world. The carbon absorption is verified by independent, widely respected organisations and buyers purchase certificates for tonnes of carbon absorbed. This is carbon offsetting.

All companies should start with a commitment to reduce emissions through a comprehensive programme of improved efficiency and investment, but there is always a residual carbon footprint. Furthermore, there will be situations where the cost of further investment in resource efficiency might be outweighed by an investment in carbon absorption. Not only is this good for the planet, but it is good for your public standing as it demonstrates your commitment to tackling climate change in a tangible and credible manner, especially if the projects in which you invest have wider benefits to poor communities in the developing world.



Why buy credits from ArBolivia?

There are literally thousands of sellers of carbon credits, so how do you go about choosing a partner from whom to purchase credits? In answering this question, you might like to consider the following:

- Is it better to buy the cheapest credits available or is it preferable to reflect the qualities and values of your organisation in the quality and values of the credits?
- How can you be sure that the carbon benefits won't be lost elsewhere?
- How much of the cost of credits will actually go to the project and how much will go on advisory fees and commissions?
- Would you like to purchase credits from a portfolio of many projects alongside many other purchasers or to associate directly with one or more particular projects?

An investment in carbon credits issued by the Arbolivia Project helps to combat poverty in some of the poorest communities in the world, whilst in the process saving one of the most unique and precious ecosystems on the planet – **the Amazon rainforest**. Unlike nearly all other forestry projects, this one shares timber profits equally with poor peasant farmers and uses 19 species of trees, 18 of which are native hardwoods. By helping peasant farmers to manage their land more sustainably, the project also removes the incentive to fell more prime rainforest, and thereby avoids the problem of 'leakage' where one area of land is reforested, only for another to be felled because of poor farming practices. Uniquely, the project enables purchasers of carbon credits to link directly to individual farmers, making it possible to clearly demonstrate the social and environmental impacts of investment.

When you buy Verified Emissions Reductions from ArBolivia you don't just buy tonnes of carbon, you buy the ability to:

- link credits with specific forestry parcels
- link credits with individual farmers within the project



- identify specific tree species being preserved
- easily communicate the environmental and social benefits of the project to customers and stakeholders



About The Project

The Amazon Rainforest is almost unquestionably one of the most valuable and important single habitats on our planet making a vital contribution in maintaining the balance of oxygen in our atmosphere and providing unrivalled biodiversity.



However for decades now the western fringes of the Amazon have suffered from aggressive deforestation. Driven by desperation, migrants have moved down from the Andes and have been granted official title to land within the perimeter of the rainforest, enabling them to exploit the valuable timber and establish smallholdings to eke out a living from the land.

After decades of adopting poor agricultural practices and without the capital to invest in a viable alternative, smallholders are still forced to continue their "slash and burn" methods in order to maintain their meagre existence.



The ArBolivia Project was established to tackle these multiple problems, following a pilot project in 2002 funded by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the European Union and the Belgian government together with support from the regional government in Bolivia. After 6 years of monitoring and research ArBolivia successfully registered the project as a Carbon Development Mechanism, selling the credits for the years 2008 – 2012 to the Belgian government.



Following the failure of Copenhagen the Bolivian government withdrew its support for the CDM convention and as a result ArBolivia has now verified its credits for the voluntary market, where host country approval is not required. 1500 hectares of trees have now been planted, with a target of 5,000 hectares. These comprise small, isolated parcels owned by roughly 1000 smallholders to date who belong to farmer co-operatives. A further 1,200 hectares will also be planted purely for conservation.

Technical assistance is provided to the farmers so that they can derive a better income from their land as a whole and can also manage this in a more ecologically sustainable manner.



Intercropping is encouraged so that farmers can cultivate both food crops and timber on the same plot of land, whilst predominantly native species of trees are used in a patchwork of different tree types.

Instead of planting one non-indigenous tree type in a concentrated area, over 18 different species have been planted on widely dispersed small plots of land. This results in huge biodiversity gains, and together with the focus on putting farmers' interests at the heart of the project, make Arbolivia a very special forestry project that stands out from other "sustainable" forestry schemes (see below for further details).

Most importantly, this new model of community-based forestry shares the net proceeds of the timber equally between investors in the project and farmers, thereby giving farmers sufficient economic incentive to both reforest part of their land and to remove the need to clear further areas of prime tropical rainforest.



A series of research documents and evaluation tools relating to the project, together with an interactive map of each smallholding is available on the ArBolivia website at www.arbolivia.org

What Makes The Project 'Special' ?

The commercial forestry enterprise undertaken by the ArBolivia project is very different from more conventional forestry plantations, even those that are termed 'sustainable':

Variety of Species

18 different native species have been used to date, all of which are grown from local seed. Parcel sizes vary (which helps to reduce visual impact) but the average is about 1 acre. Smallholders can select the most suitable species to match the exact conditions of their land and this ensures higher survival rates and future yields. Some species are faster growing but the most valuable timber is from trees which may take 35 – 40 years to mature - much longer than most commercial forestry enterprises will entertain. Many of the trees are inter-planted with other crops to improve fertility, reduce labour, provide structural support, competition for growth and increased yields per hectare.



Scattered Distribution

As at 1st October 2010 the forested area of 1557 hectares consisted of 2789 separate "sectores" (an area defined by a specific species and planting date) spread across four separate zones spread out along the western rim of the Amazon basin. This means that any incidence of fire, disease or insect attack is confined and will have little or no impact on other forestry parcels, providing highly effective natural, risk management.

Real Partnership

Each forestry parcel is owned by an individual smallholder but this demands much high levels of technical expertise and management and staffing than standard commercial forestry. Arbolivia works with smallholders to improve agricultural management practices, thereby reducing deforestation and improving smallholder incomes. Profits from the commercial forestry are shared equally between local farmers and investors and are estimated to triple a farmer's their current earnings per hectare over the full rotation period. In the interim farmers are also benefitting from both financial and practical assistance to increase efficiency and the yields on their remaining land through agro-forestry (e.g. cocoa and citrus fruits) and through collective bargaining and fair trade accreditation.

Education and Capacity Building

Many additional social benefits are provided through a programme of education and capacity building, which makes use of existing social structures such as community committees, farmer's co-operatives and other NGOs working in the area. For example, training on fire risks and control is an important additional weapon against "slash and burn" farming methods. Smallholders receive one-to-one practical advice and support on all aspects of farm management, including land use, crop and stock selection as well as marketing support.



Nature conservation

Separate conservation areas are being established to counter the loss of biodiversity by repairing and creating "islands and corridors" to provide a network of secure habitats and thoroughfares. Much of the conservation work is focussed on controlling erosion from increased local flooding during the wet season (which is itself a direct consequence of deforestation).

Additional Benefits of The Project

- High rates of carbon capture through reforestation in the Tropics
- Avoidance of further deforestation
- Protection of stocks of native seed
- Intercropping to produce food as well as timber
- Carbon capture through intercropping
- Low impact on soil, water systems and micro-climate
- Enhanced soil water retention leading to reduced flooding



What Accreditation does ArBolivia have?

ArBolivia was one of the very first reforestation projects to have been awarded "Clean Development Mechanism" status for its first project in Rurrenabaque, bordering on the famous Madidi National Park (the inspiration for the foundation of the Rainforest Alliance, by the international pop star, Sting)

Since then the Bolivian government has withdrawn its support for CDM so subsequent projects have used the same methodology to achieve verification under the *Plan Vivo* standard. This means that ArBolivia is now able to sell Verified Emissions Reductions for its forestry activities, based on CDM methodology but without the need for further host country approval.

Plan Vivo Standard

Plan Vivo has been chosen as a standard as this has been developed specifically with tropical forestry in mind. It also reflects the high value of ArBolivia's contribution not only to sequestering carbon but also to ecological repair, the protection and increase of biodiversity and, most importantly, the range of social benefits it provides for the local communities.

Under the Plan Vivo Standard:

- No Land must be removed from the ownership of local people
- Native species must be used or protected
- Local Communities must be involved in the design and implementation of the project



Further details of the Plan Vivo Foundation and the Plan Vivo standard are available on the foundation's website - www.planvivo.org



What Information & Support Do You Offer?

ArBolivia can supply an unrivalled level of detail to support your company's carbon, corporate social responsibility and media needs. In particular we provide:

- comprehensive data for each forestry parcel, family and community
- IT integration
- Opportunities for co-investment in commercial forestry
- Media resources including a comprehensive photo gallery and project videos
- Field visits and tours, including four National Parks of breathtaking beauty
- Support for affinity programmes / co-branding

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