



Proactive & integrated business action on climate change



More and more companies and financial institutions are taking responsibility in addressing climate change. But few of them know that one of the most effective ways to take urgent climate action is to protect tropical rainforests with their wealth of biodiversity and their importance for the livelihoods of 1.3 billion local people. In fact, we cannot achieve the <2 degrees target without dramatically reducing deforestation and unsustainable land use practices which account for 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions. So forest conservation is critical to achieving climate goals, biodiversity conservation and sustainable economic development and action on forests is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The REDD+ Business Initiative was founded by a group of businesses who understood the importance of forest conservation and the need to take action.



Deforestation in the tropics is disastrous for the environment, local people and biodiversity

Each year, an area the size of the Netherlands is deforested due to economic pressure and expanding agricultural production. Forests store carbon. And when they are burned or processed that carbon goes back into the atmosphere as CO₂, the most abundant greenhouse gas causing climate change. What should be our greatest ally in regulating our climate is actually now responsible 10% of global emissions – including agriculture this figure increases to 25%.

Deforestation in the tropics also threatens biodiversity and water security. More than 50% of all plant and animal species on Earth live in tropical forests which are also the foundation for our global water supply.

What is REDD+?

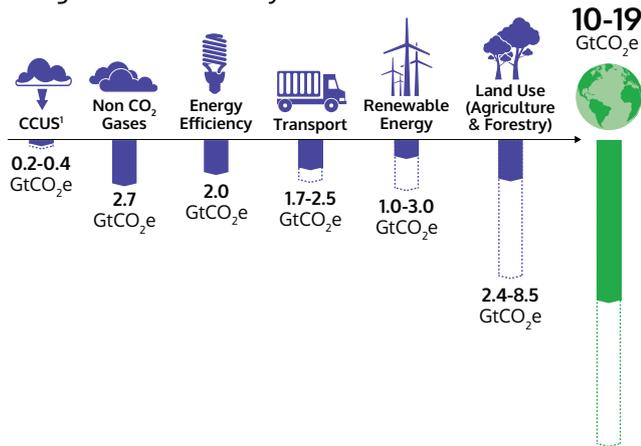
Over the past decade, a framework for the conservation and sustainable use of forests in developing countries was agreed to through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This framework is called REDD+ which stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, plus the enhancement of carbon stocks and sustainable forest management.

REDD+ quantifies and values the carbon storage services that forests provide and creates a financial mechanism to incentivise conservation and sustainable land use. REDD+ activities target the underlying drivers of deforestation to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with forest loss.

The forestry and land use sector is the only sector that can go from being an emitter today to an emitter carbon sink in the future. But in order to do this we must work together to reverse deforestation, adopt climate-smart agriculture practices, and restore degraded land.

The opportunity is huge. Forest conservation and sustainable land-use can provide up to 50% of the pre-2020 mitigation required to stay below a 2°C threshold. REDD+ provides an immediate and effective way to make progress.

Mitigation Potential by 2020



Source: UNFCCC (2015) Climate Action Now: Summary for Policymakers 2015.

¹Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage, involving removing CO₂ from the atmosphere, recycling it for use, and storing safely.

What makes REDD+ effective?

REDD+ doesn't require huge investments or complicated technical measures. It has immediate results and is therefore indispensable for reaching climate change targets.

REDD+ generally creates incentives for local projects that focus not only on forest protection, but also on the sustainable development of the region surrounding the forest. Through REDD+ projects, for example, local farmers receive technical assistance to improve their farming practices and they are helped to sell their sustainable produce all over the world, thereby improving their lives. This makes it worthwhile for local people to preserve the forest, instead of cutting it down. Thus, combining REDD+ with sustainable landscape investments is an effective way to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions and preserve highly threatened biodiversity and natural resources all over the world.

For example, the Tambopata REDD+ project demonstrates what is possible through REDD+. Located in the Peruvian Amazon, the project integrates conservation of a high biodiversity area with the development of commercially viable cacao production. This project protects 820,000 hectares, avoids 4 million tonnes of carbon emissions by 2021 and supports 400 local smallholder jobs. As a result, the local landscape is transformed with global benefits.



An example of this is the Tambopata REDD+ Project, in which the current partners of the REDD+ Business Initiative invest. This project recently received a United Nations award for innovative climate protection.



Have integrated sustainability solutions

REDD+ activities deliver multiple social and environmental benefits that contribute to the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. REDD+ is essential for conservation, resilient supply chains and empowering local people. By including REDD+ in your climate change strategy you can make improvements in many areas.

Manage climate risk and achieve targets

Businesses understand that it is in their best interest to set ambitious emissions targets to manage strategic and financial risk associated with climate change. In order to achieve these targets businesses are working hard to reduce emissions. But in most cases full climate-neutral operations or supply-chains are not realistic to achieve in the time needed without some CO₂ emission compensation.

To reach emissions reduction or climate-neutral goals, you can purchase voluntary REDD+ credits. This enriches your compensation of unavoidable emissions by also preserving the tropical forests and delivering local sustainable development.

Align your business strategy with <2 degrees pathway

Many businesses face pressure from their investors and shareholders to demonstrate how their business growth will be sustainable. Investing in REDD+ credits allows businesses to report a lower emissions pathway to shareholders with low and transparent costs.

Demonstrate measurable progress against the Sustainable Development Goals

Healthy, living forests are essential to our economic and social wellbeing. They contribute to water security, food security, climate mitigation and adaptation and are critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Good REDD+ projects measure their progress across a range of SDGs.

Advance sustainability certification and reporting

Carpet manufacturer Tarkett (formerly Desso), which operates on the basis of the cradle-to-cradle design philosophy aimed at the reuse of resources, uses REDD+ credits for certification. The objectives 'addressing climate change', 'celebrating diversity', and the social justice represented by the cradle-to-cradle philosophy can be achieved through REDD+.

Develop climate neutral products

REDD+ Business Initiative members Eneco and Essent develop climate neutral energy products using REDD+ credits that are appealing and contribute to important biodiversity conservation and local company and economic development.

Engage your employees

The REDD+ Business Initiative member FMO, a Dutch development bank, offers its employees the opportunity to opt for a Carbon Neutral Year corresponding to 7 tonnes of CO₂ per household instead of or in addition to the company Christmas gift. Other ideas might include using the broad appeal of REDD+ to motivate your employees to improve sustainability performance through competitions and offering the winner a trip to visit the REDD+ project in Peru.

Advance sustainable production and resilient supply chains

REDD+ strengthens initiatives that focus on the sustainability of supply chains such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil and the Consumer Goods Forum Zero Net Deforestation Pledge by helping to address indirect impacts and REDD+.



Join the REDD+ Business Initiative

Members of the REDD+ Business Initiative are currently working together proactively to preserve biodiversity by tackling deforestation and thereby reducing CO₂ emissions and strengthening the rights and prospects of local communities in developing countries.

Members of the REDD+ Business Initiative are shaping effective business-led solutions which demonstrate that companies are effective partners in the fight against climate change.

The founding members of the REDD+ Business Initiative Eneco, Essent, Tarkett (formerly Desso) and FMO announced at the 2014 climate summit in Lima that they were investing in a pilot project for forest conservation and sustainable cocoa farming in Peru's Madre de Dios region. In 2016 Cocoonect joined the Initiative. The goal now is to build on this early success and expand the REDD+ Business Initiative with more members and projects worldwide, delivering material and scalable results.

The REDD+ Business Initiative is supported by De Groene Zaak, the Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs and Ecosphere+ (a subsidiary of the Althelia Climate Fund).

For more information, please visit www.platformbee.nl/redd or contact erik.van.zadelhoff@degroenezaak.com

Measurable Impact on Sustainable Development Goals

Tambopata Biodiversity Reserve, Peru

Companies who are investing in the flagship project of the REDD+ Business Initiative are helping to deliver measurable results across a wide range of Sustainable Development Goals.



Goal 1: No poverty

Alleviating the poverty of local people is a key aim for the Tambopata Biodiversity Reserve. 11,500 people, mostly small-scale farmers, live in the project zone, including the Palma Real, Sonene and Infierno indigenous communities. These communities have limited access to public services and often find themselves excluded from the formal economy. The project's work is strategically designed to create genuine, sustainable livelihood opportunities for local people through agroforestry.



Goal 2: No Hunger

Reducing hunger is intrinsically linked to alleviating poverty. The Tambopata project focuses on improving economic circumstances of local people, which in turn improves their ability to feed themselves and their families.



Goal 5: Gender Equality

Gender equality and empowerment are key values in the work of the Tambopata project. The percentage of women in jobs created and supported by the project, productive activities within communities, and management roles in community engagement organisations is tracked.



Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Improving livelihoods by catalysing sustainable development through improved work and economic prospects for residents is key. The project's interventions are providing alternative livelihoods for 400 families through growing native, fine and aromatic cocoa with the ultimate goal of achieving commercial scale.



Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Sustainable production of commodities is a key part of the Tambopata project. The project is working with local farmers to restore 4000 hectares of degraded forest through cultivating cocoa using sustainable agriculture and agroforestry systems. It also supports a local cocoa producer's cooperative, which provides technical assistance, infrastructure for post-harvest management, quality control and route to market for the cocoa.

Such sustainable livelihoods foster a new relationship between local people and their environment - conserving the forest at the same time as helping to raise them out of poverty.



Goal 13: Climate Action

The foundation of the Tambopata project is addressing climate change by preventing deforestation. It is expected to counteract 4 million tonnes of carbon emissions by 2021 in Peru – equivalent to 419,000 homes' energy use for a year! Carbon revenue creates a reliable financing stream to target the causes of deforestation and create alternative economic activities.



Goal 15: Life on Land

The Tambopata Biodiversity Reserve project preserves threatened forest in the Amazon and its biodiversity. It is an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot and contains high proportions of species that are either endangered, only found locally ('endemic'), or both. The project protects the critical habitat of 30 high conservation value species, such as the giant armadillo, blue macaw, jaguar, and giant river otter.



Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

A key aspect of the project is ensuring participatory decision-making and helping local institutions at the community level. The local cocoa producers' cooperative which the project has worked to support and strengthen will be self-sustaining and independent. The project is also working to secure 188 land titles for local farmers over the life of the project which give much-needed legal recognition and security to traditionally marginalised people.