



Project 1164

Improved Biodiversity & Mixed Reforestation

Costa Rica

The reforestation project in Costa Rica combines the premium quality standards of a recognised forest carbon offset project with multiple ecological and socio-economic benefits for local communities and the environment. This project has established a remarkable ecologically and socially sound reforestation with predominantly native tree species in Costa Rica. Since the start of this project, an area of 2,115ha of pastureland, previously used for extensive cattle ranching, has been under sustainable management. 1,280ha have been successively reforested in near natural mixed forest plantations with mainly native tree species. In total, more than one million trees were planted using a variety of 17 different tree species. The plantations are managed as a continuous forest cover. This reforestation model comprises a mixture of pioneer trees, and medium growth and slow-growth shadow trees.



The reforestation farms are spread between five sites in the Central North of Costa Rica. About 25% of the total project area consist of remaining old-growth and secondary forest and wetlands – some of them classified and managed as high conservation value forests (HCVF) according to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). These areas serve as habitat and biological corridors for many rare and endangered wildlife species of the diminishing Atlantic lowland rainforests in Central America – particularly the project area La Virgen located in close vicinity of the Braulio Carrillo National Park.

**UN
SDGs**

1 NO POVERTY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

15 LIFE ON LAND

By constantly monitoring biodiversity, this project has discovered that 70 new species of amphibians and reptiles have resettled on its land. And by using *Dipteryx panamensis* as one of the main tree species planted, the project contributes specifically to the survival of this threatened tree species of Costa Rica.

Furthermore, the existence of the project, with people working in these remote areas and promoting environmental education, helps to reduce illegal logging, poaching and animal trading. Finally, the reforestation of fallow and pastureland contributes to protecting water catchment areas and improving water quality. This project is one of the first afforestation/reforestation projects in the world which gained Gold Standard Certification.



Project Impacts and Benefits:

This project in northern Costa Rica provides long-term employment in a rural and underdeveloped area and offers fair working conditions including accident, health and pension insurance, personal protective equipment, and ongoing education and training. Additionally, 25% of the total project area is managed as nature reserves, preserving remnant forests and wetlands as habitats for endangered wildlife species. The project also includes biodiversity monitoring of amphibians and reptiles, and the use of native tree species in mixed stands to create buffer zones between the project area and the bordering national park. The project also helps to reduce Costa Rica's dependency on timber imports and decrease pressure to exploit old-growth rainforests, while careful site selection and private land ownership reduce the risk of land use conflicts.