

Healthy Forests for a Stable Climate

Get involved with CI's Conservation Carbon program



The Emerging Issue of Climate Change

The nationwide release of the documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth" is the latest in a recent line of films, TV shows and new features raising the public consciousness on the issue of climate change.

This newfound attention comes on the heels of the milestone launch of the Kyoto Protocol in 2005 binding most industrial nations—not including the United States and Australia—to cut greenhouse gas emissions six percent below 1990 levels. Yet despite this important pledge, actual emissions continue to rise and the negative impacts associated with rising global temperatures such as variable and volatile weather, increased diseases, coral reef dieback and the melting of the polar ice caps are increasing at an ever faster rate.

With phrases such as "green power," "cap and trade," "energy portfolios," and "carbon neutral" becoming mainstream, there is cause for optimism in global efforts to stem the most pressing environmental, social, and economic issue of our time. Yet the question remains: What solutions exist?

Working Together to Provide Solutions

Conservation International (CI) is working with its partners to draw attention to biodiversity conservation as a promising strategy to mitigate climate change.

It is a little known fact that the burning and clearing of forests and other ecosystems account for more than 20 percent of global emissions. To combat this, CI is working globally and locally to demonstrate how protecting and restoring natural habitat removes carbon from the atmosphere while protecting biodiversity and providing local communities with clean water, protection from natural disasters, and other ecosystem services.

CI coordinated the creation of the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards (see <http://climate-standards.org>), an initiative of several leading companies and non-governmental organizations to promote land-based projects that offset carbon emissions while protecting biodiversity and supporting communities. Already, China's State Forestry Administration has endorsed the standards to attract foreign investment in restoration of degraded lands, while policy makers in Europe, Japan, and other nations are taking the standards under serious consideration.

Through investments from wide-range of partners including the World Bank, SC Johnson, United Technologies, Ricoh and Pearl Jam, CI is also putting the CCB Standards into practice on the ground through its portfolio of *Conservation Carbon* projects. Located in the biodiversity hotspots, *Conservation Carbon* projects generate cost-effective carbon offsets that meet the regulations set forth under the Kyoto Protocol as well as the emerging voluntary offset market, while also proving an opportunity for investors to diversify portfolio risk.



Humans may be the leading cause of climate change but we can also be the solution. Calculate and offset your carbon footprint at: www.conservation.org/carboncalculator.



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Benefiting biodiversity, communities and business, investment in these projects demonstrate proactive private sector approaches to climate change while meeting multiple corporate social responsibility objectives.

CI's Conservation Carbon Project Portfolio

Reforestation of Coastal Rainforests, Ecuador

Ecuador is known for having the greatest amount of biodiversity per hectare in South America as well as the highest population density on the continent. National policies encourage encroachment on and colonization of natural lands. At the current rate of deforestation, 2.3 percent a year, the country will have lost nearly all its natural forests by 2025. CI is partnering with local environmental organizations including the Jatun Sacha Foundation and Fundación Maquipucuna to reforest and restore Ecuador's Coastal Rainforests with native species. Through private sector investment, it is estimated that more than 132,000 tons of carbon dioxide will be offset over the 99-year life of the first phase reforestation project. An expanded project producing Certified Emissions Reductions is currently being reviewed by the Executive Board of the Clean Development Mechanism.

Protection of Threatened Forests, Madagascar

Devoid of human life for nearly 2000 years, the island nation of Madagascar off the eastern coast of Africa is home to a wide array of plant and animal species found nowhere else on the planet. Poverty, high population growth rate, and lack of agriculture alternatives, however, have resulted in extensive deforestation caused by slash and burn agriculture. With our partners, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Madagascar's Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests (MEEF), CI is developing carbon offset options to finance the Makira Forest Project. Investment in the Makira Forest Project helps companies reduce their carbon footprint through the protection of nearly 350,000 hectares (approximately 1,350 square miles) of untouched rain forest on the island. In addition, these efforts serve to protect vital habitat for threatened species while also working with local communities on sustainable agriculture practices.

Reforestation in the Mountains of Southwest China Hotspot

Following devastating floods along the Yangtze River in 1998, the Chinese government launched a program to restore the region's degraded forests to prevent future flooding and land erosion. Unfortunately those efforts focused on monoculture plantations of non-native trees which do not provide the multitude of ecological services of the natural forests they replace.

In 2005, CI teamed with China's State Forestry Administration, The Nature Conservancy, and others to launch the Forests for Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Initiative (FCCB) to demonstrate how reforesting degraded lands with native species can help reduce climate change, protect biodiversity, and provide economic opportunities for local communities. With initial support of \$3 million from 3M Corporation, the initiative aims to support restoration activities on an estimated 1,800 square kilometers (180,00 hectares) through pilot sites in Yunnan and Sichuan provinces, which is anticipated to leverage national level reforestation policies and activities on over 30,000 square kilometers (3 million hectares) within the Mountains of Southwest China Hotspot.

ABOUT CONSERVATION CARBON

Healthy intact forests store carbon taken from the atmosphere, and by preventing forest loss, these natural environments can play a unique role in mitigating the effects of climate change. Conservation International's Conservation Carbon projects counter climate change through the restoration and protection of threatened forest ecosystems of high biodiversity value. In addition, investment in CI's Conservation Carbon program delivers "multiple benefits" to project regions by protecting endangered species from extinction, conserving habitats that deliver critical ecosystem services such as soil conservation and water purification, and providing economic alternatives to local communities through project employment and carbon service revenues.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to conserve the Earth's living heritage, our global biodiversity, and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature.



To learn more about these Conservation Carbon Projects, please contact:

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