



# coffee + carbon

Healthy, productive forests are in everyone's best interest, and they're at the heart of the partnership between Conservation International (CI) and Starbucks Coffee Company.

Most of the world's key coffee-growing regions are the same areas where biological diversity is richest and most threatened by the combined effects of deforestation and climate change. Recognizing this overlap, CI and Starbucks began working together in 1998 to develop a field model for coffee production that maintains ecosystem services and protects biodiversity.

In 2008, Starbucks and CI launched a renewed five-year agreement to address the most important issue facing our world today – global climate change. The same forests that produce the world's best coffee and sustain millions of farmers also extract and store vast amounts of carbon dioxide. In fact, when they're destroyed, these forests release large amounts of greenhouse gas into our atmosphere.

In addition to shade-grown coffee, Starbucks and CI are now investing in and supporting communities across select coffee-growing landscapes who engage in climate-friendly activities, including protecting existing forests and helping to restore degraded landscapes to promote mutually beneficial forest conservation and the sequestration of carbon.

The newest phase of our partnership works with coffee-producing communities in Chiapas, Mexico, and Sumatra, Indonesia, to improve coffee production, conserve and restore natural habitat and explore opportunities to facilitate farmer access to forest carbon markets. Each project illustrates different approaches to addressing the climate challenges facing coffee producers while exploring the potential of the carbon market to benefit both livelihoods and conservation efforts.

As far back as 1998, smallholder coffee farmers in Chiapas, Mexico, were already practicing the eco-friendly method of

growing coffee in the shade of healthy forests. And their farms formed a natural protective buffer around some of the region's most valuable habitats. In particular, they bordered El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, a 300,000-acre Eden that is home to wildcats, tapir, monkeys and untold other species, all coexisting within the rich flora of cloud and rain forests.

Starbucks was quick to see the importance of protecting El Triunfo and similar areas worldwide that bordered prized coffee-growing farms. Together, we launched a three-year program encouraging coffee growers in Chiapas to continue their sustainable farming practices. In return, they received technical assistance from CI's field staff and Starbucks became a dependable buyer of the farmers' beans. Building on this rich history of engagement in the region, CI and local partner organizations are working with coffee growers in the region to identify opportunities to reforest communal lands and sell the carbon credits on the voluntary market.

Within the provinces of North Sumatra and Aceh in Indonesia, coffee has historically been one of the drivers of deforestation due primarily to declines in productivity after several years of coffee production. To address this challenge, CI and Starbucks are working with coffee communities to improve production practices in return for an agreement to respect the forest boundary. These activities improve farmer livelihoods without needing to continue land clearing in the Northern Sumatra Biodiversity Corridor.

While the work in Northern Sumatra is still in the pilot phase, the objective is to identify opportunities to link coffee farmers to carbon markets as a means of providing additional income and incentives for forest conservation, and to use potential revenues from Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) to provide a sustainable source of funding for the delivery of services needed by coffee growers to improve their productivity without resorting to land-clearing for new coffee gardens.

Our partnership with Starbucks is a good example of how CI collaborates with a multi-national company to bring about a sustainable supply chain and bring a sustainable economy to smallholder coffee farmers around the world.



## Chiapas Results to Date

**3 nurseries** built to supply seedlings to the project

**92,547 seedlings** produced for reforestation activities

Farmers in **13 communities** received assistance in developing farm plans

**8 community technicians** trained on climate change mitigation and adaptation

**5,042 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>** sold at an average price of 9 dollars per ton