



**WORLD
LAND
TRUST**

Registered Charity 1001291

Saving land
Saving species

Carbon Balanced

Delivering a Sustainable Future

“The money that is given to World Land Trust, in my estimation, has more effect on the wild world than almost anything I can think of.”

Sir David Attenborough,
WLT Patron



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Introduction

Taking immediate action against climate change has never been more urgent. Each year, climate records are being toppled and 2013–2023 was the warmest decade in recorded history. As global temperatures increase, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and damaging, often hitting the most vulnerable people and ecosystems the hardest.

Without a concerted global effort, the severity of these impacts is only expected to get worse. In the World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Risks Report, climate-related threats represented half of the top 10 risks global populations will face in the next 10 years. Despite the clear imperative to act, national climate action plans are "falling miles short" of what is needed, according to the UN. The current plans will cut global emissions by just 2.6% by 2030, a far cry from the 43% reduction required to keep within the Paris Agreement's "safe limit" of 1.5°C warming above the pre-industrial baseline. As governments fail to act at the scale and urgency required, this is a critical opportunity for climate action from the private sector.

"Trees are the oldest and most reliable carbon capture technology we have"

World Land Trust (WLT) is an international conservation charity founded in 1989. Since then, WLT has been working with local partners to protect the world's most biodiverse and threatened ecosystems. Throughout our work, we recognise the powerful contribution of utilising Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) to tackle climate change. Trees are the oldest and most reliable carbon capture technology we have and by protecting and restoring biodiverse forests, we also deliver an array of other benefits for people and wildlife.



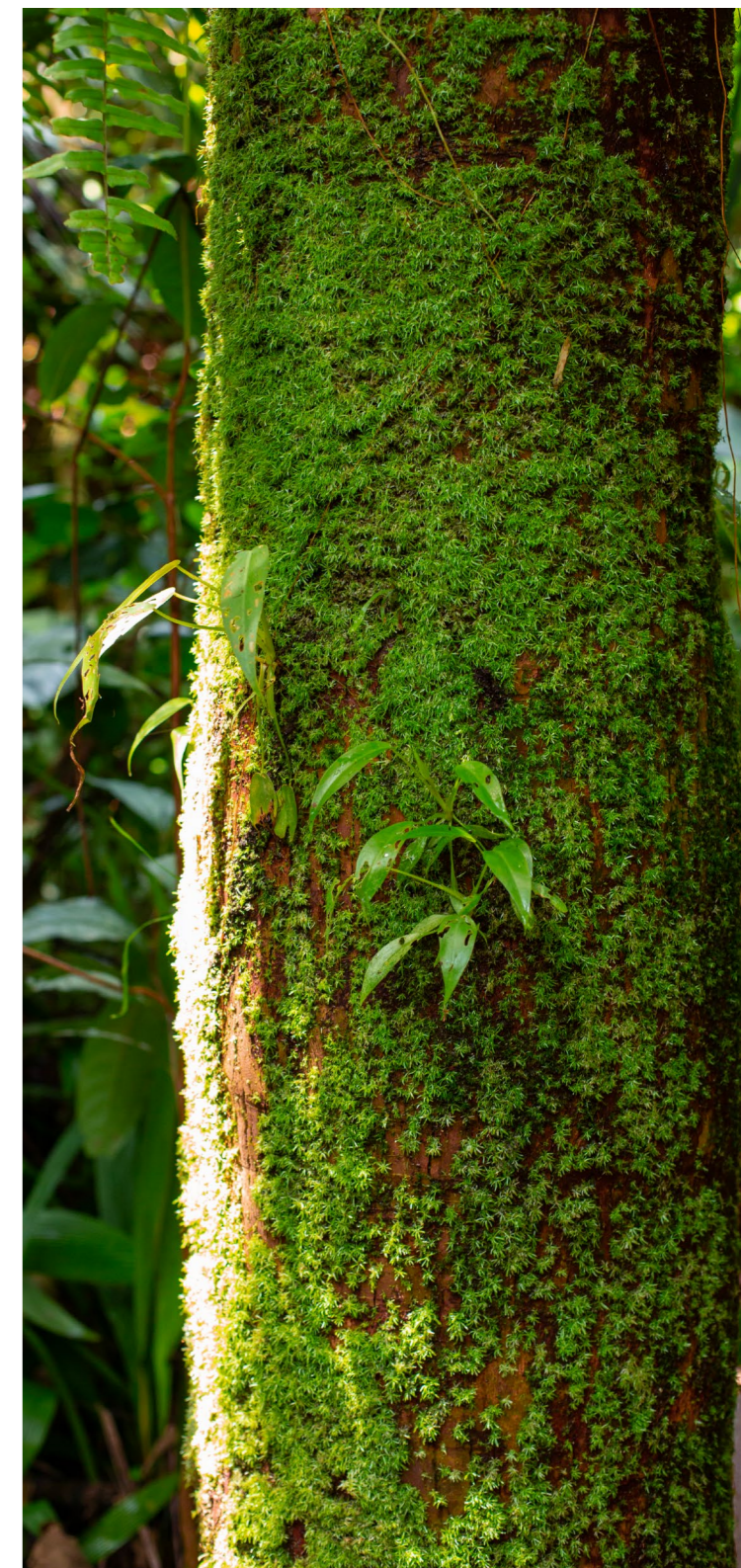
"Despite the clear imperative to act, national climate action plans are "falling miles short" of what is needed"

"As of October 2024, over 610,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) have been mitigated through our Carbon Balanced projects, unlocking more than £2.5 million of conservation funding"

WLT launched the Carbon Balanced programme in 2005 to provide businesses with a rigorous and clear pathway to address their environmental impact. This programme is aligned with the recommendations of the International Panel on Climate Change, which asserts that the single most effective climate action we can take is to avoid further forest loss, particularly in the tropics. Tropical forests are powerful carbon sinks and their protection and restoration is essential. By harnessing expert knowledge – both in-house and through our Conservation Advisory Panel (CAP) – WLT delivers carbon mitigation that is transparent, evidence-based, and robustly evaluated and verified. But WLT also goes a step further, ploughing any profit from the Carbon Balanced programme back into our conservation work. As of October 2024, over 610,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) have been mitigated through our Carbon Balanced projects, unlocking more than £2.5 million of conservation funding.

"WLT's Carbon Balanced programme is unique – it combines work with local trusted partners to protect and restore forests around the world with the robust monitoring and verification framework that is essential to deliver real and quantified emissions reductions." Professor Dominick Spracklen, Biosphere-Atmosphere Interactions Researcher and WLT CAP member

By joining WLT's Carbon Balanced programme, you are taking part in a comprehensive sustainability strategy that will deliver lasting change for the climate, people, and wildlife. We hope you will join us in this effort and look forward to working with you.



A Note on Terminology

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the most abundant greenhouse gas (GHG) in our atmosphere. In GHG balancing, "carbon" is often used as a shorthand for all GHGs. The efficacy of a carbon balancing project is measured by its capacity to either absorb or prevent the release of all GHGs, expressed as "tCO₂e" (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent).

What Sets World Land Trust Apart

Today, the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss requires a holistic approach that goes far beyond carbon alone. Science-Based Targets (SBTs), Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should all form part of a comprehensive sustainability strategy. Equally, businesses that are landowners or developers should follow a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) plan. Adopting these protocols ensures that a business does not only meet its climate commitments, but also enhances biodiversity and supports local communities.

Crucially, all our projects will contribute to your SBTs, NBS and SDG's. SBTs in particular will help you to solidify your environmental commitment and provide a more robust framework for your sustainability strategy, but they are not essential. Your business can still work towards net zero without an official SBT strategy or choose to incorporate one at a later stage of the sustainability journey.

“On the ground, our partners restore degraded forests, plant new trees, and safeguard well-established primary and secondary forests”



At WLT, we focus on protecting the world's most biodiverse and threatened ecosystems from harmful human activities. On the ground, our partners restore degraded forests, plant new trees, and safeguard well-established primary and secondary forests. In addition, they ensure that local communities receive the support they need to develop sustainable livelihoods, pursue educational opportunities, and play a leading role in the conservation of their land.

“By working with WLT, you'll be joining an internationally respected conservation charity and our local conservation partners in this critical decade to tackle climate change”

WLT is a provider of avoidance (forest protection) and removals (afforestation and reforestation) carbon credits. Avoidance credits prevent the release of stored carbon, while removals credits actively remove additional carbon from the atmosphere. This versatile offering means that investment in our projects can count towards every part of your sustainability strategy.

By working with WLT, you'll be joining an internationally respected conservation charity and our local conservation partners in this critical decade to tackle climate change. As a supporter of our Carbon Balanced programme, you'll mark yourself out as a pioneering and forward-thinking business taking decisive action to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises.

A commitment to NBS will also engage your existing employees and help you reach a new generation of consumers who are more environmentally aware than ever. As the demand for climate action grows throughout society, individuals are increasingly looking to support brands with an ethos that matches their own.



The Importance of Protecting Mature Forest

Though individual trees come and go, mature forests have remained as intact ecosystems for many decades, absorbing huge volumes of carbon dioxide and locking it away. The carbon is not only stored in the trees themselves, but also the soils that underpin these ancient habitats.

When these forests are cut down, long-sequestered carbon is rapidly released into the atmosphere – a process that is further exacerbated if the remaining brush is burned or soil is cultivated. As a result, deforestation accounts for 10–20% of annual global greenhouse gas emissions – contributing more than every car, boat and plane combined.

At WLT, we recognise that reducing avoidable emissions is the single most important step in the global effort to combat climate change. But until forests are valued for their true worth, carbon mitigation fulfils an important function by slowing the pace of climate change, while delivering other benefits as well.

With our Carbon Balanced programme, WLT offers what we believe is the most responsible, sustainable and effective choice for the global climate, threatened habitats and wildlife, local communities, and your business.

Why choose our Carbon Balanced projects?

- ✓ Certified to well-recognised international standards
- ✓ Follow robust methodologies and regular monitoring
- ✓ Undergo rigorous verification
- ✓ Credits are issued once and not double counted
- ✓ Credits are retired on a public registry
- ✓ Deliver real, additional, measurable and permanent impact
- ✓ Contribute to SBTs, NBS, and SDGs
- ✓ Support nature-based climate solutions that also deliver for local communities, biodiversity, and your overall sustainability targets

Beginning Your Carbon Balanced Journey

Every business looking to address their impact on the global climate will follow the same three-step process: **Measure, Reduce, Mitigate.**



Measure

Measure the emissions you are directly and indirectly responsible for to arrive at an accurate carbon footprint for your business. To help with this, businesses of any size can calculate their carbon footprint using WLT's business carbon calculator which adheres to the GHG Protocol Corporate Standard. If you go on to balance your emissions with us, this assessment is completely free. We also accept carbon footprint assessments from certified third-party auditors. WLT encourages businesses to balance all or a reasonable proportion of their emissions in line with their sustainability targets and goals.



Reduce

Reduce your emissions at the source as much as possible through efficiency measures, stakeholder engagement, renewable energy, and investments in business transformation. As a small team focused on maximising its conservation impact, WLT does not have the capacity to provide bespoke advice on how to reduce your emissions. However, we can provide you with a list of reputable organisations should you require assistance in making your business more sustainable.



Mitigate

Mitigate your unavoidable residual emissions by protecting and restoring carbon and wildlife-rich habitats while supporting sustainable development projects. WLT offers high quality and competitively priced carbon credits via third party-certified Carbon Balanced projects.

Achieving Net Zero

If we are to meet the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, society as a whole will need to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Even though the mid-century mark is decades away, we are far off track from achieving this goal, and time is running out fast.

If we are to have any hope of correcting our course, the latest UN-backed research suggests global greenhouse gas emissions need to drop by 43% by 2030, making the 2020s a truly pivotal decade for climate action. The challenge that lies ahead is undoubtedly a daunting one, but businesses around the world can make a hugely important contribution by bringing their own emissions to net zero by 2030.

Responding to the climate crisis with the requisite urgency is essential for the health of the planet, its people and wildlife. It is also a prudent business decision. Taking your first steps towards net zero will grant you a head start on the regulations expected to come into force over the coming years.



“A net zero strategy constitutes a comprehensive response to your impact on the climate”

A net zero strategy constitutes a comprehensive response to your impact on the climate. Achieving net zero requires a business to compensate emissions classified as **Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3**.

Scope 1

Emissions from sources under your direct control, like fossil fuel combustion from company vehicles.

Scope 2

Indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy.

Scope 3

All other indirect emissions that occur in your business's supply chain. Although you are only indirectly responsible for your supply chain emissions, it is likely these that constitute the majority of your total emissions. They are also the most difficult to obtain an accurate footprint for – precisely why accounting for them is so important to addressing your overall environmental impact.

Going Beyond Net Zero

Bringing our emissions to net zero is essential if we are to slow the pace of climate change, but healing the damage already done to our planet will require moving beyond net zero – we must begin to remove additional carbon from our atmosphere.

Once you've achieved net zero, you can explore how to compensate for your historical emissions while maintaining your net zero emissions strategy. In time, you will be able to take the significant step of compensating for the emissions produced over your entire organisational history. It is possible to work towards this goal today by investing in afforestation and reforestation through our carbon removals projects.



Planting trees to sequester carbon

WLT's carbon removals projects ensure the restoration of highly threatened forest habitats around the world through ambitious, evidence-based, and carefully managed tree planting. Crucially, we recognise that the value of tree planting is in creating thriving biodiverse forests for many generations to come.

With our partners, we bring extensive experience in habitat restoration to our carbon removals projects, ensuring the right trees are planted in the right places. Moreover, our project partners carefully assess the suitability of all planting sites and carry out meticulous plot preparation to maximise sapling survival. In addition, sapling health is closely monitored and replacement planting is undertaken when necessary. By working closely with local communities, our partners also generate a diverse range of wider social benefits, which include alternative livelihoods, abundant clean water, and healthy soils.



Project Profile

The Conservation Coast, Caribbean Guatemala

Between 2001 and 2023, Guatemala lost 1.75 million hectares (4.3 million acres) of tree cover, equivalent to 830 million tCO₂e.¹ The majority of this was driven by slash-and-burn agriculture, cattle ranching, and deforestation for monoculture plantations. These activities threaten the survival of rare and endemic species while also destroying well-established carbon sinks.

By purchasing carbon credits in the REDD+ project 'Caribbean Guatemala: The Conservation Coast', you can prevent the forests here from suffering a similar fate. Managed by WLT partner FUNDAECO, the Conservation Coast project covers 59,524 hectares (147,084 acres) of tropical forests and wetlands across Guatemala's Caribbean coastline. These ecosystems sequester huge quantities of carbon and provide clean drinking water and sustainable timber. In addition, these forests protect local communities from tropical storms and coastal flooding.

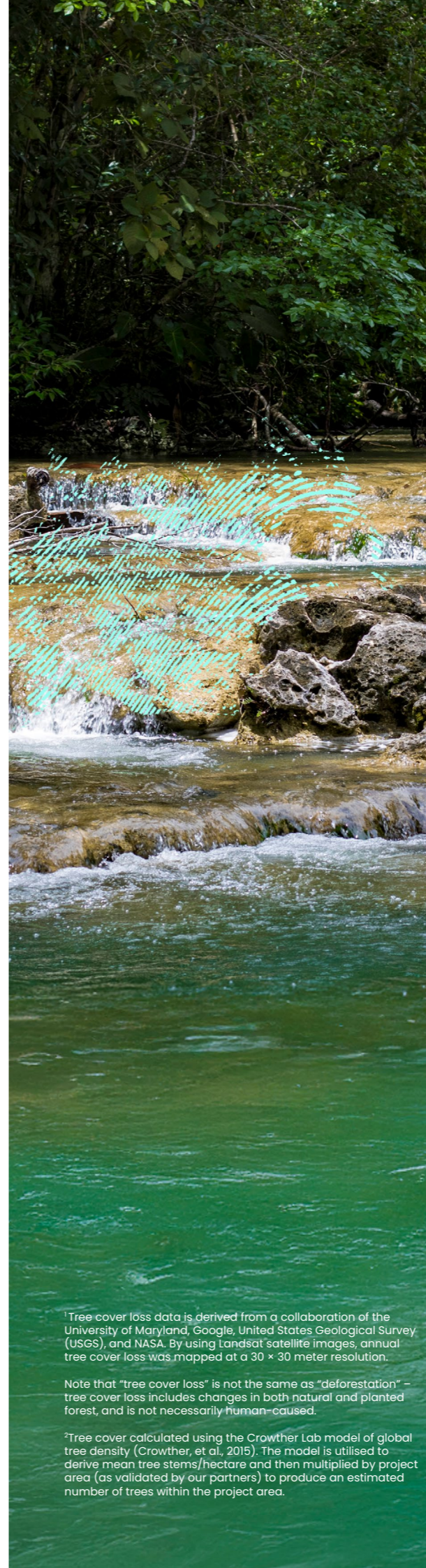
As a supporter of this project, you'll be preserving critical habitat for 30 species of high conservation value, including Jaguar (*Panthera onca*), Baird's Tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*) and West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*). On top of this, the project area provides refuge for more than 500 bird

species, over 100 of which are migratory and either travel through or spend the winter here.

This project also delivers an array of community benefits. These include improving access to healthcare and education for women and girls, particularly among Indigenous groups. Using project funds, FUNDAECO are also working to develop sustainable agroforestry-based livelihoods for farmers and fishermen, and an ecotourism programme that provides employment for the local communities.

This project is certified to the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Climate, Community and Biodiversity Standard (CCB). Purchasing Verified Carbon Units (VCUs) in this project provides third-party verification by Verra.

"These forests protect local communities from tropical storms and coastal flooding"



Project Impact of Caribbean Guatemala: The Conservation Coast

Project area: 59,524 hectares (147,084 acres)

Project timeframe: 30 years

Carbon Standards: VCS & CCB

Total estimated carbon benefit: 24,445,681 tCO₂e

Climate benefits: Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation via forest protection, sustainable forest management and complementary activities such as livelihood support, and education and health support for local communities.

Trees protected²: 31,126,020

Terrestrial species protected: 792

UN Sustainable Development Goals advanced by this project:



¹Tree cover loss data is derived from a collaboration of the University of Maryland, Google, United States Geological Survey (USGS), and NASA. By using Landsat satellite images, annual tree cover loss was mapped at a 30 x 30 meter resolution.

Note that "tree cover loss" is not the same as "deforestation" - tree cover loss includes changes in both natural and planted forest, and is not necessarily human-caused.

²Tree cover calculated using the Crowther Lab model of global tree density (Crowther, et al., 2015). The model is utilised to derive mean tree stems/hectare and then multiplied by project area (as validated by our partners) to produce an estimated number of trees within the project area.



Project Profile Mexico

In the rugged mountains of the Sierra Madre Oriental, WLT partner GESG protects two exceptionally diverse forest regions as part of the Carbon Balanced programme. These include 9,538 hectares (23,569 acres) within the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve and 4,710 hectares (11,639 acres) at nearby Xilitla. Together, these provide a refuge for iconic predators such as the American Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*), rare amphibians like the Endangered Big-footed Salamander (*Chiropterotriton magnipes*), and all six of Mexico's cat species. Despite the global conservation importance of these forests, they are under threat from illegal logging, agricultural expansion, and increasingly catastrophic forest fires.

By purchasing carbon credits from these projects, you can protect these highly biodiverse forests for generations to come. In Sierra Gorda, the carbon project protects these forests from deforestation and degradation by working with landowners and one of the local communities to provide payments for ecosystem services.

Meanwhile, in Xilitla, the forest is protected by four *ejidos*. *Ejid*os are areas of communal land tenure in Mexico that are managed and cared for by the local people. The Carbon Balanced programme provides local communities with income to support the development of community

infrastructure and sustainable livelihoods. In turn, the owners of these forests commit to monitoring their properties, preventing forest fires, and eliminating cattle grazing, logging, and poaching. Your support for the Carbon Balanced programme in Xilitla ensures that locals can maintain conservation stewardship of their land.

In addition to storing large amounts of carbon and safeguarding wildlife, the protection of both these regions also regulates rainfall across the wider Huasteca Potosina region. This is critical to ensuring a consistent supply of drinking water for the local municipalities, especially given increasingly extreme droughts in Mexico in recent years.

These projects are certified to GESG's Local Protocol for Subnational Actions for the Regeneration of Forests.

“The Carbon Balanced programme provides local communities with income to support the development of community infrastructure and sustainable livelihoods”



Project Impact in Mexico

Project area: 14,248 hectares (35,208 acres): 9,538 hectares (23,569 acres) in Sierra Gorda and 4,710 hectares (11,639 acres) in Xilitla

Project timeframe: 5 years

Carbon standard: Carbono Biodiverso – Local Protocol for Subnational Actions for the Regeneration of Forests

Total estimated carbon benefit: 228,687 tCO₂e (120,635 tCO₂e Sierra Gorda and 108,052 tCO₂e Xilitla)

Climate benefits: Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation via forest protection, sustainable forest management and complementary activities such as livelihood support, and education and health support for local communities.

Trees protected³: 5,204,491

Terrestrial species protected: 552

UN Sustainable Development Goals advanced by this project:



³Tree cover calculated using the Crowther Lab model of global tree density (Crowther, et al., 2015). The model is utilised to derive mean tree stems/hectare and then multiplied by project area (as validated by our partners) to produce an estimated number of trees within the project area.

Project Profile

Uganda



The tropical forests of the Albertine Rift of western Uganda are exceptionally biodiverse, containing 52% of Africa's bird species, 19% of its amphibians, and 14% of its reptiles, as well as Uganda's 5,000 remaining Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*).

The importance of this region has led to the creation of many protected areas and reserves. But the impacts of deforestation for agricultural expansion and timber is fragmenting the wider landscape, threatening the ecological connectivity vital for countless species, as well as encroaching into the reserves themselves.

WLT partner Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda's (ECOTRUST) long-term, carbon sequestration project Trees for Global Benefits (TGB) supports farmers in the project area to plant native trees. This has multiple benefits, sequestering carbon while also supporting agroforestry activities and sustainable livelihoods, and enhancing the local people's resilience and adaptability to climate change.

In addition, essential forest management provides the local community with timber, firewood, and fruits, while supporting the trees' growth and easing pressure on surrounding forests. The cover provided by the trees also reconnects bridges for wildlife to move through the forest.

This project is certified to the Plan Vivo Carbon Standard (PV Climate). Purchasing Plan Vivo Certificates (PVCs) in this project therefore provides third-party verification by Plan Vivo.

“Forest management provides the local community with timber, firewood, and fruits, while supporting the trees' growth and easing pressure on surrounding forests.”

Project Impact of Trees for Global Benefit

Project area⁴: 6,577,305 hectares (16,252,521 acres)

Project timeframe: 20 years

Carbon Standard: PV Climate

Total carbon benefit 2003–23⁵: 5,973,569 tCO₂e

Climate benefits: Carbon sequestration via reforestation (farmer-led forestry/agroforestry projects), reducing pressure on natural forest resources, and rural livelihood improvements.

Area restored: 27,297 hectares (67,451 acres)

Terrestrial species protected⁶: 892

UN Sustainable Development Goals advanced by this project:



⁴The TGB project intervention area spans over 37 districts in the Albertine Rift and Mount Elgon regions of Uganda.

⁵Each year, new farmers are enrolled onto this project for 20 years from their date of enrolment. This figure therefore gives the number of Plan Vivo Certificates issued to date i.e. within the first 20 years of the programme.

⁶Species count is specific to Hoima and Kikuube districts and includes areas of natural forest that the project aims to protect.

To learn more about our Carbon Balanced programme, please scan the QR code below.

When you're ready for the next steps, please speak with us and we will help you to begin delivering a sustainable future today.



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