

# CLIMATE, CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITIES

The UN Sustainable Development Goals advanced by Carbon Balanced projects



## GOAL 1: NO POVERTY

Thanks to support given to the indigenous Shuar people by our partner Naturaleza y Cultura Ecuador, these communities now receive annual payments from the government in exchange for protecting and monitoring their ancestral lands. In Mexico, it is WLT instead making annual payments to communities at a rate of £18 per hectare, resulting in an investment of more than £55,000 each year into community livelihood programmes.

SDG 1 is being advanced in Guatemala through agricultural training, increased access to legal and financial resources, and the creation of 644 jobs within local communities, transforming the lives of 3,250 families as a result. In Vietnam, three cooperatives and a body of forest owners are being established to support smallholder acacia plantations designed for FSC certification. These plantations will increase income and productivity for local communities while reducing pressures on protected timber and wildlife.



## GOAL 2: ZERO HUNGER

Fruits such as lychee and rambutan are among the 2,500+ acres (1,000 ha) of crops being grown as part of our Guatemala project. Growers are following a food production system that is sustainable and community-led.



## GOAL 3: GOOD HEALTH & WELLBEING

In Guatemala, 24 community-run clinics provide family planning and reproductive health services - combining modern health-care techniques with traditional practices, including the services of midwives, so that they can be sustainable in the long term. To date, over 2,030 people have benefited from sexual and reproductive health services, while 1,131 families have made use of the family planning services being offered.



## GOAL 5: GENDER EQUALITY

When deciding how best to use annual payments received from the Carbon Balanced programme, communities supported by our Mexico project take steps to ensure fair gender representation in their decision-making committees. In Ecuador, the same steps are taken when community land-use plans are being developed; here, women are offered equal opportunities for leadership and participation at all levels of political, economic and public life.

In Guatemala, providing access to healthcare (SDG 4) and education (SDG 5) has empowered women and girls, particularly those underserved indigenous groups who may not speak Spanish. More opportunities available to them and greater control over family planning means they can now make decisions about their own future in ways that they haven't been able to before. 30% of jobs in the project region are now held by women.



## GOAL 6: CLEAN WATER & SANITATION

The Maycú Reserve is located in Ecuador's Upper Nangaritz Valley, where the Nangaritz River's watershed and catchment head can be found. WLT's project here has helped to prevent mining developments in the valley which have a significant detrimental impact on the water quality of the river. In Vietnam, Khe Nuoc Trong has been classified as a Watershed Protection Forest in recognition of its importance to freshwater supplies.



## GOAL 8: DECENT WORK & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Our Guatemala project, located in one of the country's poorest regions, has either created or supported 716 jobs for local and indigenous communities in 2021. Over the course of the year, €7.5 million will be contributed to the local economy, supporting seven sustainable businesses including an ecotourism hub. The acacia plantations that contribute to SDG 1 in Vietnam also contribute to SDG 8, unlocking livelihoods that don't cost the forest.



## GOAL 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Alongside the fruit that contributes to SDG 2, additional crops are being grown in our Guatemala project that contribute to SDG 9. These include xate (a jungle leaf used for ornamental purposes) and spices like cardamom, pepper and cinnamon.

These crops, as well as timber, are being produced with the goal of achieving commercial scale in the future.



## GOAL 10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES

All of our Carbon Balanced projects provide for groups that are underserved in their native countries. In Ecuador, our partner is working on land-use management and decision-making with seven local marginalised communities, in a project region home to 1,200 indigenous Shuar who retain their unique language and traditional practices. Over 100 local and indigenous communities in Guatemala actively participate in their Carbon Balanced project.

In Mexico, we've helped to preserve the traditional ejido system of communal land tenure while also paying the majority-indigenous communities to protect their forest home. Our Vietnam project is bringing benefits to the residents of Rum-Ho, most of whom are members of the Van Kieu ethnic minority. These Mexican and Vietnamese communities experience high rates of poverty.

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## GOAL 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES

Our Ecuador project contributes to SDG 11 by protecting the ancestral land of the indigenous Shuar people, such as hunting and fishing territories that are key to Shuar cultural heritage.

The project also supports processes to manage land in the wider region that will encompass private land, nature reserves, community land, in addition to communal land managed by indigenous and mestizo communities.



## GOAL 12: RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION & CONSUMPTION

The land management processes deployed through our Ecuador project that contribute to SDG 11 will promote the sustainable use of natural resources in more than 150,000 acres (60,000 ha) of land, including forest with high biodiversity and carbon value.

The crops grown in Guatemala that contribute to SDGs 2 and 9 also contribute to SDG 12, as do the Vietnamese acacia plantations that contribute to SDG 8.



## GOAL 15: LIFE ON LAND

The Nangaritza Valley serves as a critical biological corridor between the Ecuadorian Andes and the Peruvian Amazon, providing a home for 600 bird species and Endangered mammals like the Spectacled Bear and Mountain Tapir. One of the most floristically diverse places in the world, an astonishing 40% of the 3,500 plant species here are endemic to the region.

Our Guatemala project is part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, vital for birds making their biannual journey up and down coastal Central America. Around 500 species of bird have been recorded in the project area, including more than 100 migratory species. An additional 30 species of high conservation value find habitat here, including Jaguar and West Indian Manatee.

In Mexico, communities are financially supported to protect a project area made up of cloud and temperate forests. This mosaic of oak, fir, sweetgum, magnolia and Mexican Yew trees is habitat high in biodiversity value that provides a home for a great many species, including the threatened Bearded Wood-partridge and cats like the Puma, Margay and Jaguarundi.

A precious remnant of biodiverse tropical forest in a land blighted by deforestation, Khe Nuoc Trong was given Nature Reserve status in 2020 - the highest level of government protection in Vietnam. Here you can find a rich array of threatened wildlife, including Critically Endangered species like the Sunda Pangolin, Red-shanked Douc Langur, and the Saola, often described as the "Asian unicorn".



## GOAL 16: PEACE, JUSTICE & STRONG INSTITUTIONS

In Guatemala, our project is supporting individuals and communities to register and obtain land titles, as legal land ownership in the region is complicated. Securing land titles corrects inequalities that are barriers to achieving real, positive change. Protection and surveillance activities are also helping to fight illegal activity on these lands.

Local and indigenous communities actively participate in the project through consultation, decision-making, and implementation of activities. Small enterprises and the sustainable livelihoods they provide are supported with technical assistance on business management; market support for agroforestry products and ecotourism; and access to finance and training.



## GOAL 13: CLIMATE ACTION

Altogether, our four Carbon Balanced projects are estimated to have a net annual climate impact of 811,628 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. All projects achieve this through natural carbon sequestration, natural forest regeneration, and the prevention of emissions from deforestation; in Ecuador, active reforestation efforts provide additional climate benefits.

Our Carbon Balanced project in Mexico protects forests that are vulnerable to wildfires and timber harvesting, while also supporting the expansion of a state-wide carbon fund that will generate revenues for a tax on fuel sales overseen by the state. Maintaining our Guatemala and Vietnam projects helps to increase the resilience of these landscapes to climate-related hazards, like flooding and hurricanes.

In Ecuador's Nangaritza Valley, which is experiencing a rapid deforestation rate of 1-2% per year, our project activities promise to curb logging, agricultural expansion and mining developments that threaten the carbon-rich forests here. Activities include a 1,200-acre (500 ha) expansion of the Maycú Reserve and the creation of a 50,000-acre (20,000 ha) community protected area.



## GOAL 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Every project we fund involves empowering the partner responsible. We mobilise financial resources from multiple sources to develop our partners' capacity and support them in the implementation of conservation work on the ground.