

## The plc's people and planet strategy – All about ArBolivia

[ArBolivia](#) is a community-based forestry project working with a small group of farmers in Bolivia to stop land conversion and slash and burn agricultural practices. The project aims to give farmers long-term financial incentives to reforest previously degraded areas and to keep trees standing. The project areas are located at the foot of the Andes, on the edge of the Amazon Basin.

The project was started in September 2007 following an extended period of research and development dating back to 1995, and is based on a [Food and Agricultural Organisation](#) pilot reforestation programme. The project is jointly run by Dutch investment company, [Sicirec](#) and Bolivian sustainable agroforestry NGO, [Cetefor](#). Trained technicians are employed to advise farmers on sustainable forestry techniques. These specialists also suggest appropriate plant and tree species to be used for reforestation. These guidelines are based on the [Plan Vivo Standard](#), which aims to:

- Empower communities to take control of their resources.
- Reduce poverty and improve rural livelihoods and food security.
- Generate long term, **verifiable carbon services**.
- Restore and protect ecosystem services, such as biodiversity and watersheds, by protecting natural forests.

ArBolivia is a certified project under Plan Vivo.

### **ArBolivia's project objectives**

The main aim of the project is to reforest a portion of the land owned by farmers and a number of communal areas. The proposed activity adds to sustainable development by introducing an integrated farming system aiming at efficient land use practices, while considering the current and future needs of the farmers and their families. The overall goal looks at the successful integration of sustainable crop production and commercial plantation forestry, combined with nature conservation and participation by the local population. Unlike most other commercial plantations, ArBolivia uses a wide range of indigenous tree species and shares the benefits of the timber equally with local farmers.

### **Benefits of the project – people and planet**

ArBolivia's objectives are to couple the benefits of the people involved in the project, with environmental conservation.

#### *People*

ArBolivia aims to work with local farmers who will participate and profit from revenues and their knowledge of agriculture and forestry management. The project hopes to insure livelihood improvement, through initiatives set up for the training and capacity building for participating farmers and their communities.

The goal is the establishment of a series of small and large scale commercial plantation forestry projects, while promoting preservation of forest patches. Financial avenues are improved by offering micro-credit to farmers, with trees as collateral. There are also incentives from enhanced timber prices, and on the preservation of primary tropical forest, as well as on CO<sub>2</sub> capture, through sales of carbon credits, payments for environmental services, green loans and equity investments.

#### *Planet*

The primary goal of ArBolivia is the prevention of further deforestation and land degradation. The project is carried out in cooperation with the local authorities, with long lasting forestry conservation results that are secured by legislation and ecologically sustainable project management. All of this results in improved and sustainable land and forest use.

### **Facts and figures for the ArBolivia project**

- ArBolivia works over 7200 ha, with 5000 ha of commercial plantation forestry, 1000 ha of agroforestry and 1200 ha of mandatory nature conservation.

- The nature conservation component is mandatory for smallholders who wish to participate in the project.
- The project has over 1500 participating smallholders. The smallholders receive payment for the labour they provide for tree planting and maintenance.
- ArBolivia has a project cycle of about 40 years, with a focus on native hardwood tree species, utilising fast growing species for positive cash flow from year 10 onward.
- The ArBolivia project has [Clean Development Mechanism](#) accreditation, which means that 20% of the funding comes from carbon credits, with 40% input from investors, and another 40% input from farmers (value of land and labour).
- ArBolivia is externally certified, according to Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance ([CCBA](#)) standards and [FSC](#) criteria for sustainable plantation forestry, and is registered under Kyoto (Certified Emission Reductions).

#### **Why red24 plc chose ArBolivia**

ArBolivia's tree planting project is complemented by sustainable agricultural management training to enable farmers to secure a livelihood without compromising their environment. Despite the project's expected potential for carbon absorption, carbon credits have merely been used to help finance ArBolivia's large overhead, while the programme remains focused on improving farmers' livelihoods and preventing further deforestation.

Commercial plantation forestry in developing countries encourages environmental awareness, helps to preserve biodiversity and improves the livelihoods of the local population. Unlike most other commercial plantations, it uses a wide range of predominantly indigenous tree species and shares the benefits of the timber equally with local farmers.

The farmer supported by the funds from red24 plc's carbon offsetting programme is planting *Calophyllum brasiliense*, known locally as Palo-Maria trees or the Alexandrian laurel. The reforested area currently covers 1.28 ha in the Yapacani municipality in the Ichilo province which is in the largest of Bolivia's departments, Santa Cruz. The GPS coordinates of the forest patch supported by red24 plc are 17°21'48.68"S 63°56'03.87"W.

By focusing on the dual benefits derived by both people and the planet, red24 plc is proud to be associated with the ArBolivia project.

