The Success Story of Growing Green

A Growing Investment Opportunity

WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE

Growing Green

123 Huntington
Boston

Highlights

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We feel immensely privileged to have got the opportunity to express my views on 'Trees are Our Lifeline'. Franklin D. Roosevelt rightly said, "A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people. " Trees are indispensable for life. Man can't live without trees.

Most of the world oxygen that the animal species including man inhale is produced in the forests and tropical rainforests. Forests and rainforests house millions of species of plants, animals and insects. Even more importantly, they are home to many unique plants and animals that do not exist anywhere else in the world. If the tropical rainforests were to be destroyed, so would the homes of all these species. Without a home, many of these species could become extinct.

Trees are important to the environment; they recycle water and process carbon dioxide in the atmosphere through photosynthesis. They are the world's full-time purifiers of air and water. Their cutting will disturb the natural water cycles which will lead to the shortage of fresh water in the water reserves of the world.

Extreme weather conditions, changing agricultural production, and increase in the disease carrying viruses are some of the other effects of global warming. Deforestation is the primary reason behind global warming; we need to show greater concern towards the cutting of trees on a large scale.

So, we see how crucial trees are for evolution and the smooth running of all the life forms on the planet. They are indeed the powerhouse of evolution. It is our bounden duty to plant and preserve trees and forests as without them we can't exist.

What We Do

As a crowdfunding platform, Grow Ahead brings together contributions from individuals, businesses, organizations, and grants to fund community-led projects that address the local challenges of climate change.

Small farmer organizations in the developing world are historically under-resourced, with limited access to the capital needed to grow their organizations and invest in climate solutions.

Through raising funds for farmer-led agroforestry projects, we endeavor to invest in climate solutions in a way that is accountable to frontline communities. We stand behind reforestation projects run by small-scale farmer organizations. Together we help combat climate change and support communities.

As we learned in third grade biology, trees are essential to life. They create the very air we breathe and filter air pollution.

What you may not know is that trees also build soil and help soak up stormwater before it can create a flood, and they offer energy-saving shade that reduces global warming and creates habitat for thousands of different species. Trees also help to reduce ozone levels in urban areas.

History:

American Forests is the oldest national conservation organization in the country. It has been at the forefront of every positive change that's happened in the nation's forests and has always stood up for healthy forests.
American Forests was established at a pivotal time in the nation's history, barely a decade after the Civil War and during a period of tremendous development and industrial expansion. Forests were being cut down at an alarming rate to make way for new farms, towns and railways, and timber barons were exploiting what then seemed like an inexhaustible resource.

The AFA proposed a different way. The organization was not opposed to progress but advocated for a careful and science-based strategy to manage and conserve our forestlands for generations to come.

HIGHLIGHTS

- in recent years, hundreds of companies have entered the landscape restoration industry, forming an emerging "restoration economy." They represent a wide range of business models that deliver financial returns for investors while restoring forests and agricultural lands.
- This report highlights four promising investment themes in land restoration: technology, consumer products, project management, and commercial forestry.
- We provide snapshots of 14 companies that restore land; the profiles are based on extensive research, field visits, and interviews with their senior management.
- Entrepreneurs continue to develop new opportunities that create value for investors as well as local communities and the planet.

Population growth and expanding consumer demand are placing immense pressure on the earth's natural resources. The human population has more than doubled over the past 50 years and is projected to rise further, from 7.3 billion in 2015 to 9.8 billion by 2050 (UN 2017). Demand for food is likely to increase by 46 percent between 2017 and 2050 (Ranganathan et al. 2016), while global demand for industrial roundwood will rise by 49 percent from 2013 to 2020 (FIM 2015).

Signs of degradation can be found in almost every ecosystem in the world. One-third of agricultural landscapes were degraded in 2010, temporarily or permanently lowering the productive capacity of land (FAO 2011). Also, the world loses 7.6 million hectares (ha) (18.8 million acres) of forest every year—an area about the size of Panama. It also gains 4.3 million ha (10.6 million acres) of forest annually, as a result of planted or naturally regenerated forests, but there is a net loss of 3.3 million ha (8.1 million acres), or an area the size of Taiwan (FAO 2015). This loss has a direct impact on local communities that depend on the land, and it also exacerbates other environmental issues. For example, deforestation accelerates climate change as the carbon stored in soil and trees is released into the atmosphere. The dual issues of resource demand and environmental degradation— coupled with land's inherently limited availability— make clear that the way we currently use land is unsustainable.

This challenge offers an opportunity for

businesses and entrepreneurs. As we encoun-

ter constraints in the planet's resources, pressure is growing to find new ways to enhance productivity and recover lost natural assets. Land restoration offers a path forward. Companies that develop profitable and scalable business models for restoration have the potential to grow substantially.

What Is Restoration?

In this report, we define restoration as an activity that improves the ecological function of a

Figure ES-1 | Benefits of Tree-Based Restoration

degraded landscape. We focus primarily on tree-based restoration, which can range from reforestation—completely replanting a deforested area with trees—to agroforestry—establishing

Source: WRi.

agricultural systems that incorporate trees. Figure ES-1 shows the benefits of planting trees.

Restoration economy refers to the network of businesses, investors, and consumers that engage in economic activity related to restoring land. Given the wide array of benefits restoration can provide, end markets for restored forests and landscapes range from sustainable timber to consumer products to livestock feed.

There are no official measures of the size of the global restoration economy. This is not surprising because restoration spans a broad range of industries, ecosystems, and regions. At the national level, data are similarly scarce in most countries. In the United States, a 2015 study estimated that the American restoration economy generated US$9.5 billion in annual

Conclusion:

While supporting tree planting organizations is a great way to be eco-friendly, you can also make a difference in your community by planting trees on your own property.

A properly planted, mature shade tree on the south or west side of your house or business can save you up to 25% on your summer air conditioning bills and increase your property value by up to 20% with its beauty. That same tree will also help soak up stormwater in the neighborhood and contribute habitat for local wildlife. If you plant a fruit or nut tree, you get food as an added bonus!

You really can’t go wrong by planting trees!