

# [***Exelon and The Field Museum Partner to Protect South American Forest, Measure Prevented Carbon Emissions; $1.5 million donation will help protect tropical forests and test carbon offset protocols***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:4TNT-4TN0-TW8C-J0FX-00000-00&context=1516831)

Business Wire

October 13, 2008 Monday 8:25 PM GMT

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**Distribution:** Business Editors

**Length:** 975 words

**Dateline:** CHICAGO

**Body**

Exelon Corporation has partnered with Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History to protect tropical forests in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador and improve the measurement of prevented carbon ***emissions***, or offsets. The effort is funded by a $1.5 million donation from Exelon, one of the nation's largest utilities, to The Field Museum's Environment, Culture and Conservation (ECCo) division, which translates museum science into enduring conservation results.

Deforestation, primarily in the tropics, causes approximately 20 percent of manmade global greenhouse gas ***emissions***. Trees extract carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and their removal releases carbon stored in vegetation and soil. By protecting forests, Exelon expects to prevent carbon ***emissions*** that would otherwise contribute to global warming. The partnership is part of Exelon 2020: A Low-Carbon Roadmap, Exelon's plan to reduce, offset or displace 15 million metric tons of greenhouse gas ***emissions*** per year by 2020. This is more than the company's current annual carbon footprint and equivalent to taking nearly 3 million cars off the road.

"As one of the nation's largest utilities, Exelon is taking aggressive steps to be an industry leader in addressing climate change," said John W. Rowe, chairman and CEO of Exelon. "By partnering with The Field Museum, we can identify forests and habitats for long-term protection to prevent the ***emission*** of significant quantities of carbon. As a corollary, Exelon will gain valuable experience in developing carbon offset projects."

The donation will support ECCo's work to undertake rapid biological inventories of tropical forests in the Andean foothills and Amazon lowlands. This is the first step in identifying areas with high biological diversity and uniqueness for conservation, such as Peru's Cordillera Azul National Park. The team works to protect intact forests and ensure that they are secured for the long-term with science-based management. The effort involves neighboring villages and helps improve the local quality of life.

"We applaud Exelon for making climate change and conservation high priorities," said John McCarter, president of The Field Museum. "Exelon's support will help the museum maintain its expert team of biologists and anthropologists, which conducts inventories of threatened, scientifically unknown landscapes with high conservation potential. This will lead to the protection of intact ecosystems and species that are vulnerable, have very small ranges or are not known to occur anywhere else."

**Protocol for Avoided Deforestation and Carbon Offsets**

As part of the partnership, Exelon and ECCo will seek to test voluntary avoided deforestation methodologies for identifying carbon offsets. They hope that the resulting protocol will be used in the development of an international standard for avoided-deforestation carbon offsets, benefiting the global climate. The pilot project will focus on the 3.8 million-acre Cordillera Azul National Park, which is larger than the state of Connecticut. Exelon will consider using up to half of the carbon offsets to help meet its Exelon 2020 ***emissions*** reduction goal.

"In addition to the clear environmental benefits, our partnership will have strategic benefits to our business," Rowe said. "Cordillera Azul National Park may serve as a model for the accurate measurement of carbon offsets from avoided deforestation. It is our hope that this voluntary protocol will be approved for use by others to meet legislative and regulatory requirements to reduce greenhouse gas ***emissions***."

The company will engage independent third parties to evaluate and verify the carbon offsets of the project and will seek appropriate approval for the protocol. Exelon and The Field Museum see avoided-deforestation carbon offsets as an important element in financing and securing long-term protection for intact, biologically rich forests, which are critical to the well-being of neighboring villagers.

**Renewable Energy Education**

In addition, the partnership will help to educate families and communities about renewable energy sources. Exelon will match Field Museum visitors' contributions to the "Take One Step" program up to $200,000 over the next two years starting this fall. The program invites visitors to purchase credits to offset the carbon ***emissions*** generated by an average trip to the museum. Each $1 credit enters the carbon market and helps address global warming through development of renewable energy technologies, conservation of intact forests and restoration of degraded habitats.

Exelon's matching gift also will support the museum's Renewable Energy Vehicle (REV), a two-tank, veggie diesel fuel system vehicle with roof-mounted solar panels. Powered by carbon-neutral vegetable oil, the REV delivers educational materials about renewable energy sources to classrooms and events in the Chicago area to teach students and residents about renewable energy sources.

For more information on Exelon's partnership with The Field Museum visit: [*www.exeloncorp.com/corpresponsibility/community/Partnerships*](http://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.exeloncorp.com%2Fcorpresponsibility%2Fcommunity%2FPartnerships&esheet=5802309&lan=en_US&anchor=www.exeloncorp.com%2Fcorpresponsibility%2Fcommunity%2FPartnerships&index=1) . To download Exelon 2020, visit:   [*www.exeloncorp.com*](http://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.exeloncorp.com&esheet=5802309&lan=en_US&anchor=www.exeloncorp.com&index=1) .

Exelon Corporation is one of the nation's largest electric utilities with nearly $19 billion in annual revenues. The company has one of the industry's largest portfolios of electricity generation capacity, with a nationwide reach and strong positions in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. Exelon distributes electricity to approximately 5.4 million customers in northern Illinois and Pennsylvania and natural gas to 480,000 customers in the Philadelphia area. Exelon is headquartered in Chicago and trades on the NYSE under the ticker EXC.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Photos and b-roll of Cordillera Azul National Park are available, and include shots of the forest, wildlife and local people.

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**Load-Date:** October 14, 2008

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