



CO₂ removal

By planting of tropical trees

Methodology and Standard (Volume 1)

Edition 2023/02

Contents

- 1. Introduction..... 3
 - 1.1. Basics..... 3
- 2. In-country National Partners..... 4
- 3. Planting Site Identification..... 4
 - 3.1. Principles..... 4
 - 3.2. Receiving Suggestions..... 5
 - 3.3. Management of the planting and seedling survival..... 5
- 4. Unique Documentation - Avoiding Double Selling..... 6
- 5. No Double Counting..... 7
- 6. Tree Reserve..... 7
- 7. Third Party Verification..... 7

1. Introduction

TROFACO plants trees in tropical areas, together with landholders there, and TROFACO also gives advice to others and documents their plantings, if they follow our standards.

TROFACO's guiding values are:

- Benefits must go to those that suffer most from global heating: Communities in tropical areas.
- Maximum transparency must be ensured between the beneficiaries in the local communities and the sponsors of climate action..
- Highest possible effectiveness is maintained through a robust, simple and no-nonsense approach.

Here we present how we do to ensure permanency of the climate action, that the activities are additional and the climate benefits are claimed only once.

1.1. Basics

TROFACO plants trees in tropical areas, together with landholders there, and TROFACO also gives advice and documents planting by others, if they follow our standards.

TROFACO's guiding values are:

- We always plants on land that is:
 - previously forested and currently without trees
 - identified by local communities or other landowners
 - not used for household farming and we prefer plantings managed as agroforestry, if the landholders agree
- Trees are planted based on written agreements with each landholder and confirmed by relevant authorities
- Our standard provides financial encouragement 'along the way' in proportion to how well the landholder takes care of the trees
- TROFACO follows up on each planting by regular, physical visits.
- In working with communities, we build long-term relationships with the communities and the national partner working in the same communities

2. In-country National Partners

TROFACO carefully screens partners' organizations, i.e. financial management, staff management, technical capacity, relations to authorities etc. TROFACO does that before entering any long-term collaboration and also 'along the way'¹

- I. TROFACO conducts testing of new partners. TROFACO pays for one or two minor plantings and then monitors how these are doing. TROFACO, on this basis, have rejected some potential partners and maintained those that consistently perform.
- II. With our trusted partners, TROFACO continues deepening collaboration. This is through expansion, joint inspections and joint planning for the way ahead.
- III. TROFACO staff follows up in the field, through regular working visits to planting sites and for identification of new potential locations and/or partners. This involves both in-country staff and staff from Denmark.
- IV. These same principles also apply when working with commercial farms in our countries of operation.

3. Planting Site Identification

3.1. Principles

TROFACO plants only on land with secure ownership, confirmed by government and institutional powers. These may be for example a cadastral office or education department (formal), a clan leader or a church (informal).

TROFACO works with local partners who themselves have considerable power or influence. For example, in Uganda TROFACO and its national NGO partner (Community Integrated Development Initiatives - CIDI) have a joint agreement with the Buganda Kingdom as well as with local farmers' associations or similar.

TROFACO only works on land that is previously forested and has been bare of trees and not used for farming for many years. First step in identifying a planting site is for the partner to produce a screenshot of the location from Google Earth. This is approved or rejected (if there is existing tree cover) by TROFACO.

¹ (TROFACO has a screening note for new national partners. May be provided on request)

The local communities suggest which land to plant on. TROFACO's local partners then check suitability and land management. If that is OK they recommend to TROFACO.

3.2. Receiving Suggestions

The national partner, or a client, suggests new planting areas. TROFACO inspects the area for security of the land rights, absence of forest on the land, and its current use. TROFACO also meets the farmers in the area, to assess their commitment and spot potential disagreement in the community, which could be about land rights, the distribution of the trees or other.

3.3. Management of the planting and seedling survival

- I. Communities / schools / religious institutions are local project owners. They are committed to tree planting, also for their own benefits, but without funds from TROFACO they cannot afford the planting. The plantings are thus clearly *additional*. Communities choose trees that are useful for them. Benefits come as fruits, leaves for animal fodder or medicine from the trees, as well as the value of the timber, when the trees are mature². So, project owners and communities protect the trees.
- II. TROFACO and partners operate a CO2 fund, which will with a few years' intervals pay out rewards to the communities when trees are thriving after intervals decided by the fund board. This is one element in permanence and works towards trees becoming more like a short-term crop in the minds and economic considerations of farmers.
- III. The local formal and informal governance structures that are agreeing and supporting the plantings include:
 - A. 'Commune' (or similar-level government) and district governments, relevant departments. This may be education for schools, environment, land management or others.
 - B. Where relevant: Farmers groups/associations/cooperatives, school management, churches, temples etc.
 - C. Management agreements: At local level all parties (community or local institution, National NGO partner, local formal authorities) sign agreements and management

² Landowners are allowed to fell timber trees when they mature after at least 20 years, but they are obliged to plant new after felling. This is one element in **permanence**.

plans. These stipulate; Trees cannot be touched for 20 years and the project owner is responsible for replanting trees, which may die ³. This is one element in *permanence*.

- IV. TROFACO avoids planting large stands of valuable trees in places where corrupt business people/officials or armed groups may steal the timber. Theft or death of seedlings are dealt with by the landowner, who is obliged in their management agreement to replant missing seedlings.

4. Unique Documentation - Avoiding Double Selling

Basic principles in TROFACOs documentation are: Every customer or sponsor receives information from the planting site(s) sponsored. The information is in the form of:

- I. Images from the planting site. The images are taken at agreed intervals. The images are shown on TROFACOs website under each planting site. Sponsors receive a certificate with a link to the planting site and can also search the website using their name or the number of the certificate and this way get to the relevant planting site(s).
 - Each image has a timestamp, which is shown on the website, so anybody can see when the image was taken.
 - Each image also contains GPS metadata. This is used to place the image onto a Google Earth, shown on the website for each planting site. Each image, when displayed on users' screen will also show its GPS coordinates.
- II. Reports beyond the images: If desired, and agreed in contract w. TROFACO, each sponsor may also receive reports from the relevant site(s). It will report in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and can emphasize specific aspects.
- III. CO₂ capture measurements. If desired, e.g. for ESG accounting of a company or an institution, TROFACO can do detailed measurements of the trees and calculate the amount of CO₂ absorbed (sequestered) in any group of trees. (See TROFACO standard Volume 2)

And all of this above is no more complicated than a sponsor can do additional verification. TROFACO is welcoming visits from sponsors and partners and TROFACO can support visits to the particular planting(s) and the communities taking care of them. TROFACO can also support on-site measurements of the trees if a CO₂ calculation/accounting is desired. Sponsors or partners can for example send their auditor if they need an independently audited CO₂ account,

³ TROFACO can provide examples of such plans, on request.

5. No Double Counting

Each planting site, as presented on TROFACO's [website](#), contains a list of which trees are planted and how many of each. Together with this is presented how many trees each customer has paid for with customer name and certificate ID. This way the number of planted trees, and the number paid for are presented together. This makes multiple selling of the same CO2 impossible.

6. Tree Reserve

TROFACO maintains and continuously renews a reserve of 20% extra trees, to cover possible losses due to natural disasters, or other causes. We finance these trees themselves, and the communities that plant them get the same compensation and level of benefits as others. They are therefore not treated any differently than the ones that we sell.

7. Third Party Verification

The TROFACO standard has an agreement with Copenhagen University , Section for Global Development and its experts on tropical forestry.

A protocol for verification of application of an TROFACO standard is agreed with the Section and can be applied.

The protocol covers tree survival, measured CO2 uptake and its documentation, and may also include socio-economic aspects of the plantings. The protocol is available on request.