

The Plan Vivo proposal towards the Sustainable Development Goals



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Plan Vivo works because:

1. Its ethical approach puts strong emphasis on an equitable share of benefits.
2. It is cost-effective, with committed individuals and institutions constantly looking for ways to reduce transaction costs for smallholders and communities.
3. It creates loyalty: it works, it helps and we can see it.
4. It is an effective vehicle for business and companies to combine their climate and CSR agendas.
5. Plan Vivo supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a plan for action for people, planet and prosperity.



Our globalised economy faces massive challenges ahead. Climate change and poverty reduction are at the forefront of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. These goals will define national and international policies for the next 15 years. The Plan Vivo Foundation, together with its network of partners, offers a tested, ethical approach to align the interests of the private sector with smallholders, communities and their local environments.

The Plan Vivo Foundation is holding a two-day Stakeholder Conference in Sweden to celebrate the milestone of 2 million tonnes of emissions reductions, and to discuss the opportunities and challenges to contribute to a better, more just planet.

Turning problems into opportunities

Climate change is one of the most pressing problems of the 21st century. Record levels of carbon emissions are causing severe changes in local temperatures, rising sea levels and unpredictable precipitation patterns. While it affects everybody, it hits those who have the least access to finance and technology the hardest. Companies are increasingly looking to minimize their environmental impacts, and many are introducing efficiency systems along their supply chains.

Voluntary carbon markets, which Plan Vivo forms part of, have emerged as an option for companies to compensate for their unavoidable socio-environmental footprint, for example by reducing carbon emissions, by supporting biodiversity and water conservation or, in the case of insetting, by tackling procurement costs and risk, as well as by strengthening links with suppliers.



Local boy in Durian Rambun, Indonesia

At the Plan Vivo Foundation, we believe in mutually beneficial, ethical partnerships for a better planet. We believe that our approach to more resilient and that improved ecosystems are a viable proposal to contribute to at least seven of the seventeen SDGs.

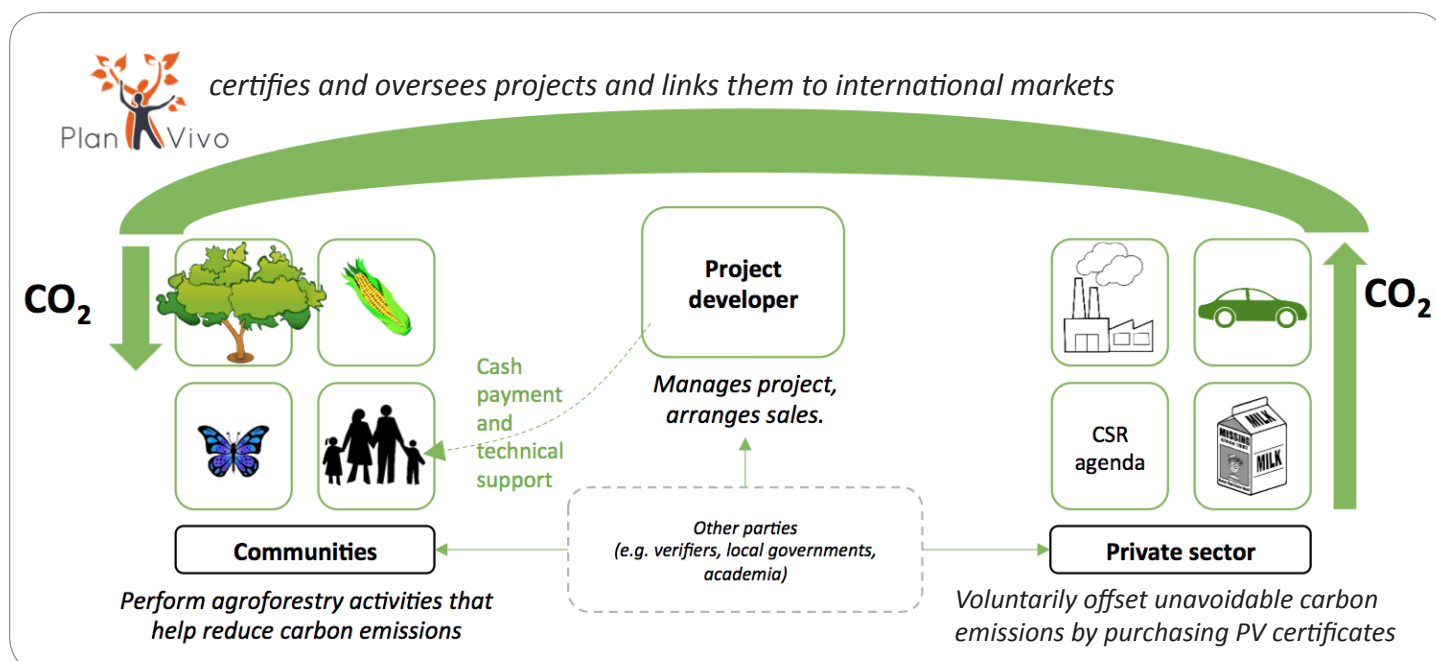


Figure 1: How the sale of Plan Vivo certificates benefits communities and the private sector

How does Plan Vivo work

Plan Vivo provides a certification framework for projects wishing to manage their land more sustainably. It is the longest-standing ethical standard linking buyers of carbon credits to smallholders and communities through mutually beneficial agreements (see Figure 1). Plan Vivo promotes projects which support smallholder agriculture and rural enterprise in providing local employment opportunities as well as sustainable food and energy sources.

These goals are not just big: they are huge, and so is the challenge to make them real.

The SDGs will also shape the way the policy landscape evolves and will therefore affect everybody. The investment required amounts to trillions of dollars and will need partnerships from all sectors of society: governments, private sector, international and local NGOs. The scale will involve everybody, from the local to the global level.

What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are common objectives for member states of the United Nations to transform the world into a fairer, more prosperous and peaceful society. They include a commitment to end poverty and hunger, improve health and education, make cities more sustainable, combat climate change and protect oceans and forests.

How does Plan Vivo support the Sustainable Development Goals?

SDG1: Plan Vivo contributes to reducing poverty

Plan Vivo tackles the multiple dimensions of poverty:

- Short-term poverty alleviation via direct/indirect cash transfers, in a way that is culturally appropriate and estimated in proportion to the amount of carbon fixed by tree species used in the project.
- Long-term aspects of poverty by building human and natural capital in local communities.

In many places, Plan Vivo operates where few others do, providing much needed technical support in the design of smallholder farmer management plans. Farmers also benefit from harvests of their own fuelwood and timber over the medium and long-term.

SDG2: Achieving food security

At the initial stages of the projects, farmers and project developers meet continuously to design a management plan that ensures the long-term survival of tree species without compromising family food security. A mix of fast-growing and nitrogen-fixing tree species increase crop yields and provide timber, fruit, fodder, and shade for intercropping.



Faustini Kashiija, a farmer from 'Emiti Nibwo Bulora' in Tanzania

SDG7: Affordable and sustainable energy from trees

Farmers often plant fast-growing, native tree species. Significant volumes of cuttings and fuelwood are generated through the thinning process, when younger trees are removed to give space for others to mature, or through the removal of branches to encourage basal area. Many projects, like Scolel'Te in Mexico and Trees for Global Benefits in Uganda, also promote the adoption of efficient cookstoves. These cookstoves are not included as creditable activities, but are often built into the design of the project, as part of a landscape level approach and as part of the additional benefits offered to communities. These activities are often part-financed through the generous support of buyers of Plan Vivo Certificates.

SDG8: Growth and employment

The incursion into carbon markets has created new supply chains. At the local level, it includes project developers who carefully orchestrate the participation of small-scale and scattered farmers providing cash payments, technical support, and marketing Plan Vivo Certificates to international buyers. Community monitoring creates jobs for forest technicians – many of them women and young people eager to discover new technologies. Projects often collaborate with local universities, opening new channels of knowledge transfer, or implement innovative methods for microfinance. The demand for trees also promotes the collection of seeds and the creation of local nurseries.

SDG13: Urgent action to combat climate change

Aside from contributing to climate change mitigation, Plan Vivo projects help communities to build resilience and adaptive capacity in a changing climate through selecting native species and sustainable land use management. The Plan Vivo Foundation engages with national and local governments in helping shape their response to global adaptation and mitigation targets, most recently demonstrated through inclusion in Indonesian, Colombian and Mexican offset schemes. Partners in the research and academic sectors, such as the ESPA project involving IIED and the University of Edinburgh, help develop robust and streamlined scientific approaches to quantifying ecosystem service benefit delivered by communities. Companies can support communities in their efforts through purchasing Plan Vivo certificates. Sustainability consultants, such as Zeromission, support companies to calculate their carbon footprint, improve energy-efficiency, and offset unavoidable emissions through Plan Vivo-certified projects.

SDG15: Protect biodiversity and ecosystems

The sustainable principles underpinning each management plan seek to find a balance between growing food, growing trees for sustainable fuelwood and timber and widening the area of impact on other ecosystem services. Improved management at farm level contributes to better water retention and less sediments. Planting greater numbers



Nursery of CommuniTree project

of trees, especially native species, helps to rehabilitate degraded landscapes. Some projects, like CommuniTree in Nicaragua, have tracked over 70 species in reforestation plots. The Hiniduma Bio-Link project in Sri Lanka was responsible for replanting more than 90 native species, while the Yaeda Valley REDD+ project in Northern Tanzania works with indigenous communities – specifically the Hadzabe, an ancient hunter-gatherer community – on activities that reduce pressure on existing forests while improving livelihoods. Plan Vivo has recently been working with Flora and Fauna International on implementing three bio-carbon projects in Indonesia, which integrate novel means of community monitoring, developed through a series of participatory indicators.

SDG17: Means of implementation

Projects that include activities such as reforestation, organic agroforestry and cleaner energy technologies are increasing their presence in voluntary global carbon markets. Operational since 1997, Plan Vivo now has 12 registered projects and over 40 projects in the pipeline. While representing a small but growing percentage of voluntary market transactions, demand is up as the value of landscape level approaches, and some flexibility in project design is increasingly valued. These emerging projects are important for road-testing the economic viability of climate change mitigation, and the potential for nesting co-benefits, like community rights and biodiversity protection. The actions of voluntary projects and buyers play an important role in sending signals, and in helping shape and inform global climate talks and policies.

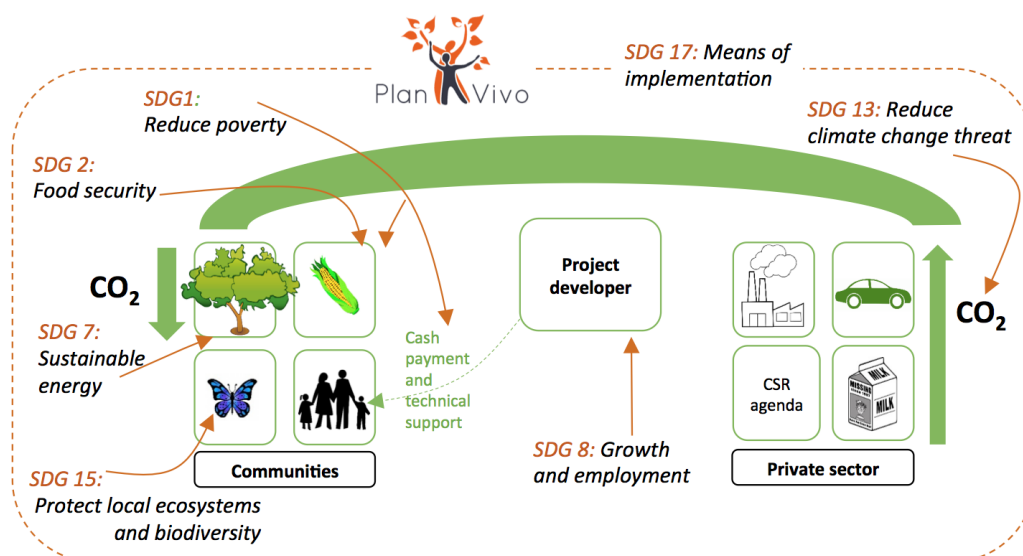


Figure 2: The Plan Vivo system in the framework of the SDGs

The Plan Vivo system in the framework of the SDGs

Over 3 billion people live in rural areas. Food consumption is set to rise 70% by 2050 and already generates 19–29% of all anthropogenic GHG emissions. Projects that incorporate sustainable land management, agroforestry systems and forest protection help communities tackle the perfect storm of food and energy insecurity, degraded ecosystems and unpredictable local climates (Figure 2). While governments remain locked in debate, Plan Vivo projects are already implementing solutions and providing valuable lessons to help scale up the global response.

Get involved!

All Plan Vivo projects are independently verified, and supported by a generous network of retailers, particularly in Scandinavia, other parts of Northern and Southern Europe as well as the USA. The Plan Vivo Foundation is part of a network of respected and internationally recognised partners including NGOs, non-profit organisations and research institutions. Their work and constant support have been central to the success of many of the Foundation's projects. [For more information visit the Plan Vivo website at www.planvivo.org](http://www.planvivo.org)



CommuniTree project participant and project coordinator with Arvid Nordquist

References

Transforming our world: the Agenda for Sustainable Development
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

CGIAR, Big Facts on Climate Change
<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/bigfacts/#>

Plan Vivo Foundation
www.planvivo.org

IIED

The International Institute for Environment and Development promotes sustainable development, linking local priorities to global challenges. We support some of the world's most vulnerable people to strengthen their voice in decision making.
www.iied.org

ESPA

The Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) programme aims to deliver high-quality, cutting-edge research that will improve understanding of the way ecosystems function, the services they provide and their relationship with the political economy and sustainable growth.
www.espa.ac.uk

Zeromission

ZeroMission is a leading retailer of carbon offsetting, carbon footprinting and analyses. As a "catalyst for good business" we give companies and organisations the skills and tools they need to make meaningful changes and our most significant impact on the planet is through the actions of our customers.
www.zeromission.se

The Plan Vivo Foundation

The Plan Vivo Foundation is an international, Edinburgh based charity which administers the Plan Vivo standard, a framework for smallholders and communities wishing to manage their land and natural resources more sustainably.
www.planvivo.org

iied International Institute
for Environment
and Development

espa ecosystem services
for poverty alleviation

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