

People, Nature + Coffee

Over centuries, coffee has traveled to nearly every corner of the world. Globally we drink about 600 billion cups of coffee every year. Grown on over 10 million hectares spread across the tropics, coffee is a US\$22 billion global industry that provides essential income for millions of people, including over 25 million smallholder farmers. These farmers are often key stewards of the world's tropical forest landscapes.

These landscapes are increasingly under threat due to rapidly rising demand for coffee in emerging economies like China and India. Scenarios predict a need for two to three times the current volume of coffee produced by 2050 to meet this demand.

Coffee, like all agricultural products, depends on nature to thrive. It needs water — in fact, it is estimated the average cup of coffee takes 140 liters of water to produce. It needs soils that have not been flooded, eroded or otherwise degraded. Coffee is also particularly sensitive to increased temperatures, which slow its growth, reduce flowering and fruiting, and make it more susceptible to pests and diseases.

Today, nearly every major coffee-producing landscape is under stress. Climate change is responsible for much of this stress. Rising temperatures, droughts and changing weather patterns are predicted to reduce the overall land suitable for growing coffee by 50%. A recent study estimated that 60% of the areas remaining suitable are currently forested and most lack protection. This means that coffee farmers may move to upland forested areas, as conditions in the lowland become adverse for coffee production- and this could put pressure on remaining protected areas.

These conditions produce a major challenge: how to satisfy the growing demand for coffee while conserving tropical forests. Meeting this challenge will require new, ambitious programs that sustainably increase coffee production on existing farms, identify degraded areas where coffee could be produced, and establish

effective incentives for conservation and effective management of tropical forests. Coffee is not the only economic driver in these landscapes, but it can serve as an anchor for engaging in a wider integrated management approach to sustainable commodities and designing and implementing sustainable landscapes that provide opportunities for improved livelihoods, sustainable production and forest conservation. The GEF-7 presents a tremendous opportunity to make much-needed progress on these fronts.

GEF-7 Impact Programs

The Impact Program, Food, Land Use and Restoration builds on the experience in GEF-6 from the Commodities Integrated Approach Pilot. In GEF-7 coffee has been added to the list of commodities included under this new Impact Program. The goal of the impact program is to promote food security, sustainable land use and habitat restoration. In GEF-7, Impact Programs are designed to deliver global environmental benefits (such as biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation) across several GEF focal areas and to enhance synergies, integration and impact of GEF investments.

The GEF Secretariat will work with countries to leverage STAR allocations through Impact Programs and Focal Area Investments (focal area strategies). The Secretariat would like to ensure that all countries have the opportunity to apply for the Impact Programs. As part of a transparent process, the GEF Secretariat will ask Operational Focal Points for initial expressions of interest prior to the start of GEF-7 (July 1). Expressions of interest will need to indicate the Impact Program that the country wants to participate in along with the desired Implementing Agency.

Developing Sustainable Landscapes

To achieve conservation, development and production benefits, CI recommends that impact programs apply integrated landscape approaches. Developing an integrated landscape approach promotes sustainable production, ensures that key biodiversity areas are conserved, ensures the provision of

ecosystem services, channels financial resources towards areas of need, and shapes policy to positively impact coffee communities. Coffee presents an opportunity to engage in key landscapes on the frontline of where coffee cultivation meets forest conservation. The cornerstones of any impact program would include **land use planning, farm transformation activities and multi-stakeholder engagement.**

Land use planning: Understanding the multiple priorities for a given landscape is instrumental in developing a sustainable land use plan. For each landscape, we propose undertaking a holistic analysis to identify priority areas for conservation in relation to current and future coffee producing areas as well as opportunities for other production systems – especially in places where coffee is becoming less suitable.

The comprehensive analysis will serve as an input to land use planning conversations with local governments, farmers, businesses and citizens. Where relevant, CI will work with the government and/or other local stakeholders to establish payment for ecosystems services (PES) programs that incentivize conservation and/or restoration activities within the landscape.

Farm transformation: Based on the land use plan, CI will work with partners to implement programs designed at optimizing agricultural production for coffee and other crops on existing farmland, improving the food security and livelihoods of farmers. Programs will focus on rising yield on existing cultivated areas while increasing on-farm tree cover (shade, windbreaks, live fences) to enhance the resilience of coffee production to climate change. In parallel, restoration activities will be employed on degraded lands and riparian buffer zones within the landscape to improve landscape connectivity.

Multi-stakeholder engagement: Ensuring that municipal priorities are coordinated across stakeholders and linked into country priorities will be the foundation of the multi-stakeholder coalitions committed to sustainable development of the target landscapes. The coalitions will raise awareness of their priorities via knowledge-sharing platforms in coffee and other sectors. This

will enable companies purchasing coffee and other commodities from the landscape to prioritize investments identified and agreed at the local level.

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL'S EXPERIENCE

For over 20 years, Conservation International (CI) has been working in partnership with coffee producers and the broader industry to promote sustainable practices that retain the rich biodiversity of coffee producing landscapes.

We have established a renowned coffee program that has directly impacted coffee producers and their communities across 12 countries throughout Asia, Latin America and Africa, including Indonesia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Colombia, Honduras, Peru, El Salvador, Guatemala, Brazil, Rwanda and Ethiopia.

In 2015, recognizing the need to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the long-term sustainability of coffee, CI launched the Sustainable Coffee Challenge. The Sustainable Coffee Challenge is a collaborative effort of over 100 companies, governments, NGOs, research institutions and others working to make coffee the first sustainable agricultural product. Challenge partners are working together to identify, implement and scale solutions that enable us to meet future demand for coffee while conserving nature and improving the livelihoods of producer communities.

A sustainable landscape is one where natural ecosystems and resources are conserved or restored; agricultural systems are economically viable and resilient to climate change; rural livelihoods and well-being of all social groups are improved; and local decision-making processes are inclusive and equitable.

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