



## Press Release

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# Certification achieved in Peru for first-of-kind scalable carbon project for smallholder farmers

## Certification of a programmatic approach to reforestation

LONDON, UK ( July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015) - Plant your Future is pleased to announce the validation of the first ever programmatic project certified under both the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards and the VCS. We have created a scalable model that enables smallholder farmers to access carbon finance by reforesting deforested lands using a sustainable agroforestry system in the Peruvian Amazon.

*"What is so exciting about this accomplishment is that it provides a proven and certified method for forest-based mitigation projects that can be readily applied to vast areas of deforested lands in the Amazon region and that will improve the livelihoods of many small farmers"* says Dr Sandra Brown, a trustee of Plant your Future.

Following an external audit by the Rainforest Alliance, an accredited independent certification body, confirmation of validation has been received for this first-of-kind innovative framework that combines the grouped project VCS mechanism with the new provisions of the programmatic approach of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the CCB Standard. This project has also received gold level recognition for climate adaptation and community categories with the CCB Standards.

*"We are thrilled to see this first use of the programmatic approach under the CCB Standards in combination with the VCS grouped project requirements,"* said David Antonioli, Chief Executive Officer of VCS. *"The combined approach enables small-scale and community-led projects such as this Planting for the Future project to leverage carbon finance and demonstrate powerful non-carbon benefits, which will drive sustainable land use in the Peruvian Amazon."*

## Reducing barriers to entry for smallholder farmers to restore deforested land and implement agroforestry

The programmatic approach is different to the normal project-based approach to carbon certification because it allows for the addition of new project lands after the initial validation. Programmatic and grouped project are unique because they do not require that named participants, exact project areas, and agreements with carbon rights holders are all defined at project inception allowing for the option for expansion. In this sense the programmatic approach is advantageous for smallholders because it removes key barriers to entry. It can be difficult to get many smallholders to commit to a project and collectively start project activities at the same time even if they are in agreement with

the goals and activities of the project. Smallholder projects are better suited for starting small and then expanding over time by adding more land and smallholders, as the project's model proves successful.

The newly validated Plant your Future project has enabled an initial group of smallholder farmers in the Peruvian Amazon to begin agroforestry activities and access carbon finance without penalizing others who may wish to join at a future date. As such it provides an innovative mechanism to restore degraded farms with sustainable agroforestry over a large area.

Manuel Mavila, Regional Technical Coordinator at the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), who part-funded project development costs said *"Our SFM Programme was seeking innovation in order to remove barriers to sustainable development in the Andean countries. Plant your Future, through this grouped project initiative and its validation, has achieved an important milestone for the Peruvian Amazon. This innovation offers the possibility to restore thousands of deforested areas in the Amazon, provide income and food security for vulnerable smallholders, and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. We are positive that the scaling-up of this project will deliver all these benefits for local people, climate and biodiversity."*

### **Market-orientated agroforestry**

Our programme aims to empower smallholder farmers in Peru to transition from unsustainable agriculture to market-oriented agroforestry systems. Revenues from carbon finance help to facilitate farmers in maintaining climate-smart farms on degraded lands that use native species to provide diverse income streams from the sale of specialty crops and timber trees. By working directly with the landowners, this project is designed to create lasting changes in the local community.

#### **About Plant your Future:**

*Plant your Future is a registered charity in England and Wales (No.1134720) that work at the grassroots level with subsistence smallholder farmers in the Amazon basin of Peru. Our aims are to fight poverty, combat global climate change, and protect one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. For more information visit [www.plantyourfuture.org.uk](http://www.plantyourfuture.org.uk)*

#### **About IICA:**

*The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, provided financial support for project development and carbon certification process through their "Sustainable Forest Management Programme in the Andean Region" (SFM).*



A Global Benchmark for Carbon

Planting for the Future project has achieved registration with the VCS



Planting for the Future project has achieved validation with the CCB Standards Third Edition with Gold Level achievements for Community and Climate Adaptation