

BACKTOEDEN, ONE YEAR, ONE THOUSAND TREES AND NOW ALSO IN THE RURAL SCHOOLS

In sixteen months of life, Backtoeden has been able to plant a thousand trees in four rural lots in Suesca, Colombia, allowing the families who own them, to supplement their incomes all the way to June 2009. It has also facilitated a community component, through which we are planting at least one hundred trees in communal lots where rural schools operate, giving the opportunity to boys and girls, accompanied by the adults of the community to care for the trees and learn about the importance of living in harmony with nature.

Backtoeden creates an opportunity in Suesca, by hiring a service that will contribute to the recuperation of the area, at the human level as well as the ecological level. For this purpose we created a fund, resulting from the decision of a group of people to direct money as their personal contribution to the social responsibility of preserving the habitat that allows us to exist. It is the purchasing of a service, not a charity, nor a donation. It is an investment in the recuperation of the air, the water, the Earth of today. Nature has a great ability to heal itself; it just requires some attention of in our part, in order for us to coexist in harmony.

With the funds collected, the program hires owners of small plots of land (holding legal title), that live in them permanently, to plant and sustain the growth of native trees fit for sustainable wood farming, in order to control erosion and preserve water, for an initial term of

two (2) years, following an organic technique. The creation of native forests, fit for farming, guarantees that the contractor sees the trees as a long-term investment, that will benefit him financially, due to the fact that, with a previously stated reforestation plan and with the authorization of the area's public works organism, they will be able to farm the wood. The trees are provided and delivered to the contractor in their plot. They are bought with Backtoeden funds and become the property of the contractor.

The contract involves rental and services, since the contractors give the space for the planting, the fertilizers and the labor required to build the forest. Women head of households take priority in the contracting. Payment takes place every month and the number of trees planted and alive determines the amount. In order to maintain a control and a follow up of the reforestation, the contractors delineate the area to be used for sowing.

Gloria Umaña handles the contracts, coordination, administration and follow-up of the program. She invites you to join. She has lived in the area for five years in the lot called "El Paraíso", in the vereda called Hatillo, in Suesca- Cundinamarca, Colombia, South America. You can reach her at number 57-300-558-5738
Email address: backtoeden@cristinaumana.org



The administration of the program is handled horizontally. There are no established hierarchies in payment or duties. This means that all and every single one of the people involved, be it the contractors who plant and maintain the trees, or those who manage and keep the accounting, will receive the same amount of payment for their services.

Tree selection was conducted based on the experience gained in the experimentation and reforestation that took place in the land parcel “El Paraíso”, started in the year 2000, where there have been more than a thousand five hundred trees planted, 90 percent of which are native species and have allowed the existing forest to grow.

Backtoeden, in its initial phase, financed the planting and maintenance of two new forests of one hundred trees during two years. In the months of July and August contracts were signed, trees were bought from a nursery close by, were delivered to the contractors and were planted in a favorable month of rains.

Contracts were signed with Mrs. Catalina Torres, owner of the land parcel “Villa María” and Mrs. Ana Pradexis Rivera, owner of the land parcel “El Pino”. Both women devote themselves to small-scale dairy farming.

After three months we were able to subscribe a new contract with another family: the family of Ildefonso

Fonseca y María del Carmen Tibaque, owners of the land parcel “El Porvenir”. We also increased the trees from 200 to a total of 600 native trees, since we had already started the program in “Villa María” and “El Pino”, where we had already planted; we added 100 trees and 300 plants in “El Porvenir”.

As we reached one year of existence, we signed another contract with the family of María Cecilia Mestizo y José Sánchez, owners of the land parcel “El Arrayán”, where we planted 200 trees.

In August 2008, Backtoeden was able to plant one thousand (1000) native trees in four (4) land parcels. With the help of financing from Cristina Umaña, we started a community project, which consists of giving to the local school, one hundred native trees to be planted in the area where the school is located. Those trees will be planted and cared for by the community. This was started in the “Hatillo” area.

The planting, conservation and consolidation of the trees done under the Backtoeden project is based on the principle that all processes will be done manually and that the use of fertilizers will be limited to those of organic origins. The labor that is required for the strengthening of the trees will be constant and regular. In order to recover the soil, we incorporate organic materials (manure, fallen leaves, cut grass) in a con-



stant and abundant manner. To prevent wind and rain erosion, as well as the evaporation of ground humidity, we place a permanent cover surrounding every tree. In the hope of increasing the plants capacity to assimilate nutrition and fight plagues, we incorporate organic bio-fertilizers twice a month.

Every person engaged in the commitment of Backtoeden receives, via Internet, a month and annual report containing information audited by a certified accountant. They are also welcome to visit, without previous notice, the area and all the contractors.

The goal is, that gradually, we can substitute the agricultural economic activities that destroy and impoverish the Earth. Our objective is to generate clean air, recuperate sources of water and soil, and dignify the human being by creating an opportunity to live well in the countryside.

The proposal here detailed is one of the many paths that life itself gives us for her survival. If this resonates within you and if you trust it, allow us to welcome you.
<http://www.backtoeden2.blogspot.com>

Plant a tree, sponsor a forest, and promote a source of income for the people of the countryside. It is about being part of an ecological solution that preserves nature and includes the human being. It is about starting NOW to create forests in small land parcels in the mountains of Suesca. Colombia, South America, Planet Earth.

<http://www.backtoeden2.blogspot.com>
<http://www.cristinaumana.org/backtoeden/>
email: backtoeden@cristinumana.org

Suesca, Colombia
2009

