Seed to Tree: Value chains and partnerships for resilient restored forests

Project duration

Expected close date:
December 2026

Lead implementing partner

Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT (a CGIAR centre)

Consortium partners

Tropical Rainforest Conservation and Research Center (TRCRC)

Overview of the initiative

This project accelerates high-quality forest restoration in ASEAN by improving how countries choose tree species, increasing access to quality planting materials, and empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) as central partners in the restoration efforts. These actions open up opportunities for increased restoration efforts, carbon sequestration, and sustainable livelihoods for IPLCs. Innovative restoration methods and tools currently being piloted in Malaysia will be shared broadly through ASEAN knowledge platforms and regional exchanges so other AMS can learn, adapt, and apply them.

ASEAN's remaining natural forests hold immense potential for climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and local economic benefits. With ASEAN Member States committing to restore over 37 million hectares of forests and landscapes, this project provides a strategic pathway to translate these commitments into tangible environmental and community benefits. By combining science-based restoration approaches with local knowledge, the initiative creates productive, resilient ecosystems that attract investment and deliver lasting value for both communities and nature.

The project approach is being scaled to Thailand, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam with funding from Global Centre on Biodiversity for Climate (GCBC) and other donors, to build the momentum to expand across other ASEAN Member States.

Key objectives

1. **Develop and deploy decision-support tools** that provide site-specific, climate-smart recommendations on which tree species to use for different land use objectives and site conditions. These tools will help AMS design restoration interventions that enhance carbon storage, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.

2. **Implement proven operational models and institutional arrangements** that empower IPLC as suppliers of quality native tree seed and seedlings for restoration. This directly links community-based forest management with national forestry policies.

3. **Apply the MyFarmTrees digital platform** to support Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) of restoration efforts. The platform is tailored for use by local stakeholders, allowing them to document their work, measure carbon and biodiversity gains, and participate in carbon or emerging biodiversity credit markets.

Alignment with ASEAN vision, plan and priorities

This project closely aligns with the Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Forestry, particularly Strategic Thrust 1.3, by actively empowering IPLCs to play a leading role in restoration efforts. By positioning communities as suppliers of native tree seeds and seedlings, the project strengthens community-based forest management, generates sustainable income and jobs, and enhances local governance while linking community actions to national forestry policies.

The project further supports ASEAN's restoration commitments by providing decision-support tools to design climate-smart restoration suited to different landscapes. The MyFarmTrees MRV platform improves transparency and accountability by allowing communities to document restoration results and participate in carbon markets. It integrates an incentive mechanism compatible with mobile payments and allows tailored incentives, for example for planting food trees or restoring erosion-prone area. Its built-in incentive system supports long-term engagement and encourages good forestry practices that improve resilience.

By integrating science-based approaches with local knowledge and community empowerment, the initiative exemplifies ASEAN's vision for sustainable forestry, inclusive development and resilient ecosystems, while creating replicable restoration models that can be used across the region.

This project will be implemented in close partnership with the ASEAN Secretariat under the guidance of ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry.

"Seed to Tree demonstrates how nature-based solutions can move from ambition to implementation across ASEAN. By empowering locally led restoration design, seed systems, and digital monitoring and incentives, the project enables locally adapted and scalable solutions – translating nature-based approaches into measurable and investable climate, biodiversity, and livelihood outcomes."

Juan Lucas Restrepo
Director General, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT