



THE STARFLIGHT AVIATION CARBON RESPONSIBLE PROGRAMME

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is The Starflight Aviation Carbon Responsible Programme a carbon offset scheme?

No, it is much, much more. Most offset schemes match your carbon footprint to an equivalent reduction in emissions somewhere else in the world. This is usually an industrial process or a more efficient technology that is reducing waste. These offsets are done on a one-to-one basis and it could be argued that the improved efficiency would have happened anyway.



Working with Cool Earth, we can do things differently. All trees represent a store of carbon. Their trunks, branches and roots are carbohydrates created by carbon dioxide breathed in, oxygen breathed out and water sucked up. Rainforest is found where growing conditions are perfect with maximum sunlight, warmth and water. That is why they are such dense stores of carbon with at least 260 tonnes of CO₂ embedded in every acre of trees. Cool Earth's village partners have all been pressured to sell their forest timber for ranchland, palm oil or mining. They have refused and instead work to keep the world's most potent store of carbon and biodiversity intact.

An acre of forest breathes in CO₂ every year. But an acre within one of Cool Earth's partnerships also stores on average 270 tonnes of carbon in its trunks, branches and roots, which would otherwise be released into the atmosphere as CO₂.

Cool Earth offer a direct-action carbon mitigation initiative that locks up a minimum of five times your carbon footprint. It's not a one for one offset package; they use a minimum of five tonnes of emissions prevented for every one tonne emitted.

But that's not all. The best bit is that as well as locking in carbon, Cool Earth partnerships deliver some incredible co-benefits:



Since the installation of the first boat for emergency evacuations in the Asháninka partnership, 79 lives have been saved.



Thanks to mosquito nets provided to all partner villages, the prevalence of Malaria has dropped by 64%.



Through sustainable livelihoods, income is increased by more than 100% for some of the world's poorest.



98% of women in the Awajún partnership felt that working with Cool Earth has empowered them and 100% had higher self-esteem.



Biodiversity and forest health is higher where forest is protected by indigenous communities compared to "designated protected areas". (1)



In areas where 100% of school-age children have anaemia, Cool Earth is working with nutritionists to stop malnutrition claiming lives.



Does a Cool Earth partnership lock in CO₂ indefinitely?

A forest protection agreement is signed at the beginning of every village partnership that agrees that Cool Earth funding will be given as long as no trees are logged. Budgets must be approved by the community as a whole and fall under one of six general spending categories. These are: poverty, health, education, micro-credit, sustainable incomes and conservation training. This is really important, as their previous partnerships have shown that by investing in these things, communities can make more money from sustainable income streams (like coffee, cacao, and jewellery) than they would from selling their trees. This means that we can be confident that no trees will be felled in Cool Earth's partnerships whilst the communities are living – and making a living – in the area.

Cool Earth's data refers to projects implemented to date. They take pride in the fact that their light touch model works under any local conditions, but appreciate that new projects and global changes may bring new challenges and circumstances which are difficult in ways they have not encountered previously. Their strict monitoring and evaluation framework helps to ensure that Cool Earth partnerships are as future-proof as possible.

How do Cool Earth work out how much carbon is stored in an acre?

They use the latest research on carbon storage. There is no significant variation in the type or density of forests protected in Cool Earth partnerships and the most current research suggests that 270 tonnes of carbon per acre of primary rainforest is at the lower level: most rainforest stores between 260 and 340 tonnes per acre in above-ground biomass. It's worth pointing out that their figures do not

include soil or other below ground carbon storage, which increases the carbon storage capacity of rainforests many times over.

Their figures for each partnership, and average CO₂ per acre figure, come from the following research papers:

Country	tCO ₂ per acre	Author(s)	Journal
Peru	233	Saatchi et al (2011)	PNAS
DRC	270	Kearsley et al (2013)	Nature Communications
PNG	313	Vincent et al (2015)	Austral Ecology
Average	272		

Are Cool Earth's partnerships REDD projects? If not, why not?

REDD stands for Reduced Emission from Deforestation and Degradation and refers to rainforest conservation projects that generate carbon credit. REDD+ is a mechanism to reward developing countries for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

After the COP21 in Paris in December REDD+ has been adopted by governments as a climate change mitigation solution, with the aim of helping to reduce up to 20% of global carbon emissions.

Cool Earth have some concerns about REDD+. Firstly, it doesn't necessarily incentivise or promote 'non-carbon benefits', which include biodiversity, indigenous rights, human rights, land rights, livelihoods, transparency and accountability. It's carbon storage first, everything else second – a view that's exactly opposite to how Cool Earth operates.



For indigenous groups specifically, there are concerns that REDD+ will cause further land grabs and human rights violations.

Second, of the billions invested in REDD+, comparatively little trickles down to on-the-ground investment in rainforest-saving initiatives. Exactly how much money goes where within the general term of 'direct support to the design and implementation of UN-REDD National Programme' is not clear but there is a proportionally higher amount going to the Policy Board and Multi Donor Trust Fund Office than any individual country.

Of the funds pledged to REDD projects between 2008 and 2012, less than half have been disbursed to projects (2). Cool Earth spends more than 90% of donors' funds on saving forest, with not a penny going to governments, intermediary organisations, or middle-men.

Where communities have asked for more information about REDD, they have provided workshops to explain what would be involved if this path was pursued.

How do I calculate my (or my business') carbon footprint?

Cool Earth doesn't have a carbon footprint calculator but if you'd like to work out the carbon emissions you or your business cause, we recommend the online tool produced by the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

REFERENCES

(1). West et al, 2006. Sheil et al, 2015

(2). <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7912.pdf>