Restoration Barometer

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AstraZeneca

2022 Pledge Implementation Progress Report

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2022 1T.ORG PLEDGE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT

AstraZeneca

AZ Forest: Our Reforestation Initiative

Reporting period

January 2021 – December 2021

Pledge status

Somewhat on track

Intervention locations

Ghana, UK, USA, Australia, Indonesia

Progress summary

In January 2020, AstraZeneca announced the AZ Forest initiative – its commitment to plant and maintain 50 million trees globally by 2025 and which supports the World Economic Forum's Trillion Trees platform. This global tree planting and stewardship initiative aims to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and to make a positive contribution to communities, local economies, nature and our planet – including building connectivity between key habitats and prioritising the planting of key habitat species.

This voluntary commitment complements AstraZeneca's Ambition Zero Carbon strategy, which aims to deliver deep decarbonisation across Scopes 1, 2 and 3, by eliminating, reducing and substituting 98% of Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 2026, and becoming carbon negative across the value chain by 2030. AstraZeneca was one of the first seven companies worldwide to have its net zero, science-based Scope 1–3 GHG emissions reduction targets verified under the Science Based Targets initiative Net-Zero Corporate Standard. We aim to be net zero by 2045.

In 2021, AZ Forest planted a total of 3.1 million trees across six key projects. The cumulative number of trees planted by AZ Forest at the end of 2021 was 3.4 million, and by December 2022, 8.2 million trees had been planted.

In Australia, AstraZeneca aims to plant 25 million native and locally appropriate trees by 2025, in partnership with One Tree Planted and Greening Australia. The project focuses on restoring degraded agricultural land, while prioritising distressed areas of farmers' landholdings. These interventions help to make degraded areas more productive, as greater tree cover is expected to improve soil health and boost water quality and availability, alongside supporting broader ecosystem health. The trees will help to moderate local temperatures, and once established, are expected to help restore the water cycle, mitigating wildfire risks.

As part of its aim to build connectivity between key habitats and prioritise the planting of key habitat species, species such as Eucalyptus punctata and Eucalyptus melliodora trees will be planted to increase the food supply of species such as the koala and Regent honeyeater, whilst she-oak trees will be planted to create an important food supply for the threatened glossy black cockatoo. Vital habitats will be created for dozens of additional endangered species such as the sandhill dunnart, malleefowl, honey possum and black-gloved wallaby.

The initiative will also support traditional owners and rural communities with economic and skills opportunities for undertaking contracted works such as seed collection and planting. It is anticipated that the initiative could create approximately 900 jobs across regional locations over the next five years, engaging up to 150 indigenous and non-indigenous business subcontractors, seed suppliers and nurseries. By the end of 2021, the project had planted 784,000 trees.

In Indonesia, in the Citarum River Watershed in West Java, AstraZeneca aims to plant 10 million trees by 2025, in partnership with One Tree Planted and Trees4Trees. The watershed is one of the most strategically important in the country. It serves nearly 27 million residents of the Jakarta–Bandung metro area with domestic water as well as irrigation for rice fields and hydroelectric power.

Degradation of forests in the watershed has caused widescale erosion and topsoil loss, resulting in landslides in the wet season and exacerbating droughts in the dry season. The resulting sedimentation in rivers and reservoirs threatens freshwater habitats, water supply, food security and power generation for an area that is home to 10% of the Indonesian population. As climate change is expected to increase the intensity of weather events, without a change in land use practices, these risks are likely to increase.

This project will provide smallholder farmers with a high-quality seedling mix of income-producing species, along with subsidies on specific crop seeds and ground plants for erosion control. Through the development of community-based agroforestry systems and training, the project aims to reduce deforestation and increase tree cover, rehabilitating the watershed while working with local farmers to transition to more sustainable livelihoods. By the end of 2021 the project had planted 914,000 trees.

In 2021, AstraZeneca announced three new projects: in Ghana, the planting of nearly 4 million trees in partnership with the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance and New Generation Plantations; in the UK, the planting of 1.2 million trees with Forestry England and Borders Forest Trust; and in the USA, the planting of one million trees with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. All of these projects have specific aims and objectives, aligned to the local context.

In central Ghana, the nearly four million trees will be grown and maintained through a community-led project combining natural forest restoration and sustainable agroforestry. In collaboration with the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance and New Generation Plantation Technical Assistance, this unique partnership will focus on building community and ecological resilience and form part of a global network of 'Living Labs', helping to demonstrate how investing in nature and putting local communities at the heart of landscape restoration can benefit both biodiversity and local livelihoods.

The sustainable agroforestry programme combines fruit and nuts production, regenerative agriculture and wood production. It will give local communities access to new sources of revenue and a more diverse food system, whilst improving soil quality. In addition, the timber trees will provide fuel for energy. With charcoal production one of the leading drivers of forest degradation in the area, the provision of fast growing and renewable timber will reduce pressure on natural forests, helping to protect carbon stocks and natural forests habitat.

Local level governance of the project is ensured through a multi-stakeholder platform facilitated by the Nature and Development Foundation, a Ghanaian non-governmental organisation. This process helps to steer the project and ensure that the community's needs and concerns are at the heart of all decision making. The tree species used in the agroforestry programme have been guided by large-scale community engagement.

In the United States, in partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, AstraZeneca will grow and sustain one million trees by the end of 2025. To date, the reforestation effort has focused on the Delaware River watershed, together with other sponsors in habitat restoration projects – AstraZeneca's funding helps to grow native and locally appropriate tree species, restore forests and promote the adoption of conservation practices to benefit water quality and sustain native wildlife species in the watershed.

Planting in riparian habitats on riverbanks and in 'buffer areas' close to the water will help stabilise riverbanks and reduce surface water runoff, improving water quality. Additionally, the increased riparian tree cover will shade waterways, moderating water temperatures. Waterways also act as key habitat corridors, therefore, reforesting riparian areas can help to ensure species such as the golden-winged warbler, wood thrush and cerulean warbler can move through the landscape, giving them a great chance to adapt to climatic and environmental changes.

In the United Kingdom, in partnership with Forestry England, Borders Forest Trust and One Tree Planted, over one million trees will be grown and sustained by the end of 2025. The key project areas in 2021 aimed to restore land previously covered by commercial plantations but degraded by tree pests and diseases. For example, in Thetford Forest, land used for larch plantation was cleared as some trees had succumbed to larch disease (Phytophthora Ramorum). A diverse mix of tree species was selected to replace the larch, including a variety of native species and some non-native species that have high pest tolerance and can tolerate warmer temperatures, to ensure the new woodland is resilient to the future climate anticipated in the area.

Work has now started with partners on all projects, which will contribute to our pledge to plant and maintain 50 million trees by the end of 2025. We are proud of the quality of the projects we have initiated and are excited about the long-term benefits we expect them to bring as they accelerate and scale in the coming years.

We continue to address the inherent challenges to scaling up new projects. For example, some partnerships took longer than anticipated to finalise, which for one project meant work started part-way through the planting season and suitable implementation time was lost. Additionally, analysis of survival rates indicated trees planted late in the season showed higher than expected mortality. As a result, target planting schedules were updated in 2022, which improved survival rates. Despite Covid-19 restrictions to group sizes and training opportunities in two of our project areas, which slowed project scale up in 2021, the initiative is on track to grow and maintain 50 million trees by the end of 2025.

Implementation method

Financial support to:

- One Tree Planted
- Trees4Trees
- Greening Australia
- Friends of the National Park Foundation
- New Generation Plantations
- Circular Bioeconomy Alliance
- African Plantations for Sustainable Development
- Borders Forest Trust
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Ecosystems and restoration interventions concerned

Farmlands and mixed-use areas Agroforestry:

- Mixed farming and forestry
- Establish/manage woodlots
- Restore riparian zones

Forests and woodlands:

- Planting/seeding corridors of mixed stands of native species
- Artificial regeneration (through planting of seedlings or seeds in mixtures)
- Reconnecting fragmented forests by planting mixed stands of native species
- Planting on steep slopes and along waterways to avoid or recover from erosion
- Planted forests and woodlots
- Enrichment planting or underplanting
- Combining trees with crops and/or animals
- Watershed protection and erosion control

Rivers, streams, lakes (wetlands):

- Artificial regeneration or actions to improve and/or enhance water quality and/or flow

Action indicators

Policies and strategies

- **AstraZeneca Ambition Zero Carbon**

In January 2020 AstraZeneca announced a commitment to plant and maintain 50 million trees worldwide by the end of 2025. AstraZeneca initiated this voluntary project as we recognise the connection between a healthy planet and healthy people. Through the AZ Forest initiative, we seek to support sustainable livelihoods, restore biodiversity, tackle climate change and improve human health. This commitment also complements our Ambition Zero Carbon commitment to reduce GHG emissions from our global operations (Scope 1 and 2) by 98% by 2026 and halve our entire value chain footprint (from 2015 baseline) by 2030 on the way to a 90% reduction by 2045 (from 2019 baseline).

Supporting documentation

- AZ Forest

Funding

Funding disbursed to:

- **Financing of implementing partner(s)**

Our support enabled the planning, preparation and implementation of the restoration interventions. It will also support the maintenance of the projects and ensure ongoing monitoring and reporting.

Supporting documentation

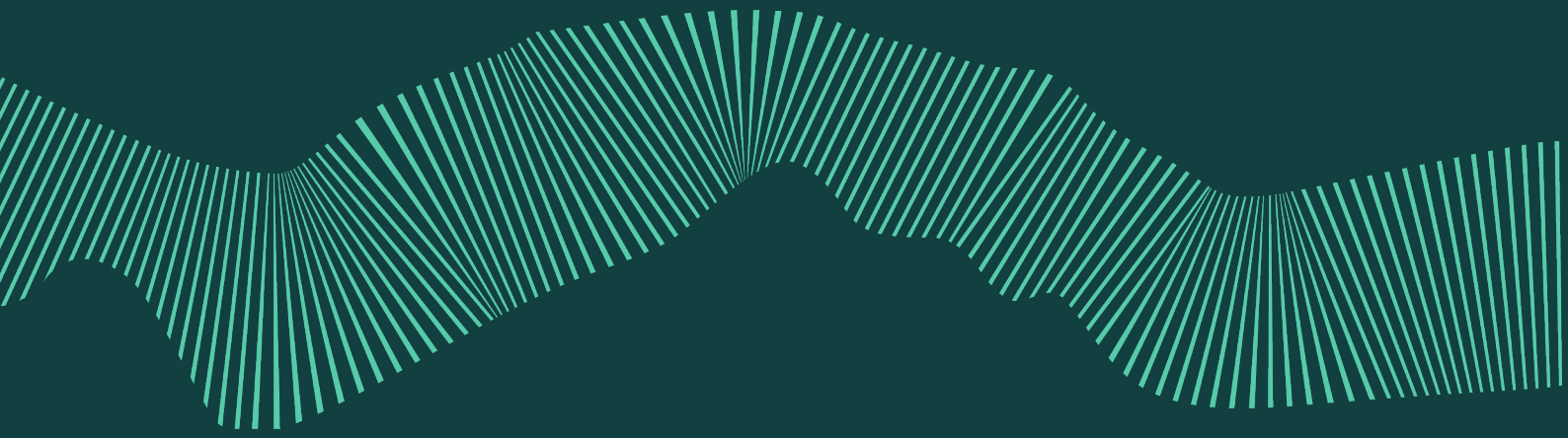
- Information compiled by company staff

Area of land

As of the end of 2021, 4,390 hectares were under restoration across Australia, Indonesia, Ghana, the UK and the USA. All of these project areas were selected to maximise the environmental and social co-benefits of land and forest restoration, while the tree species and restoration methods used are aligned to the local context.

Supporting documentation

- Information compiled by company staff



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