

## **Afforestation project in Ethiopia recently resulted in 350 million trees planted in one day**

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The world's forests have been widely described as the planet's lungs. Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and purify the air we breathe.

Forests are home to 80 percent of the world's terrestrial biodiversity. These ecosystems are complex webs of organisms that include animals, plants and micro-organisms. And forests supply 75 percent of the world's water.

### **Ethiopia breaks India's tree planting record**

According to the UN Environment Programme, Ethiopia planted more than 350 million trees on 29 July, setting a new world record.

The more than 350 million trees were planted in an ambitious move to counter the effects of deforestation and climate change.

The trees were planted in 12 hours, breaking the world record held by India since 2016 for the most trees planted in one day, which stood at 50 million trees.

The figure of 350 million has not been verified, but it far exceeds the previous record held by the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, which was verified by Guinness World Records.

Juliette Biao Koudénoukpo, Director of UN Environment's Africa Office said: "Afforestation is the most effective climate change solution to date and with the new record set by Ethiopia, other African nations should move with speed and challenge the status quo."

In 2016 India planted 50 million trees along national highways, expressways, railways and forest land. The project involved more than 800 000 volunteers including students,

legislators, government officials, housewives and volunteers from a number of non-governmental organizations.

### **Filipino students must plant 10 trees before they can graduate**

A new law in the Philippines requires all graduating elementary, high school and college students to plant at least 10 trees as a prerequisite for graduation. According to the Graduation Legacy for the Environment Act, trees should be planted in any of the following areas – forest lands, mangrove and protected areas, ancestral domains, civil and military reservations, urban areas under the greening plan of the local government units, inactive and abandoned mine sites, and other suitable lands.

Gary Alejano, one of the authors of the bill said: “With over twelve million students graduating from elementary and nearly five million students graduating from high school and almost 500 000 graduating from college each year, this initiative, if properly implemented, will ensure that at least 175 million new trees will be planted each year. In the course of one generation, no less than 525 billion can be planted under this initiative.”

### **Largest tropical reforestation project in the Amazon rainforest**

In September 2017 Conservation International and partners announced that they are participating in a massive reforestation effort in the Brazilian region of the Amazon.

The multimillion dollar, project aims to restore 73 million trees in the Brazilian Amazon region by 2023. Spanning 30 000 hectares of land, the project claims to be the largest tropical forest restoration in the world. It will also help Brazil move closer to its Paris Agreement target of reforesting 12 million hectares of land by 2030.

### **Australia's one billion tree project**

In February 2019 a plan was announced to plant a billion trees across the country by 2030. The plan is part of a campaign to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. The agreement's aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change.

The project is expected to remove 18 million tons of greenhouse gases from the environment each year between now and 2030.

### **Ontario's 50 million tree programme**

The government of Ontario's 50 Million Tree Program was established in 2007 to plant 50 million trees across the province by 2025. Benefits of the project include improving wildlife habitat, contributing to soil and water conservation efforts and moderating local climate.

The project is led by Trees Ontario, the forest-restoration arm of Forests Ontario. It provides landowners with financial support to plant trees on their property.

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