

Government of Canada Launched the 2 Billion Trees (2BT) Program

24 June 2022

The Government of Canada launched the 2 Billion Trees (2BT) program as part of its commitment to plant two billion trees over 10 years. The program funds projects proposed by public and private sector organizations and Indigenous communities.

The 2BT program is part of the Government of Canada's broader approach to nature-based climate solutions. It will contribute to Canada's efforts to mitigate climate change while achieving key biodiversity and conservation goals, as well as contributing to human well-being.

The 2BT program offers funding to assist with tree-planting projects but does not directly supply trees, seedlings, saplings or land. It works with organizations to help fund tree-planting projects for which the successful partner is responsible for all aspects of tree planting. The program will establish multi-year agreements with tree-planting partners that will create predictable, stable, long-term demand for nurseries and others along the supply chain for seedlings, ensuring that the right tree is grown and planted in the right place.

The tree-planting process

Tree planting on a large scale requires careful planning. For the Government of Canada's planting partners, the process of planting a tree takes several years of investment in advance, including collecting seeds, increasing nursery capacity, growing seedlings until they are large enough to be planted successfully and identifying available land. Tree selection is based on the species' ability to adapt to a changing climate and other environmental considerations, with priority given to native trees. Specific tree-planting locations depend on the funding proposals put forward by partners. These considerations take time and are necessary initial investments on a path to restoring nature and biodiversity while increasing carbon storage. Accordingly, tree-planting projects must demonstrate a variety of climate and conservation benefits.

How the 2BT program projects are approved and tracked

The Government of Canada supports tree-planting organizations to reach the 2BT program goal of planting two billion trees in 10 years. Proposed projects received through Calls for Proposals are assessed and reviewed by expert review panels that inform the selection of projects to be funded.

Planting the right tree in the right place and for the right reasons is essential for the 2BT program. Tree-planting projects need to demonstrate how they intend to select the right tree species and seeds to ensure the survival of trees for a given location and climate. Applicants are required to describe how their projects also contribute to ecological and biodiversity goals.

Partners report on the number of trees planted once tree-planting activities have concluded, as outlined in their contribution agreements.

Natural Resources Canada and the 2BT program also receive expert advice and thought leadership from the external Nature-based Climate Solutions Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee consists of 16 experts in nature-based climate solutions and includes Indigenous, science and non-governmental experts.

The role of shrubs

The 2BT program focuses on planting trees. However, in some instances, planting shrubs alongside trees supports tree survival and health. The 2BT program therefore also funds the planting of shrubs (up to 15% of project funding can be used for shrubs), but planted shrubs do not count toward the two billion trees program goal. In order for shrubs to be eligible for funding, applicants must demonstrate that these plantings will be a protective measure to support the survival and health of the trees planted or that the shrub species are native and an essential component for habitat restoration objectives.

Partnerships with provinces and territories

The Government of Canada is moving toward an Agreement in Principle with partner jurisdictions under the program's provincial and territorial stream. The agreements, once signed, will demonstrate a shared commitment to the multiple objectives of the 2BT program, focused on enduring environmental benefits (e.g., biodiversity, GHG) and monitoring prior to project commencement. The Agreement in Principle clearly sets out shared desired outcomes that are collaborative and focused on climate action and environmental co-benefits. The program anticipates that provinces and territories across Canada will plant over one billion trees over the 10 years of the 2BT program.

Source: <https://indiaeducationdiary.in/government-of-canada-launched-the-2-billion-trees-2bt-program/>