Let's Green the Planet with Treedom

Region	**Europe and Central Asia**
Award Scheme	**Dubai International Award**
Themes	**Regeneration**
Sustainable Development Goals	**Goal 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

Summary

Treedom is the only platform that allows one to plant a tree and follow it online, directly financing farmers around the world. Thanks to its web platform (ww.treedom.net) It sells a tree planting service, by directly financing cooperatives of farmers who then plant the trees and manage their upkeep. Farmers benefit from the plantation of trees creating an extra income or food security thanks to tree products.

Background and Objective

With Treedom, you finance farmers who want to plant trees, supporting their work in the early years when trees are not yet productive. Treedom provides farmers with the knowledge and technical support for planting and managing trees. Trees are photographed, geolocated and monitored by Treedom over time. Treedom directly finances small agroforestry projects throughout the territory. The philosophy is to establish sustainable ecosystems and allow thousands of farmers to support the initial costs of planting new trees, ensuring food autonomy and income opportunities over time. The project allows small rural communities to become aware of the causes and effects of climate change, information that often does not reach people in the Global South. In fact, Treedom's effort is to educate, train and monitor rural communities in the realization of agroforestry projects. In fact, they are enabled to receive the necessary training to plan the management of their land through agroforestry systems. These mixed agricultural-forestry systems make it possible to absorb CO2 emissions, reduce pressure on water resources, restore land tenure and mitigate the effects of desertification. It also offers the possibility for corporate clients to plan and manage social corporate responsibility activities in a simple and transparent way, giving them the means to plan and communicate their environmental initiatives. These activities are not just limited to tree planting but start from an evaluation of the environmental impact that the clients want to have to allow them to calibrate the intervention according to their goal.

Actions and Implementation

Every year, due to desertification, soil degradation and drought, 24 billion tonnes of fertile soil are lost in the world, with serious repercussions on the lives of millions of people. This is the alarm sounded by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, on the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought on 17 June. The mismanagement of land over the years has caused the degradation of an area twice the size of China. Treedom gives further impetus to reforestation, an extraordinary tool to combat desertification and soil erosion, through technology. Treedom is the only platform worldwide that allows consumers and corporations to plant and follow trees online, directly financing farmers around the world, since its birth Treedom has planted more than a million trees in 16 countries. Treedom directly finances small agroforestry projects throughout the territory. The philosophy is to realize sustainable ecosystems and allow thousands of farmers to support the initial costs of planting new trees, ensuring food autonomy and income opportunities over time. The realization of small agroforestry systems allows making precise choices in relation to the specific characteristics and needs of each project area. The tree species planted are native or respect the biodiversity of the different territories. The agroforestry practice also integrates the planting of trees in an agricultural system, favouring the virtuous interaction between the different species and sustainable use of resources and land. Finally, all trees absorb CO2 in the course of their growth, naturally generating a benefit for the entire planet. In arid zones, agroforestry practices help mitigate the consequences of irregular and unforeseen rainfall and of economic fluctuations; they do this through the regular and reliable supply of substitute products for man and livestock, reducing pressure on local resources and encouraging sustainable production.

Outcomes and Impacts

Treedom sells a tree planting service, by directly financing cooperatives of farmers who plant the trees and manage their upkeep. In fact, the goal is not only to plant trees but also to have them planted by those who need them the most, so that their communities can have the advantages of the local and social benefits triggered by agroforestry activities. Contributing to the planting of a tree is perceived, thanks to Treedom features, as a rewarding deed, both on an emotional and reputational level. Individuals and companies are proud of their trees and forests, as it is a clear demonstration of their

commitment to helping the environment. Treedom's core innovation consists of associating each tree with the user who has chosen to plant it, allowing the user to interact with it. Each tree has an online page, it is geolocated and photographed, it can help the user to offset CO2 emissions produced by various activities, it can be kept or virtually gifted to someone else. Thanks to these features, a tree from Treedom is engaging and can also become a communication and marketing tool for companies. Clients and donors are more focused on the quality and impact of their actions - and they also want to share and be involved in the solutions. This is why the sector is trending towards giving clients and donors the tools to check forestry activities (videos, photos, exact locations, external expert reports) and the implementation of engagement strategies (through marketing, digital marketing and gamification, for example). In the Global, South Treedom is involving rural communities and smallholder farmers providing them with information on climate change and the agroforestry approach providing not only funding but also training and infrastructure (greenhouses, cisterns etc.). The message of Treedom, planting a Tree with a click and providing environmental and social benefits, is involving at the moment more than 406,00 users, 2,500 businesses and 67,000 farmers.

Sustainability and Scalability

Through its system, Treedom acts to make a change towards more sustainable lifestyles. From the point of view of the beneficiary communities and farmers, these are driven to take environmentally sustainable agricultural approaches such as agroforestry systems. Resulting in several benefits in terms of environment and social sustainability. Individual users are motivated to monitor their co2 emissions and compensate them through the planting of trees, they are also pushed to realize sustainable gifts and purchased through Treedom's trees instead of buying products that have an environmental impact. Companies can give a concrete and transparent response to consumers that are asking businesses to take greater environmental responsibility. Given the results obtained also in terms of reputation by businesses that have chosen Treedom services, many companies are encouraged to associate marketing campaigns with environmental actions by increasing funding for tree planting. The digital product - corresponding to real trees- developed by Treedom facilitates this operation for companies.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

Potentially Treedom can serve worldwide all rural communities and socially useful realities that want to realize forest and agroforestry projects. At the moment it operates in 16 countries involving 67 thousand farmers, both in countries of the Global South and in Italy. In the first case, favouring farmers' cooperatives and NGOs and associations that promote ecological and sustainable development in the second case by financing associations and projects with a predominant social purpose. (Countries currently involved: Nepal, Kenya, Italy, Haiti, Cameroon, Malawi, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Argentina, Madagascar, Thailand, Tanzania, Colombia, Guatemala, Ghana, Ecuador). Treedom users also benefit from the possibility to contribute in an effective and transparent way to reforestation, as well as to increase their awareness of climate change and the adoption of ecologically and economically responsible behaviour.

Innovative Initiative

The innovation consists of associating each tree with a user who has chosen to plant it, allowing him to interact with it. Each tree has an online page updated, it is geolocalized and photographed, it can help users to absorb the CO2 they produced, and can be kept or virtually gifted. Thanks to these features, Treedom's trees engage people and become a communication and marketing tool for companies, that bring a positive impact on rural communities. In fact, trees planted remain the property of local farmers that can use fruits for their alimentation or generate an extra income. Farmers guarantee the caring of the tree and local environmental benefits from the planting of vegetation selected according to the farmer's needs and respecting local biodiversity. To do so Treedom is using simple ICT technology to manage its platform and GIS system to monitor and geotag its trees

Resources devoted to delivery

Up to date, we have planted 1.011.204 trees in 20 agroforestry projects (16 countries) involving 67,000 farmers. We have 398,422 consumers adopting trees, and 2.346 companies have built forests with Treedom. These numbers impact the absorption of CO2, estimated at 342.781,97 tons, and the mitigation of phenomena such as loss of habitat, desertification, and soil deterioration. Socially, thousands of farmers in developing countries can plant fruit trees, guaranteeing food security and extra income. The SROI analysis of the Kisii project (Kenya) has stressed how the social value that each tree brings can be estimated at 25$. Treedom has also impacted the rise of awareness on environmental issues, reforestation & biodiversity. On one side through the training of farmers involved in agroforestry projects and on the other through communication and marketing activities. Treedom's message reaches its customers but also a wide public on social networks with an audience of about 258,727 users.

Conclusion

The replicability of Treedom projects has been demonstrated by the growing numbers of beneficiaries, trees planted and clients. The model has been applied in 16 countries (Italy, Nepal, Kenya, Haiti, Colombia, etc.). The experience has shown us that our model is applicable in different contexts/countries mainly in developing countries, but with several experiences also in Italy, this is an indicator that disadvantaged communities could benefit from our model worldwide. From the side of the buyers has started an expansion in foreign markets, the attention of individuals/companies on the environment is increasing, we expect that more people will want to live the Treedom experience to be involved in a worldwide movement to fight climate change and reach sustainable development goals.