



Amazon to invest US\$15 million in nature-based projects to support communities, climate resilience, and biodiversity in the Asia-Pacific region

September 04, 2023 at 6:00 AM EDT

- Amazon's Right Now Climate Fund expands its support for biodiversity and climate resilience projects in the Asia-Pacific region, following nine similar investments in communities across Europe.
- The fund will invest an initial US\$3 million into projects in India, beginning with a first project in the Western Ghats to plant 300,000 trees – creating carbon sinks as well as enhancing wildlife conservation and livelihoods.

4 September 2023, Bengaluru: Amazon today announced a US\$15 million allocation for nature-based solutions in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region. This allocation draws from Amazon's US\$100 million Right Now Climate Fund, which was created in 2019 to support nature conservation and restoration projects that enhance climate resilience and biodiversity, while driving social and environmental benefits in communities where they operate.

"The Asia-Pacific region is home to vast forests and rich coastal environments, but it is also highly vulnerable to climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation," said Kara Hurst, Amazon's Global VP for Sustainability. "To protect the region from the impacts of climate change and preserve biodiversity, we will need both large-scale and local action – and we're committed to investing in both."

The first US\$3 million from the fund's APAC allocation will support nature-based projects in India. For its first project, Amazon will be working with the Centre for Wildlife Studies (CWS) to support communities and conservation efforts in the Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage Site which is home to more than 30% of all of India's wildlife species, including the world's largest population of wild Asiatic elephants and tigers. Amazon's funding of US\$1 million will help CWS establish the "Wild Carbon" program, which will support 10,000 farmers in planting and maintaining one million fruit-bearing, timber and medicinal trees.

Amazon's direct contribution will enable CWS to partner with 2,000 family farms and plant 300,000 trees over three years. The trees will help to expand land area for animals and reduce human-wildlife conflict through the creation of natural buffer zones, while also bringing in higher-value trees for the farmers compared to other subsistence crops. CWS will also use project funds to develop state-of-the-art monitoring systems using drone and remote sensing technology and on-the-ground surveys to verify program outcomes, advancing research on the potential positive impact of farmers on reforestation opportunities.

"We have designed the Wild Carbon program with an unwavering commitment to wildlife conservation, and also poverty alleviation through livelihood support. By partnering with and incentivizing farmers to be part of the solution, we will be able to facilitate buffer habitats for tigers, elephants and other endangered species," said CWS Executive Director Dr. Krithi Karanth. "Amazon's support enables us to plan and build a program that is self-sustaining in the long-term. The farmers will receive upfront support to select tree types that serve both their livelihoods and the wildlife, whilst also receiving technical assistance, agroforestry training, and support for replanting failed saplings."

Projects are selected based on their potential positive impact on local communities and livelihoods, as well as the magnitude and tangibility of benefit to the environment. Further investments in projects located in India and other APAC countries will be announced in coming months.

The Right Now Climate Fund's allocation for India and APAC complements its broader sustainability and decarbonization efforts in the region. In 2019, Amazon co-founded The Climate Pledge, committing to reach net-zero carbon by 2040 – 10 years ahead of the Paris Agreement. The Pledge now has more than 400 signatories across 55 industries and 38 countries, which work together on initiatives that preserve the natural world and enable decarbonizing technologies. Nine Indian companies have joined the Pledge: BluPine Energy, CSM Technologies India, Godi, Greenko, HCL, Infosys, Mahindra Logistics, Tech Mahindra, and UPL. In 2022, Amazon launched six utility-scale projects in India, and the company is on a path to powering its global operations with 100% renewable energy by 2025 – five years ahead of the initial 2030 target. This includes three wind-solar hybrid projects located in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, as well as three solar farms in Rajasthan, representing a total renewable energy capacity of 920 megawatts. Amazon India has also committed to deploying 10,000 electric vehicles in its delivery fleet by 2025, and is well on its way to achieving this goal.

Amazon supports other nature programmes in APAC: in 2022, Amazon and Conservation International established the International Blue Carbon Institute, an organization based in Singapore that aims to mitigate climate change and protect coastal communities. It supports the restoration and protection of coastal and marine carbon ecosystems, known as "blue carbon" ecosystems, in Southeast Asia and beyond. In Europe, the [Right Now Climate Fund](#) has allocated €20 million to [nature-based projects](#), such as a [nature and wildlife restoration fund](#) in France, a [reforestation programme](#) in Italy, an [urban greening programme](#) in Germany, [rewilding and tree planting projects](#) in the UK, and [the world's first commercial-scale seaweed farm](#) located between offshore wind turbines off the coast of the Netherlands. Additionally, Amazon has funded forest conservation and restoration in the Appalachian Mountains in the United States, the Agroforestry and Restoration Accelerator program in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest, and is a founding member of the LEAF Coalition, a global public-private initiative working to mobilize over US\$1 billion to protect the world's tropical rainforests.

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