

Volcano Valley Reforestation.

Planting Report 2022



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United Nations Environment Programme*

Introduction

The trees made possible by the cocoa farmers producing Die Gute Schokolade are planted by farmers in the origin of cacao.

In order to be truly long-term effective, reforestation and restoration efforts should work and involve local communities in an integral manner so that they can benefit from the work. This means that projects need to take into account the local context, necessities and interests to increase the likelihood of success.

By involving local stakeholders since the beginning of the process we can increase their engagement to the project, so an integral approach needs to take into account not only the biological, but also the social, cultural and economical impacts in the community. As a result of involving and taking into consideration local interests during the planning and implementation processes, as well as ensuring economical benefits, we can contribute to the improvement of social welfare in different aspects and at the same time, can contribute to the empowerment of the community and the long-term conservation of the restored areas.

Taking this into consideration we partnered since 2019 with a local organization that could help us to implement such a reforestation model, in particular to plant the trees funded by Die Gute Schokolade and Die Gute Bio Schokolade: The Protectora de Bosques del Estado de México (PROBOSQUE).

PROBOSQUE is a governmental organization established in 1990 in charge of reforestation and improving the conservation and protection status of the forest resources of The State of Mexico (Edomex).

The State of Mexico is the most populated state in the country¹ and is 22,487.67 km² in size. Around half of its territory (48%) is covered by pine, oak and fir forests, but the exploitation of their forests has been extensive. Among the main causes of degradation and reduction of the forests in the region we can find illegal logging, excessive use of firewood and charcoal, intensive cattle grazing, intensive agricultural activities, creation of roads and highways as well as an accelerated population growth (PROBOSQUE, 2021).

The main objective of PROBOSQUE is to develop sustainable forestry management in the state. To achieve so, they implement diverse programs, including “Payments for Environmental Services”, “Sustainable Forestry Management”, “Reforestation Edomex”, among others. In particular, Reforestation Edomex is a program focused on conserving forests and soil by providing funding, trees and technical assistance to farmers with forestry land with the intention to conserve and recover the forests of Edomex. To support the work that PROBOSQUE is doing in the state, Plant-for-the-Planet collaborates with them since 2019 in order to contribute to actions that help improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of Edomex, ensure the sustainable development of forests and encourage the conservation of biodiversity and environmental

services. As a result of our collaboration, by 2021 a total of 9.3 million trees have been planted on 9,808.76 hectares in different regions of the Toluca Valley. The trees planted belong to 53 different species including pines, cypresses and mesquite plants.



2022 Reforestation Work

In 2022, we continued our existent collaboration with PROBOSQUE and planted 2,500,000 trees on 2,995.81 hectares, adding up to a total of 11.8 million new trees in the State of Mexico. The trees planted this year are located in 9 different regions covering 54 municipalities of the state (Figure 1a). These municipalities are located in the Transvolcanic Belt (Figure 1b) in which the dominating ecosystems are conifer forests.

During the year 2022, the planting activities of the project benefited around 145 sites. This year participation had a new type of property compared to last years: "Bienes comunales" which refers to communal property. Apart from this, the project also included farmers in another traditional community organizations called Ejidos, as well as individual farmers with private properties and others (Figure 2). From the total of trees planted in this year, 1,450,790 trees were planted by 83 Ejido farmer communities. A further 743,310 trees were planted by 31 Bienes Comunales and the final 305,900 trees were planted by private property and others. Most of these farmers had land with a certain degree of degradation. However, the intensity of degradation varied widely among the areas.

The saplings used for these activities belong to 20 species and 7 different families. To decide the specific species to be planted in each of the areas, the technical team of PROBOSQUE visited and evaluated the areas beforehand. Based on their expertise, they selected the best approach and species to use every time according to the site characteristics and needs of the area. Not all species are planted in every site. All seedlings were grown in the PROBOSQUE nurseries, under controlled conditions, and once they were ready were provided directly to each one of the beneficiaries. Tree planting sites are mapped and are being made available at <https://www1.plant-for-the-planet.org/volcanovalley> (see site tab in the top right to navigate between project sites). The exact number of trees per species is documented for each site.



Species planted

Families and species planted in 2022 in the Toluca Valley Reforestation program.

Family	Species
Pinaceae	<i>Abies religiosa</i>
Cupressaceae	<i>Cupressus lusitanica</i>
Lamiaceae	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>
Fabaceae	<i>Leucaena glauca</i>
Fabaceae	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus ayacahuite</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus cembroides</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus greggii</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus hartwegii</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus leiophylla</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus montezumae</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus oocarpa</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus patula</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus pseudostrobus</i>
Pinaceae	<i>Pinus teocote</i>
Fagaceae	<i>Quercus sp.</i>
Salicaceae	<i>Salix babylonica</i>
Caprifoliaceae	<i>Symphoricarpos microphyllus</i>

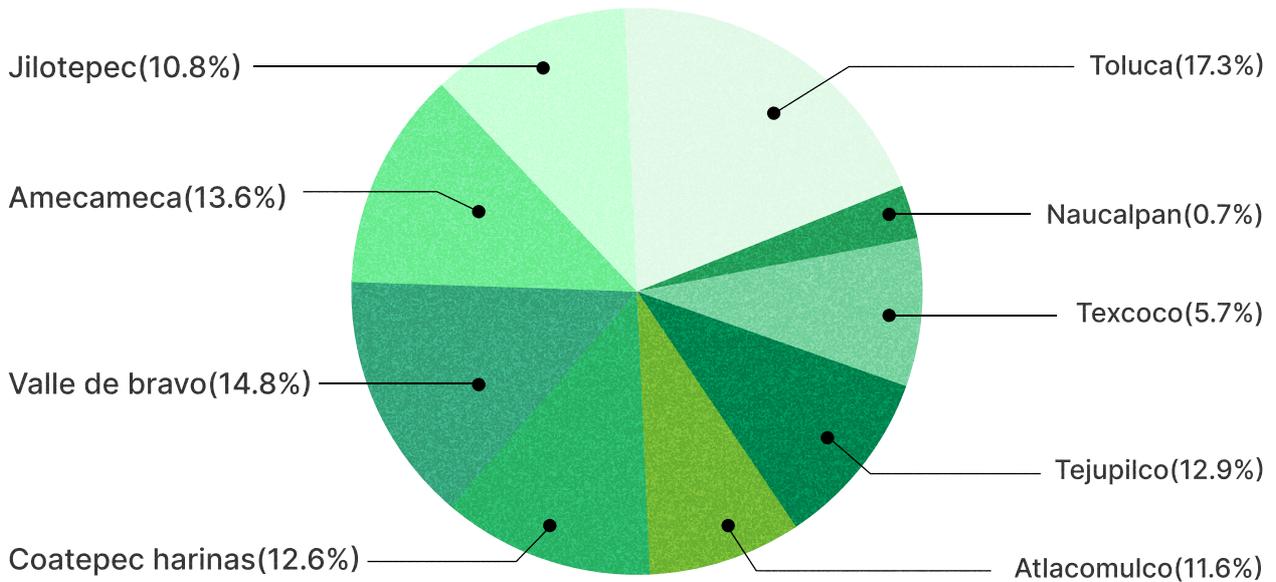


Figure 1: Percentage of trees planted in each different region of the state of Mexico. The total number of trees planted in 2022 was 2,500,000.

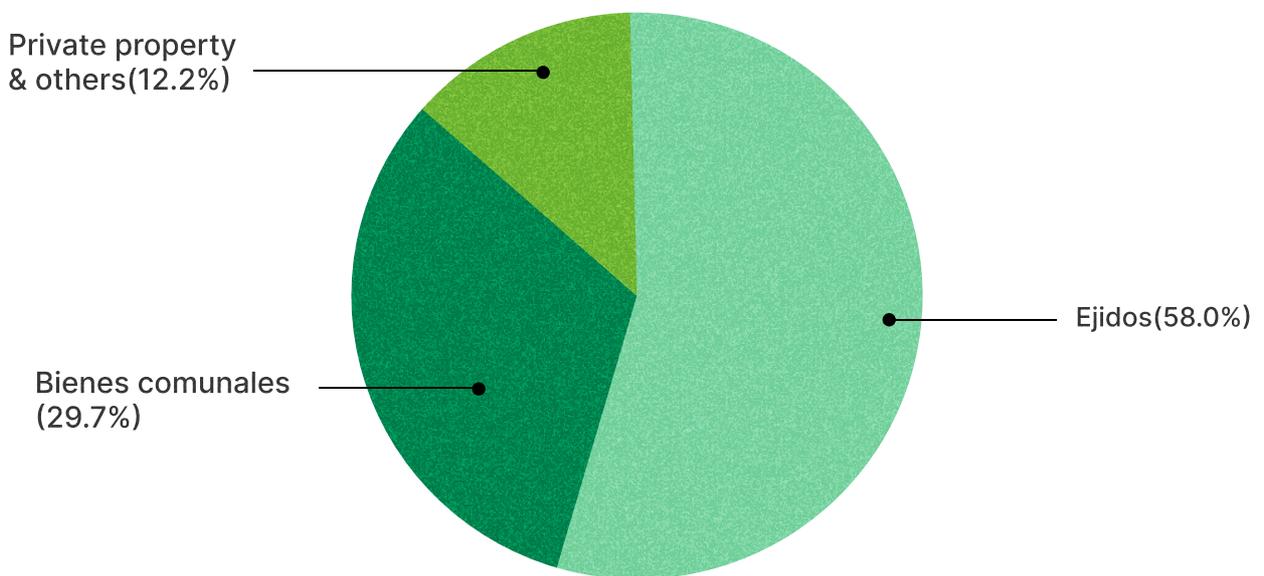


Figure 2: Percentage of trees planted per community type.

Plant-for-the-Planet Foundation

📍 Am Bahnhof 1
82449 Uffing am Staffelsee, Germany

📠 Fax +49 (0) 8808 / 9346

☎ Tel. +49 (0) 8808 / 9345

🌐 www.plant-for-the-planet.org

✉ info@plant-for-the-planet.org

📷 [/plantfortheplanet_official](https://www.instagram.com/plantfortheplanet_official)

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