

The Tree Planting Process

Land Rights and Education

The initial step is to secure permission to restore degraded land and obtain a guarantee of future preservation. The local community promises that the areas which we restore will be preserved in perpetuity.

Education of the Community

Next we raise awareness of the importance of the local forests. We accomplish this task by bringing forest awareness into the schools. This requires us to train school teachers in the importance of their forests. The teachers explain the values of the local rainforest to their students.

In this photo, Jose Luis Morales, our reforestation manager, explains the reasons for tree planting and our methods to the local school teachers.

Education about the forests is integrated into the local school curriculum from first grade through high school.



Discussion with teachers is continual. Jose (at left) describes the values of the rainforest and the role which students can play in the restoration process. He teaches the richness, the beauty and bounty of the rainforest and the values of the forest for the local community. As they learn about the forest, they grown more respectful and treat it with care. This helps them impart this same respect to all of their students.

A crucial feature of our tree planting program is that it is led by local people, including discussions and suggestions from the school children. Decision making is done cooperatively with the students which allows for the development of local leadership. This is a novel experience for the students as almost all other decisions are made for them.

Other school teachers are joining Jose and our tree planting efforts. This teacher (seated, front center), surrounded by several students, provides a class on the benefits of the rainforest that is close to the village. The students help plan the steps in the tree planting and forest restoration.



In this photo, Jose takes a small group of students by water taxi to an area near the town of Flores to visit an area that will be restored and turned into a local park. The high school students discuss the project, help gather seeds for the local nursery, and will also be part of the planting. This helps them gain a sense of responsibility for the maintenance and care for this area.

This map identifies areas on the Tayasal peninsula on Lake Peten-itza that will be reforested. Smaller circles indicate areas for seed gathering and for planting different tree species. Our goal is a full spectrum of tree species so that a fullness of the original rainforest can be restored.

