# From 'more forests' to 'better forests'

The phrase 'plant more trees' has always captured the attention of leaders and activists around the globe as a powerful solution to rising temperatures. Yet, once a tree is planted, our job is not done. With the right people to take care of the right trees in the right place and with the right purpose, one might do more wonders to people and the planet than imagined. To ensure sustainable forestry in Vietnam, SNV has successfully coordinated with the Bidoup – Nui Ba National Park to pilot a model spanning 30 hectares of land that focuses on enhancing forests' quality, not just quantity. The model has demonstrated a 99% survival rate of enriched trees, an exceeding natural regeneration rate, and thus a successful example to promote the quality of forests.

## A constant urge to strengthen our greatest shield against climate change

The Provincial REDD+ Action Plan (PRAP) in the Lam Dong province, which outlines the province's long-term strategy to achieve meaningful emission reductions through sustainable land use planning and climate change action, and its recent efforts to carry out the Green Growth Action Plan has made progress in reducing the rates of deforestation and forest degradation. However, this does not mean we should stop striving for robust initiatives to achieve more ambitious climate-related goals. Mr. Le Van Huong – Director of Bidoup – Nui Ba National Park stated: 'Bidoup – Nui Ba National Park now possesses about 1500 hectares of the poor Pinus kesiya natural forest. This type of forest has not yet met the basic functions of a forest; such as protection, carbon sequestration, or conservation function, etc., hence it requires interventions of suitable silviculture techniques to raise the forests' quality progressively.'

## An outstanding model of forest protection and restoration in Lac Duong district

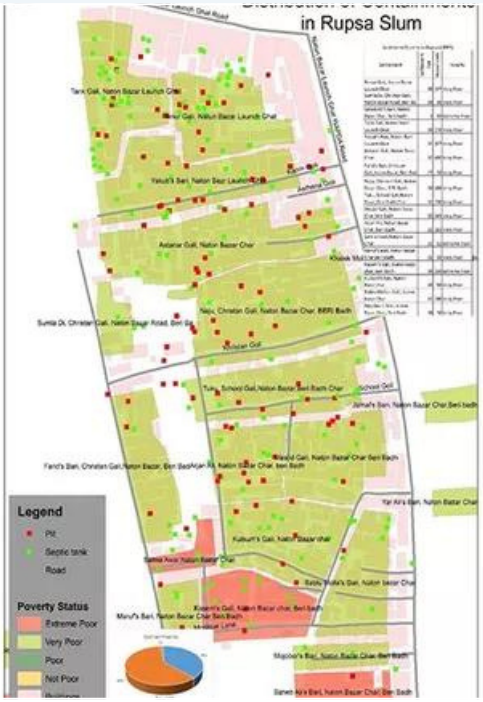
According to the regulations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, forest enrichment by natural regeneration with additional planting is one of the silviculture methods that can maximize the ability of natural regeneration and succession, thus improving forest quality. It is evident that communities, especially farmers, must be introduced to this practice as agricultural conversion is the biggest threat to the well-being of forests in Lam Dong.

The 'Coffee Agroforestry & Forest Enhancement for REDD+' project partnered with the Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park to pilot a model of enhancing forest quality and natural generation of Pinus kesiya on protected areas with the engagement of frontier farmers

## Mobilising frontier farmers in silvicultural forest enrichment

In 2020, SNV organized two technical training sessions to encourage local households' participation in enriched planting. Frontier farmers were then mobilized to prepare, attend, and actively protect the enrichment model.  According to Mr. Le Van Son - Vice Director of International Center for Tropical Highland Ecosystems Research (ICTHER), the involvement of indigenous communities in the whole process of planting, tending, and protecting has contributed to generating more income for people and raising their awareness of forest protection. This model can thus protect

the ‘hot spots’ of forestry land adjacent to agricultural land and potentially facilitate afforestation on areas that have previously been encroached upon.




Active participation of frontier farmers in restoring sustainable landscapes.

Experts working closely with indigenous people to plant and attend enriched trees.

## A promising future: SNV supports locals to restore sustainable landscapes by improving forests’ quality

Evaluation results demonstrate that the survival rate of additional trees in the enrichment model is nearly 99%; while the rate of naturally regenerated trees has increased at least five times. The model has not only met the initial goals of increasing forest quality, contributing to strengthened carbon sequestration, but also timely prevented the risks of deforestation and agricultural encroachment on forests.

A view of natural regeneration and succession after the forest enrichment pilot model.

Enriched trees show incredible survival and growth rates after nine months.

The initial success of the forest enrichment model has proven an achievable public-private-producer partnership approach to improving forests' quality. Mr. Pham Thanh Nam – IKI funded Café REDD project manager at SNV believes that this solution, once implemented in the sustainable forest management plan for 2020 - 2030, will contribute tremendously to Lam Dong province's goal of planting 50 million trees. 'Imagine the powerful impact of a gigantic quantity of such quality forests. There is no doubt that we must continue to apply and expand this method not only to improve poor forests but also to create a green belt that timely prevents the risk of encroachment on forest land and protect locals against the globe's bogeyman - climate change', he says.

Read more about SNV's work in forestry from the Coffee Agroforestry and Forest Enhancement for REDD+ (CAFÉ-REDD) project.

**Source: "Source: "Coffee Agroforestry and Forest Enhancement for REDD+ (CAFÉ-REDD) project"** - https://www.snv.org/update/more-forests-better-forests