

EcoLogic Development Fund has helped over 700 communities in Latin America to improve their well-being and become stewards of their land. Collaborating with local partners, EcoLogic has established sustainable livelihoods and strengthened community participation in natural resource management, creating more than 5,000 jobs and providing support for the conservation of more than 6 million acres of critical wildlife habitat and the protection of over 1,200 water sources.

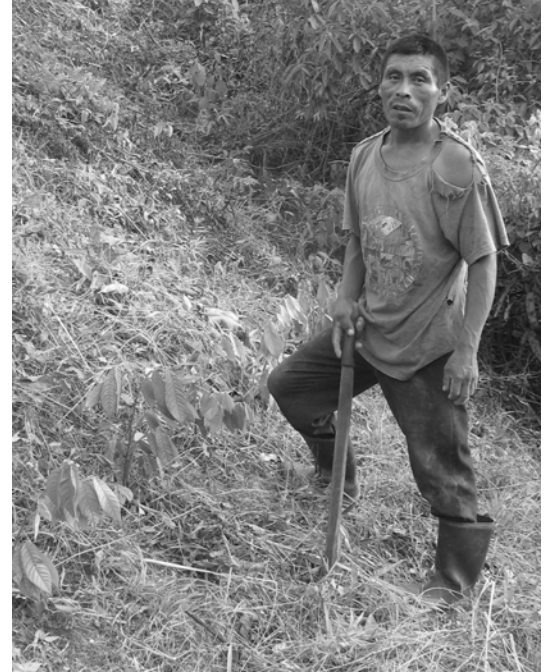
EcoLogic Plants Trees to Restore Degraded Lands and Help Rural Farmers Improve Their Crops

Juan Cruz is a small farmer living in the remote village of Blue Creek in the Sarstún region of eastern Guatemala. Of Q'eqchi Mayan descent, Juan lives in a small hut, with dirt floors and a thatched roof with no electricity. He spends his days caring for his family and cultivating a small plot of land on a steep hillside a few kilometers from his home. From the top of this hillside, you can look out across the land and see rolling hills covered with a patchwork of forests and pastures.

Juan does not have the grand ambitions that many of us have. Instead, he has two primary goals in life: to provide for his family, and to honor his Mayan beliefs by caring for the natural world.

In their struggle to survive, Juan and the other residents of Blue Creek clear plots of trees to make room for corn and beans. The loss of these trees leads to decreased water quality and quantity, higher rates of erosion, and the loss of vital nutrients from the soil. This also makes it difficult to find clean drinking water and to grow their food.

With EcoLogic's help, Juan is replanting trees by using agroforestry, an agricultural method that integrates trees and shrubs alongside crops and livestock in order to restore the benefits of the natural environment to farmland. He is planting a native tree species known locally as "guama" (*Inga edulis*) on his plot of land. Grown in rows four meters apart, the guama will provide several benefits to the land and to Juan's crops. A leguminous tree, the roots of the guama will not only hold soil in place but also take nitrogen from the atmosphere and return it to the soil for crops to use. Its leaves will shade the soil, keeping it cooler and helping it to retain moisture, and when the leaves fall, they will



Juan Cruz is growing guama on this steep hillside to increase the amount of corn he grows on this land and to reduce the loss of nutrients from erosion.

serve as an organic fertilizer and mulch, returning nutrients to the soil while adding a protective layer to reduce erosion. As an added bonus, the branches of the guama may be trimmed and used for firewood in the home, reducing the pressure on remaining forests.

The combined benefits create an environmentally-friendly agricultural system that restores
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EcoLogic Receives \$3 Million Pledge to Build a More Sustainable Organization

EcoLogic Development Fund recently received a \$3 million pledge over the next five years to extend its support of community-driven management of forests and streams in rural areas with extreme poverty. Diane Ives, Advisor at The Kendeda Fund, says, "We see our investment in EcoLogic's innovative programming as an important channel to benefit both communities and ecosystems in Mexico and Central America."

The Kendeda Fund is dedicated to exploring how human beings can relate to one another and to this planet more mindfully and use resources equitably. Through its grant making, the Fund is committed to examining two of the critical questions

confronting humanity: How do we live within the limits of the natural world in ways that promote community, equity, and health? And how do we redefine prosperity so that it leads to deeper contentment in our lives?

Thanks to the Kendeda Fund, EcoLogic will be able to greatly enhance its financial sustainability and field operations. "This grant is a powerful vote of confidence in our work and our community-led approach," said Barbara Val-larino, Director of Development. "We are deeply honored by this commitment and look forward to working with Kendeda—and all of our supporters—to expand our impact on the ground." •

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We Need Your Support to Help Rural Farmers

In 2004, EcoLogic supported its partner in Honduras to establish a few test plots of agroforestry and we were excited and amazed by the results: by providing shade, organic fertilizer, and reducing erosion the trees we planted helped to increase subsistence crop yields by up to 50 percent!

Thanks to your support, we have continued to expand agroforestry in Honduras and, more recently, to Guatemala, where new demonstration plots were established last year. We are using the native tree species *Inga edulis*, locally called guama, whose roots and leaves provide organic material to enrich and protect the soil, and whose branches can be trimmed and used in the home as fuel for stoves. These trees also increase forest cover in the area, providing habitat and connectivity for local wildlife populations. By increasing crop yields, we are reducing the demand for new agricultural lands, saving acres and acres of forests from clearing and degradation.

The positive response from farmers is impressive. Communities are working together on these agroforestry plots, and already two communities in the Sarstún River delta of Guatemala have con-

structed nurseries to grow more guama seedlings for their agricultural land.

With your help, we will be able to meet this growing demand for agroforestry by purchasing more seeds, building more nurseries, and strengthening local management of community lands. This will protect existing forests while working to restore lands degraded by agriculture and logging. Together we can conserve critical habitats and help rural families to live more dignified lives.

We cannot do this work without supporters like you. Thank you for your continued passion and commitment!



Meet Peter Kalil, EcoLogic's New Managing Director

He was a Little League All-Star, he survived running with the bulls in Pamplona during college, and he's been known to win the occasional neighborhood pie contest. One thing is clear: Peter Kalil knows how to overcome challenges and succeed.

This summer, Peter began putting his hard work and dedication to use for the rural poor of Mexico and Central America, helping to tackle the local problems facing these communities. As the new Managing Director at EcoLogic, Peter is responsible for running the day-to-day operations, including finances, field operations, and communications.

Peter was drawn to EcoLogic by the way it promotes development through environmental protection. "Often environmental protection represents an added cost to a project," he said. "Here, it is the project."

Peter has broad and deep experience in the field of international economic development. Prior to joining EcoLogic, he worked for 27 years at the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C., where he served in a number of lending and senior managerial positions, including project officer, adviser to the Executive Vice-President, and Division Chief. During this time, he worked on a wide variety of development projects in many sectors and countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. These include loans and technical cooperation grants, as well as sev-

eral regional initiatives.

With a keen eye towards improving EcoLogic's effectiveness both on the ground and in the office, Peter has quickly familiarized himself with



all aspects of the organization. He joined EcoLogic's staff in May, and having gotten to know both the people and projects of EcoLogic, he is impressed by staff and activities alike. "We have an excellent staff who are extremely dedicated and truly care about making a difference in the

world," he said. "We take great care to make the maximum impact with the resources we have."

Peter holds a B.A. degree in Spanish from Tufts University and an M.B.A. (with honors) from the Thunderbird School of Global Management. He has lived in Chile, Spain, Mexico, and Honduras, and he is fluent in Spanish.

Now settled into his new role, Peter looks forward to contributing to the organization in the most effective way he can. "I'm very impressed by EcoLogic's accomplishments over the past 15 years," he said, "and want to apply my skills and experience to help it do even more." •

You Are How You Eat: How You Can Choose A Healthier Planet When You Sit Down To Eat

Did you know that according to the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, agriculture is one of the greatest threats to the natural environment?

A major driver of biodiversity loss, agriculture causes the degradation and destruction of habitat, pollutes our soil and water, contributes to global climate change, and requires extensive use of natural resources, such as water and fossil fuels. EcoLogic is tackling this challenge abroad by helping farmers to plant trees on their agricultural plots, restoring many natural benefits to the landscape.

But what can you do at home to minimize the impact of your food on the environment? How can you enjoy your food while creating a healthier planet for the future?

One option is to buy organic foods, which have become increasingly popular in recent years. You can identify many organic foods by the USDA organic stamp of approval. Foods that bear the USDA stamp are produced without antibiotics, genetic engineering, or synthetic (petroleum-derived) fertilizers. Organically-raised animals eat 100 percent organic feed and have access to the outdoors. However, many small farms that meet the regulations don't display the label, since the annual USDA organic certification process is expensive. In other words, a product may be organic without having that stamp.

Another way you can support environ-

mentally-friendly agriculture is to eat local and seasonal foods, reducing the distance your food has to travel while also supporting local farmers and businesses. Transportation is responsible for 13 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, so the fewer miles your food has to travel to get to you, the better! Local food could mean anything from vegetables grown in your own backyard to seasonal products grown in your region rather than imported from abroad. It also means fresher ingredients for you and your family to enjoy!

The best thing you can do is be a smart shopper, and consider where and how your food was produced. Not only will you reduce your impact on the environment, but you will be eating fresher, healthier foods! •



Choosing organic, locally-grown foods is good for nature and your family. (Credit: Todd Shapera)

(AGROFORESTRY – continued from page 1)

forest cover and increases crop yields by up to 50 percent. By using the natural fertilizer and mulch provided by guama, Juan and other farmers in his community can also save time and money.

Today, Juan and four other farmers from the Sarstún region are the first of their communities to use guama to establish agrofor-



Salvador Toc, a farmer from Ixcán in northwestern Guatemala, is the first of his community to use agroforestry in order to improve crop yields on his land while restoring the benefit of trees.

estry systems. Similarly, in Ixcán, a community in northwestern Guatemala, Salvador Toc is also trying out guama. These men are serving as leaders and models in their communities, and they hope that once they demonstrate the benefits of using guama to their friends and family, others will want to plant guama too, helping farmers and forests alike. In some cases their friends and families are already participating by supporting these men to cultivate their plots of agroforestry, hopeful that they will see real results.

Juan and his peers are proud to be taking the first steps towards creating sustainable agriculture, where they can grow their food without degrading the landscape. By restoring lands in ways that benefit local farmers, EcoLogic is demonstrating to communities that environmental conservation can improve the lives of the rural poor. As other farmers realize the potential gains of agroforestry, EcoLogic will promote its use throughout the region with learning exchanges and technical support. In this way, Juan and other farmers can ensure that their children grow up to inherit a better and healthier world. •

You Can Help!

Our work is made possible by support from people like you. Here's how you can help:

- Sustain our work with monthly giving. Just \$20 a month can make a huge difference for the rural poor and the environment!
- Have your employer match your contribution.
- Honor a birthday, wedding, bar/bat mitzvah or anniversary with a donation to EcoLogic.
- Participate in workplace giving (CFC# 11432).
- Share your talents by donating professional services.
- Donate via our website. Simply go to www.ecologic.org and click on Donate Now to give through our secure online donation form.



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VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Young Mayan Assists Rural Farmers to Sustainably Manage Their Lands



José Domingo Caal is a young, Q'eqchi Mayan from the Sarstún region of eastern Guatemala. Passionate, insightful, and highly dedicated, he works with EcoLogic to coordinate our agroforestry projects and assist our local partner, APROSARSTUN. Prior to joining EcoLogic, José Domingo received a technical degree in Rural Well-Being, with a concentration in Community Development and Gender Equality. He is also pursuing a degree in Legal and Social Sciences. He is fluent in Spanish and his native language, Q'eqchi, which enables him to be effective in the indigenous communities where he works.

What is your role with EcoLogic?

Monitoring the plots of guama in each of the communities; coordinating the farmers; supporting capacity-building of APROSARSTUN; helping the farmers

with different activities, such as integrated pest management and establishing nurseries; and purchasing materials for the nurseries and agroforestry plots.

How is EcoLogic making a difference?

EcoLogic is an organization concerned with the problems that the communities confront, and interested in finding solutions [for those problems]. EcoLogic creates good, concrete activities that respond to the needs of the communities. This way EcoLogic can protect and conserve natural resources and, at the same time, families can live more dignified lives. In Sarstún,

dination of activities and the good will of the people of the communities. I do this type of work because I enjoy it, because I have lived all my life in a community and I have truly experienced what it is like to live in extreme poverty. I also do this work because I share the values and principles of EcoLogic.

What would you like supporters to know?

It's important that they know about the situation of the communities in the region: the poverty, the rate of illiteracy, and the unemployment. EcoLogic projects go a long way in addressing these problems. •

By supporting EcoLogic, you can protect and conserve natural resources and help families to have dignified lives.

the new alternatives for improving the production of corn and beans, like planting guama, has generated many aspirations for farmers. The restoration of degraded areas through reforestation is now happening in the region.

What is your inspiration?

What inspires me is teamwork, good coor-



Guama seedlings are prepared in a nursery for planting alongside corn and beans.