

The Regional Government of Extremadura and large companies join Motor Verde, the largest reforestation project in Spain, led by Repsol Foundation and Sylvestris

- Extremadura is the first autonomous community in Spain to join Motor Verde, a public-private collaboration project promoted by Repsol Foundation alongside Sylvestris, and in which Banco Santander, Tierra Pura Foundation, Enagás and Ilunion are also participating.
- The objective is to promote the voluntary offsetting of emissions through large-scale reforestations in Spain, creating benefits for biodiversity and contributing to climate change mitigation.
- Local people will be hired to carry out the planting, with special consideration given to vulnerable groups, creating local and inclusive employment.
- Motor Verde project will help Spain to position itself as a European model to follow in offsetting emissions and promoting a social, green and sustainable economy, and will have a transformative effect on rural areas.
- The objective is to reforest up to 70,000 hectares throughout Spain to offset 16 million tonnes of CO₂, which will generate more than 15,000 job opportunities.

In Extremadura,

5,000 hectares of land will be reforested, which will generate

1,000 jobs in the region over the next 3 years

Motor Verde project is aligned with the Extremadura 2030 Plan, the 2030 Agenda, the European Green Deal and the Spanish Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan

Repsol Foundation, the Regional Government of Extremadura and Sylvestris, together with Banco Santander, Tierra Pura Foundation, Enagás and Ilunion, have launched Motor Verde project in this autonomous community, making it the first to join this innovative public-private collaboration initiative. Motor Verde aims to become the biggest large-scale reforestation project to boost the offsetting of emissions in Spain.

It is a distinctive project, which aims to have a three-fold positive impact: environmental, restoring natural areas and contributing to action against climate change; social, creating local and inclusive employment; and economic, backing a green investment for the future and expanding business networks in rural areas.

The overall objective is to reforest up to 70,000 hectares in Spain, an area similar to that occupied by the city of Madrid, to boost the offsetting of 16 million tonnes of CO₂. This project will create more than 15,000 local and inclusive employment opportunities in rural areas and is an ambitious commitment to a social, green and sustainable economy.

It will start in the northern Cáceres mountain range

In Extremadura, 5,000 hectares of wasteland or land affected by fires in different municipalities will be reforested over the next three years. The selection of land has been led by the Regional Government of Extremadura, working alongside different town councils and forestry experts. These new forests will absorb 1.3 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions from the atmosphere, giving companies and institutions that join Motor Verde the opportunity to offset their greenhouse gas emissions.

The work will begin this autumn in the northern mountains off Cáceres, with the planting of nearly one million trees species that are native to the land, conserving and improving biodiversity while ensuring its long-term resilience. More than 1,000 local workers will be hired for planting, 70% of whom will come from vulnerable groups, helping to keep the local population in the region.

The project will also implement programmes for training in and promotion of innovation and technological development in the forestry sector. The reforestation work will also support the local business network in the areas where the planting is carried out, boosting the rural economy in Extremadura as well as activities related to tourism and the service sector.

Motor Verde is based on an innovative public-private partnership model to boost economic recovery and rural development following the impact of COVID-19. It is aligned with the social, environmental and economic boosting strategies set out by the Extremadura 2030 Plan, the 2030 Agenda and the European Green Deal, promoting a green economy within the framework of the energy transition. The project also aims to position Spain as a quality, competitive and pioneering carbon sink in Europe.

The General Director of Repsol Foundation, António Calçada, points out that "thanks to the support of the government administration and collaborating companies, we have managed to set up this ambitious reforestation programme to offset emissions which aims to be the largest in Spain". In addition, António Calçada emphasizes the three-fold impact of Motor Verde: "economic, by promoting a green and sustainable economy; social, by creating local and inclusive employment; and environmental, by growing new forests and helping to conserve the existing ones."

The forestry projects will be led by Sylvestris, a company in which Repsol Foundation has a stake and which has more than 30 years of experience in the forestry sector. The new forests will be designed in accordance with the standards of the Spanish Office for Climate Change, the official certification body for offset projects in Spain, under the aegis of the Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge.

It is expected that the project will soon be extended to other autonomous communities, with the collaboration of both the government administration as well as other organisations and private companies.

In addition, Repsol Foundation has recently signed a strategic agreement with KPMG to increase the volume and competitiveness of the voluntary offset of CO₂ emissions market in Spain.

Reforestation, a natural climate solution with great potential in Spain

Trees, through photosynthesis, absorb CO₂ and fix it in their tissues. Reforestation therefore represents a natural climate solution that offers technically proven, attractive and profitable options for capturing CO₂ from the atmosphere, while generating environmental and social benefits.

Spain has the necessary natural spaces and skill set among its population to position itself as a leading carbon sink in Europe, responding to the growing commitment of companies to offset their footprint.

It is estimated that the voluntary carbon emissions market could grow 15-fold by 2030 and 100-fold by 2050, and could thus be worth between 5 billion and 30 billion dollars depending on the different factors, according to The Taskforce on Scaling Voluntary Carbon Markets.

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