

SHANGHAI ROOTS & SHOOTS: THE MILLION TREE PROJECT

The Shanghai Roots & Shoots Million Tree Project (MTP), which began in 2007, aims to raise community awareness of the Earth's precious environment while focusing on steps individuals can take to lessen their negative impact on the natural world. MTP is designed to improve both ecological and humanitarian conditions by planting trees. The project gives individuals and organizations an opportunity to fight climate change by planting oxygen-producing trees. It also encompasses true capacity building as the local population is intimately involved with, and benefits from, every step of planting, maintaining and monitoring the trees.



2007-2008 Poplar Site

Location and Goal

A combination of the climate change and land exploitation such as overgrazing and over-farming have degraded the land of Tongliao Municipality, Inner Mongolia, and the now desertified area is expanding at an astonishing rate. Sandstorms strike Inner Mongolia and its surrounding areas each spring, destroying local homes and forcing many people to flee their native land. This project will reforest the area in order to revitalize the land and block the sandstorms.

With the generous support from everyone, we've successfully planted TWO million trees over the past ten years, covering an area of nearly 1800 hectares in Kulun Qi and Kezuohou Qi in Tongliao, Inner Mongolia. The average survival rate of MTP forests is 68%. Besides planting, community and education programs are implemented through our program to raise awareness and assist local living standards, ensuring positive impacts and project sustainability. Significant impact is observed in terms of vegetation restoration and ecosystem reconstruction in the forests planted 10 years ago.



2008 planting site, taken on Apr.2008



Planting trip



Volunteer planting



2008 planting site, taken on Jul.2015

Types of Trees Planted

We primarily plant hybrid poplars (*Populus simonii*), which are particularly effective at sequestering carbon and do not require large amounts of water. Local forestry experts, in combination with experts from Oregon State University in the United States, have deemed this species suitable for the local soil and climate. In 2009 we also planted several plots of yellowhorn trees (*Xanthoceras sorbifolia*). Yellowhorn seeds contain twice the amount of oil as

soybeans, and can be used for both cooking and industrial purposes. This species has a long history of successful growth in the region and will return both economic and ecological benefits. In 2011 we began planting pine trees (*Pinus sylvestris* var. *mongolica* Litv.) which have proven suitable for fighting desertification in nearby areas. In 2012, poplars and pines were inter-planted to increase biodiversity and reduce the risk of large scale pest disaster.

Maintaining and Monitoring the Trees

Local farmers and tree planters help plant, monitor, and maintain the trees growing on their land. The farmers are licensed to harvest the trees that have reached maturity, but only on the condition that they replant on the same plot. During the trees' infancy, local farmers are encouraged to inter-plant crops such as beans, millet, watermelons etc., for extra income; this benefits biodiversity and nutrition for the trees at the same time.

Roots & Shoots also works with the local government to engage local students, encouraging them to get involved by measuring the growth of the trees, assessing the ecological impact of them, and helping to create a database for long-term project development.



Yellow horn



Pines



Volunteers pruning trees



Students measuring

Technical Expertise

Shanghai Roots & Shoots cooperates with the Department of Forest Science's Nursery Technology Cooperative at Oregon State University, USA. Our full-time forestry managers, with their academic background in forestry and agriculture, work on-site to evaluate how the trees are growing and to ensure continued success by assessing the technical aspects: soil evaluation, viability of the saplings, watering regimens, intercropping practices, and local community support. Regular observation and annual investigations are conducted by forestry managers to provide information and data for solid, reliable forest reports in a long term.

Get Involved

- ✓ **Sponsoring one tree** costs RMB 25, including all expenses needed throughout the tree's life.
- ✓ **Carbon offset;** Air travel emits huge amounts of carbon dioxide and therefore contributes considerably to climate change. Determine your yearly carbon footprint and reduce it - better yet, completely offset it!
- ✓ **Sponsor corporate forests;** 2,000 trees (50,000 RMB) make a healthy-sized forest. This sends employees and clients a strong message that your company cares about its environmental impact. With GPS technology, you will be able to view the exact location of your company's forest!



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- ✓ **The Gift That Keeps Giving;** Planting a tree in someone's honor is a unique, thoughtful, and environmentally friendly gift for any festive occasion. Sponsor trees for the Million Tree Project as personal gifts for friends and family, or as corporate gifts for clients and staff.
 - ✓ **Planting trip in Inner Mongolia;** Every year, Shanghai Roots & Shoots staff, volunteers, and sponsors travel to Inner Mongolia to plant trees with local farmers. The trips are scheduled in April to coincide with the best poplar planting season and last 4 days and 3 nights, activities include tree planting, pruning and desert visiting. A company must donate a minimum of 2,000 trees (50,000 RMB) , a school group must donate a minimum of 1,000 trees (25,000 RMB) , and individual must donate a minimum of 500 trees (12,500 RMB) to join the trip. Participants need to be no younger than 16, and pay for trip expense.

