



The United Nation's Global Compact: Communication on Progress

2019-2020





Message from the CEO

April 2020

Dear Stakeholders,

With a decade invested into the development of commercial and certified bamboo farms globally, EcoPlanet Bamboo has led the industrialization of bamboo as a viable and environmentally attractive alternative fiber. Our bamboo farms have been developed alongside a commitment to use innovative and clean technologies, in order to set a platform for seed to sale solutions for industries and markets that currently contribute to the deforestation of our world's natural forests.

In the past 12 months, EcoPlanet Bamboo has continued this pursuit more than ever as we prepare to scale our operations and commission green manufacturing facilities worldwide that will disrupt unsustainable global industries and provide mass markets with truly sustainable alternative products.

I look forward to sharing our work with you in this year's Communication on Progress as we re-affirm our support of the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

Yours in Sustainability,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'T' followed by a horizontal line and a dot.

Troy Wiseman
CEO and Co-Founder, EcoPlanet Bamboo Group
Chicago, USA: COP for 2019

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About EcoPlanet Bamboo

EcoPlanet Bamboo is the first entity to grow bamboo at a commercial scale outside of China and has pioneered a unique framework of next generation commercial forestry that puts sustainability at the forefront, ensuring that as the demand for bamboo fiber increases, the plant maintains its unique green credentials and positive social impact even when grown at large scale and for industrial purposes.

EcoPlanet Bamboo was founded in 2010 and its projects across Latin America and Africa have been designed to provide a market driven solution to key issues of environmental and social concern:

1. By providing an alternative fiber for consumer products and industries that currently rely on timber sourced from natural forests, both hardwoods from primary tropical forests and softwoods from old growth boreal forests. EcoPlanet Bamboo's alternative fiber source reduces pressure on the worlds remaining forests and addresses issues of global deforestation.
2. By utilizing only degraded and marginal land and converting it into economically viable yet ecologically healthy bamboo plantations, EcoPlanet Bamboo creates a paradigm shift, restoring ecosystem functioning and forest connectivity at a landscape scale, all the while ensuring its operations do not compete with food security.
3. By focusing on areas where opportunities for economic diversification are low and where increasing levels of rural poverty exacerbate pressure on remaining natural resources, EcoPlanet Bamboo is able to stimulate failing rural economies through the creation of stable and attractive livelihoods that have a generational timeframe creating opportunities for people to lift themselves out of poverty.

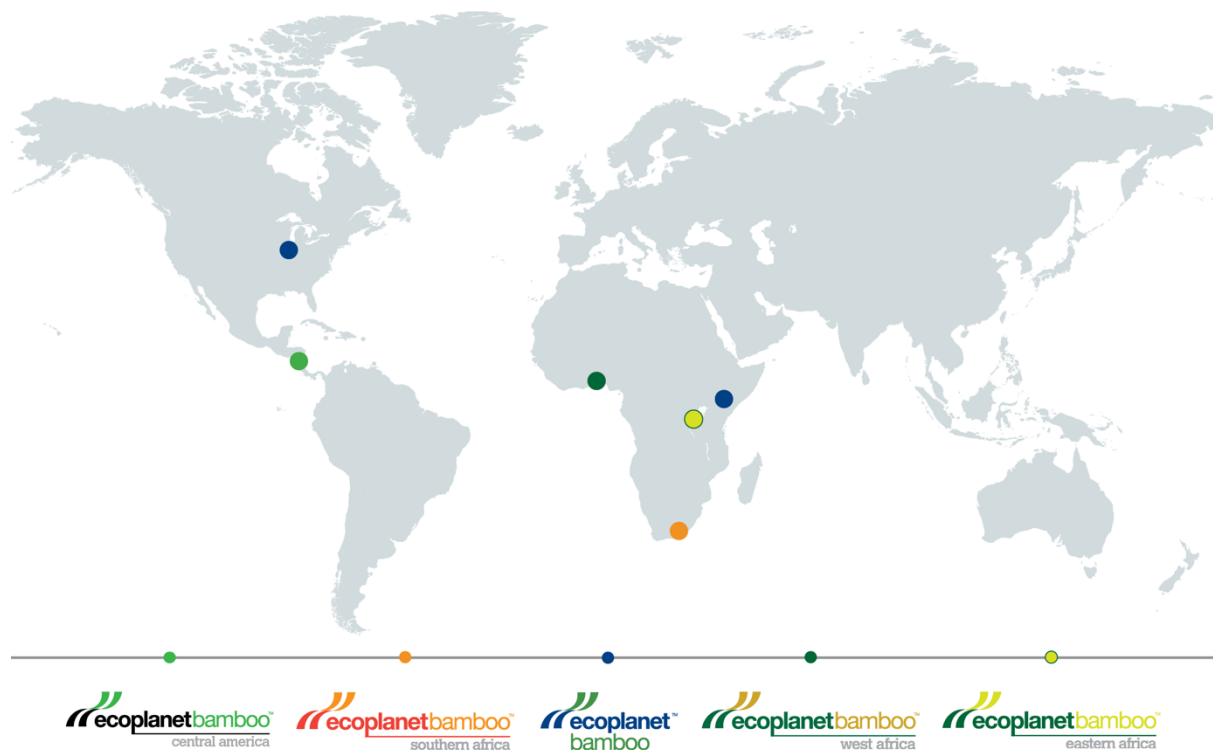
Mission: To disrupt currently unsustainable global industries by growing a resource base of truly sustainable, tree-free, deforestation-free bamboo fiber and converting this utilizing a zero waste bio-refinery technology into packaging, toilet & tissue paper and textiles, ensuring seed to sale supply chains that are environmentally, socially and financially positive.



Vision: We envision a world where millions of hectares of degraded land are restored into productive and biodiverse bamboo forests, providing the raw resource to meet growing demand for consumer products while reducing deforestation pressure on our world's remaining natural forests, generating competitive and sustainable financial returns, regenerating rural economies through the provision of secure and stable livelihoods, and addressing the critical issue of global climate change.

EcoPlanet Bamboo's Global Operations

EcoPlanet Bamboo's framework of next generation commercial forestry has successfully been implemented in 4 countries worldwide where EcoPlanet manages over 18,000 hectares (ha) of strategically located bamboo farms and is expanding into green manufacturing of bamboo pulp based products such as sanitary papers and moulded pulp take away containers. EcoPlanet has corporate offices in the USA and Kenya.



EcoPlanet Bamboo Central America

EcoPlanet owns and operates over 3,500 ha of commercial *Guadua aculeata* farms in the South Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCS) of Nicaragua, representing the first project globally to grow tropical clumping bamboo at commercial scale. These farms represent restoration at the landscape scale, with native bamboo interplanted between remnant forest patches, conservation areas and standing trees. Approximately 30% of the total area has been set aside for conservation purposes and wildlife corridors. No trees were cleared during EcoPlanet Bamboo's land preparation or planting. This project is validated and verified for the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) for successful contribution to fighting global climate change. These farms are approaching maturity and are targeting the production of bamboo thermoform packaging and toilet paper.

EcoPlanet Bamboo Southern Africa

EcoPlanet Bamboo South Africa represents the African continent's first successful commercial bamboo plantation, which was established on heavily degraded former pineapple lands. Approximately 485 ha of certified bamboo are under cultivation at Kowie

Bamboo Farm, which is predominantly planted with tissue culture *Bambusa balcooa*, with *Oxytenanthera abyssinica* grown from seed representing the remaining plantings. EcoPlanet Bamboo is the first company globally to transition tissue culture planting material from a laboratory setting to growing successfully at commercial scale and under strict sustainability structures. EcoPlanet Bamboo Southern Africa will supply sustainably produced raw bamboo for use in its on-site, integrated paper and packaging facility for the growing South African market.

EcoPlanet Bamboo West Africa

EcoPlanet Bamboo West Africa represents a Public Private Partnership with the Government of Ghana through the Ghana Forestry Commission targeting the industrialization of bamboo for the country's timber and fiber needs. EcoPlanet Bamboo is currently developing an 11,000 ha bamboo farm growing predominantly *Dendrocalamus asper* in the Ashanti Region, which will ultimately provide more than 1,000 permanent jobs. At maturity, EcoPlanet's West African farms have the potential to produce 600,000 tons of raw fiber each year, representing 150,000 tons of pulp. This resource will represent the largest supply of an alternative fiber globally and the first at a volume that can transform target markets.

EcoPlanet Bamboo East Africa

EcoPlanet Bamboo expanded into Rwanda in 2018 and works with government and NGO partners to undertake environmental protection projects that work with smallholder farmers to support a bamboo bio-economy. These contracted projects are designed and implemented by EcoPlanet for maximum impact and provide a range of solutions from riparian protection to buffer zones for protected areas. Current projects include the planting of 150 km of rivers with bamboo in the Secoko Catchment of Rwanda, designed to protect riparian areas while creating a raw feedstock supply for smallholder farmers to commercialize as well as the expansion of Volcanoes National Park through holistic solutions for restoration plantings with indigenous bamboo and buffer zone establishment with commercial bamboo species for green manufacturing.



Pioneering Frameworks of Sustainability

EcoPlanet Bamboo has implemented its framework of next generation commercial forestry from the inception of its operations, adapting and improving along the way to uphold its mission and vision. As a result, a range of environmental and social benefits are generated that create a pathway for sustainable development and support the 10 principals of the UN Global Compact.

SECURE DECENT EMPLOYMENT

- Provides equal opportunity employment
- Allows workers to plan & invest for their future
- Empowers women & promotes gender equality



FINANCIAL & SOCIAL INCLUSION

- Integrates workers in the formal system for banking, health care & social security
- Increases confidence & educates workers on their rights



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Enhances quality of life
- Builds resilient, inclusive and prosperous communities
- Increases food security, access to healthcare & levels of education



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

- Expands transport, communication & utility access
- Increases access to markets
- Strengthens SMEs through secondary opportunities



ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

- Controls micro-climates & improves climatic stability
- Reduces erosion, rehabilitates soil & improves water tables
- Improves biodiversity & ecosystem functioning



Upholding the 10 Principals of the UN Global Compact

EcoPlanet Bamboo implements the 4 areas of the UN Global Compact - Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption - through its extensive policies, procedures and general company culture focused on maximizing the positive social and environmental impact of its operations.

EcoPlanet Bamboo has an adaptive management policy and continues to enhance its policies and procedures as needed to incorporate the Global Compact.

Area 1: Human Rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: Make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

EcoPlanet Bamboo fully supports the Universal Declarations of Human Rights and remains committed to upholding the human rights of all involved, both directly and indirectly, in our operations.

EcoPlanet Bamboo has an integrated management system that includes EHS procedures, which form the minimum requirements that all operations must comply with to ensure strict social and environmental policies are carried out. These EHS procedures are in line with both the IFC's Performance Standards and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) requirements:

- There is a documented grievance procedure that mandates all staff and stakeholders have the ability to raise complaints and that any complaint, grievance or dispute is dealt with swiftly and in line with company culture. The policy includes the use of suggestion boxes, representatives and emails / phone calls as a means for complaints to be received by the company. This procedure is reviewed with staff and signs posted in accessible locations.
- Regular stakeholder communications and consultations take place to convey company objectives and policies as well as give stakeholders a chance to raise questions or concerns. Minutes of these meetings are filed.
- Whether certified or not, EcoPlanet Bamboo requires all operations to comply with the FSC principles and criteria, which find violation of human rights unacceptable. FSC also require compliance with international conventions.
- Human resource policies clearly state that EcoPlanet Bamboo is an equal opportunity employer. Procedures are provided to ensure non-discriminatory, fair labor practices as well as safe working environments.
- Suppliers and contractors are also required to comply with the company's EHS procedures. Non-compliance would mean termination of the relationship.

Area 2: Labor

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor;

Principle 5: The effective abolition of child labor; and

Principle 6: The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

All EcoPlanet Bamboo operations comply with the strictest labor and health & safety standards, including compliance with the ILO. All operations must comply with local legislation but if international standards are stricter then international standards are assumed. Labor rights include:

- Freedom of Association
- Collective Bargaining
- Zero-Tolerance of Forced Labor or Child Labor
- Elimination of Employment Discrimination

In order to implement its commitment, EcoPlanet Bamboo has in place EHS procedures as well as a Social Impact Policy, see appendix A, which make labor rights a fundamental part of its operations. All staff receive contracts with their rights and responsibilities and their compensation and benefits clearly stated. Management also partake in regular assessments of health & safety risks and EcoPlanet Bamboo is dedicated to continuing to innovate new methods and standards for safety. Specific activities to ensure compliance includes:

- All staff undertake an induction during their first days of employment and annually thereafter that provides training on company policies, health and safety, job-specific training as well as national and international labor legislation.
- Staff also have mechanisms to report to supervisors, managers or anonymously of any labor concerns or health & safety issues they may have.
- Managers are required to regularly review health & safety risks. Should an incident occur, they are recorded, reported to the corporate office and mitigation measures taken to ensure a similar accident does not happen again.
- All operations have Human Resource policies, which comply with EcoPlanet Bamboo EHS procedures as well as country specific and ILO requirements.
- Systems are put in place to ensure accurate accounting for payroll and staff productivity.

Area 3: Environment

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

Principle 9: Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

EcoPlanet Bamboo's focus on the production of clumping (non-invasive) bamboo and bamboo based products is a showcase of its environmental commitments. When managed under EcoPlanet Bamboo's sustainable framework, bamboo has the ability to transform the timber industry and reverse the current trend of global deforestation while building resilient, inclusive and prosperous communities:

1. Bamboo grows rapidly and if managed correctly, this rapid replacement makes it the most sustainable form of biomass on the planet, with the potential to reduce pressure on remaining natural forests.
2. Bamboo provides an array of ecological functions: reverses land degradation, restores canopy cover, maintains soil productivity, improves water tables and contributes to climate change mitigation.
3. Bamboo is not clear cut and instead is sustainably harvested by manually selecting mature culms. Not only does this create a constant landscape that provides connectivity between remnant forest patches and thus improves biodiversity, it is also labor intensive creating employment opportunities for vulnerable communities.
4. Bamboo fiber can be substituted in a diverse range of products such as paper, engineered timber, textiles and bioenergy without compromising on quality, or product appeal. The relatively long fiber length makes bamboo pulp well suited for moulded pulp packaging and dishware.

EcoPlanet Bamboo cements its commitment by only utilizing degraded land, employing green manufacturing solutions and developing operations under strict requirements for sustainability to maximize positive impact. From its inception, EcoPlanet Bamboo has held strong environmental principles that are weaved into everyday operations. All stakeholders, managers and staff are aware and regularly trained on the company's environmental policy and EHS procedures, with the aim to foster stewards of the environment. See Appendix B for the Environmental Policy.

Furthermore, EcoPlanet Bamboo has developed methodologies to monitor, quantify and report on the sequestration and storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide by bamboo. EcoPlanet Bamboo is the only entity globally to have successfully validated and verified bamboo's climate change benefits. EcoPlanet's Nicaraguan farms are certified under the Verified Carbon Standard removing more than 1.5 million tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Area 4: Anti-Corruption

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

EcoPlanet Bamboo has a zero-tolerance policy for corruption. The policy states that “EcoPlanet Bamboo is a transparent and morally sound company. Bribery, extortion, fraud, collusion and any other corrupt behaviors are prohibited in any operation conducted by the company or any individual within the company.” The full policy can be found in Appendix C.

In order to implement its commitment, EcoPlanet Bamboo:

- Requires all operations to post the signed policy in accessible locations for staff and visitors to see and makes the content of the policy a component of staff inductions;
- Makes staff, visitors and stakeholders aware of the company’s grievance procedure and how any concerns about corrupt behavior can be reported;
- Protects whistleblowers;
- Operates in full compliance with the laws of the countries; and
- Conducts extensive research on the legal requirements of an area of operations during our due diligence phase, which continues into the operational phases with annual reviews of legislation changes.

These actions greatly reduce the risk of corrupt behavior and ensures managers understand the laws under which they must lawfully operate.



Measurement of Outcomes

In the past 12 months, EcoPlanet Bamboo's operations worldwide have continued to move the needle on sustainable forestry and green manufacturing for bamboo products. This has resulted in the following operational achievements:

Human Rights

General Managers have continued to ensure their operations comply with all EcoPlanet Bamboo EHS Procedures and thus Human Right Standards, which are verified independently. There were no incidents of human rights related grievances or violations during the reporting period.

Labor

EcoPlanet Bamboo continued to provide training and empowerment programs for its workforce, leading to staff who are better informed of their rights than most laborers in the areas of our operations. Additionally, operations successfully underwent internal reviews or external certification audits to verify their compliance with worker's rights and labor laws as well as other sustainability standards.

EcoPlanet Bamboo has hundreds of employees worldwide and aims to have 25% of its workforce as women, including in managerial positions. EcoPlanet Bamboo has continued to exceed this goal.

Environment

EcoPlanet Bamboo continues to actively manage and restore degraded lands in its countries of operations. Two new project have started in the last 12 months. In the first, EcoPlanet Bamboo is actively protecting 150 km of riparian areas in the Secoko Catchment in Rwanda with IUCN, the Dutch Government and Rwanda's Ministry of the Environment. Due to bamboo's intricate root system that binds soils and controls erosion, this project will help reduce high sediment loads in the country's rivers while promoting sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers. For the second, EcoPlanet Bamboo is piloting a restoration project with Rwanda Development Board and the African Wildlife Foundation to plant bamboo indigenous to Volcanoes National Park (VPN), home of the Mountain Gorilla. This successful pilot restoration will allow for the project to scale and expand VPN and Mountain Gorilla habitat by over 3,700 ha.

Over the past 10 years, EcoPlanet Bamboo has invested extensively into research on available, new and emerging technologies, bamboo trials, sample production, and an understanding of the innovations required in order to:

- Scale down from the ultra large scale pulping facilities of the past
- Achieve a closed loop technology to the maximum possible extent

- Achieve zero toxic waste and environmental pollution
- Achieve chemical recovery systems
- Target a 30% reduction in water and energy footprints

With this knowledge and a maturing bamboo resource, EcoPlanet Bamboo is implementing green manufacturing operations targeting a deforestation-free, tree-free, climate friendly alternative to traditional sanitary paper, such as toilet paper and paper towels, as well as packaging products, such as take away containers.

EcoPlanet Bamboo continues to work on improving environmental education and bamboo awareness amongst its workforce and local communities. It is also working internationally to raise awareness and mold a sustainable platform for the bamboo industry. Furthermore, EcoPlanet Bamboo continues to be active in international policy with Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Co-Founder, Camille Rebelo, representing the private sector on the Global Restoration Council.

Furthering its work and the reach of its impact, EcoPlanet Bamboo also provides consulting and advisory services to select public and private sector organizations that share its vision for sustainable bamboo development. EcoPlanet Bamboo has carried out projects for KOICA, UNDP, AWF, the Kenyan Government and Rwandan Government.

Corruption

In-country operations are monitored for compliance by the corporate office as well as by external auditors. EcoPlanet Bamboo's integrated management systems require all operations to regularly report on operational and financial information, which provides sound checks and balances. This data is translated to tables and graphs, which allow managers as well as the COO and CEO to see any potential irregularities. There have been no complaints reported during this period.

Furthermore, EcoPlanet Bamboo has not been involved in any legal cases, rulings or other events related to corruption or bribery.

Contribution to SDGs

EcoPlanet Bamboo's operations contribute to 14 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



Appendix A: Social Policy



ECOPLANET BAMBOO GROUP

SOCIAL IMPACT POLICY

EcoPlanet Bamboo aims to catalyze positive socio-economic development in the Company's areas of operations. EcoPlanet Bamboo's mission is to show that business, through the concept of conscious capitalism, can, both directly and indirectly have long term social impact.

To achieve this EcoPlanet Bamboo is committed to:

- Develop bamboo plantations and associated manufacturing operations in rural areas that suffer from high unemployment with few opportunities for economic development.
- Carry out socio-economic baseline studies in order to identify the current status of key development variables, and enable the quantification and monitoring of such variables over time.
- Achieve Forest Stewardship Council certification for the external verification of such impact.
- Commit to preferentially hire local residents from the communities and municipalities closest to each Company site of operation.
- Commit to ensuring that equal opportunity exists for employment, regardless of gender, religion, physical/mentally disabled, or political inclination.
- Commit to empowering women in all operations through the provision of equal opportunities.
- Ensure that all laborers are paid through legitimate sources, thereby ensuring each individual is recognized by local and central governments, and therefore eligible for social security (if applicable).
- Provide training and education opportunities for all employees and ensure that promotion opportunities exist for qualified individuals.
- Apply Company procedures for all employees and stakeholders to express views, concerns or issues. All such issues raised will be dealt with by the Company on a case by case basis until resolved satisfactorily.

Troy Wiseman, CEO

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Troy Wiseman", with a horizontal line underneath.

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Appendix B: Environmental Policy



ECOPLANET BAMBOO GROUP

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

EcoPlanet Bamboo aims to become a global leader in the (1) reforestation of degraded land in to productive commercial bamboo plantations, and (2) the associated processing and manufacturing of this bamboo in to products that represent a sustainable alternative to timber. The Company is committed to follow the best accepted environmental practices with regards to all activities, and all activities of its subsidiary companies.

To achieve this EcoPlanet Bamboo is committed to:

- Conduct all Company activities in an environmentally responsible way through compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards.
- Commit to sustainable forest management practices and to acquire Forest Stewardship Council certification for all plantations, or where available equivalent bamboo certification.
- Minimize impacts and mitigate potential negative risks to any ecological aspect of plantation development and associated subsidiaries.
- Maximize biodiversity in all plantations, and where necessary conserve existing biodiversity through the maintenance of high conservation value forests on any purchased or leased land.
- Promote the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle, to minimize waste and maintain best practices for waste management.
- Minimize and monitor the use of chemicals, using only those accepted by sustainability standards, and minimize their impacts on the environment.
- Ensure that all management and staff understand the implications of this policy and their associated environmental responsibilities.
- Adhere to adaptive management under a changing global context for best available environmental practices.

Troy Wiseman, CEO

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Appendix C: Anti-Corruption Policy



ECOPLANET BAMBOO GROUP

ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY

EcoPlanet Bamboo is a transparent and morally sound company. Bribery, extortion, fraud, collusion and any other corrupt behaviors are prohibited in any operation conducted by the Company or any individual within the Company.

EcoPlanet Bamboo is committed to undertake the below measures in order to enhance the rule of law and eradicate corruption:

Taxation

- All property is accurately recorded and property taxes are paid according to appropriate governments and/or regional offices
- Income tax returns are filed within every jurisdiction as required
- Internal audits conducted starting from the end of year one

Employment

- All employees are paid at or above the minimum wage in the country of operations
- All employees are provided with social security and taxed accordingly
- Working conditions are in accordance to Country Labor Laws

Adhere to Government Policies

- Permits and licensing are carried out through proper legal procedures
- All documents are filed correctly
- Due diligence is carried out by all partners and third parties in contact with government officials

EcoPlanet Bamboo has a full time Quality Control Manager who will carry out sporadic and unannounced checks across all operations, reporting directly to the CEO.

Troy Wiseman, CEO

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