



**New Acre
Project**



Communication on Engagement

UN Global Compact

Supporting the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all

March 2022

Executive Summary

ALUS is a ground-breaking environmental program that supports farmers and ranchers to restore and steward environmental projects through community partnerships, producing cleaner air, cleaner water, and wildlife habitat. ALUS' innovative, community-developed, farmer-delivered model is changing the dynamic between private landowners and conservation while raising awareness about the important role farmers and ranchers can play in building a healthy environment for all Canadians.

ALUS' New Acre™ Project is a vehicle through which purpose-driven corporations can create shared value for their stakeholders and customers by funding ALUS projects on the agricultural landscape. New Acre™ Project enables ALUS to provide technical support and annual payments to more farmers and ranchers, establish and maintain more ALUS projects on acres of marginal or environmentally sensitive agricultural land, and produce more ecosystem services to benefit Canadian communities.

ALUS registered as a member of the UN Global Compact through the Global Compact Network Canada in 2019, recognizing the strong connection between New Acre Project and the UN SDGs, and New Acre Project was recognized in the Global Compact Emerging Best Practices Guide.

The following Communication on Engagement document (COE) is a disclosure of specific activities that a ALUS has taken in support of the UN Global Compact and its results. It demonstrates ALUS' commitment to support the Global Compact and promote the implementation of the ten principles among businesses.

As the largest single group of landowners in North America, agricultural producers are in a unique position to provide solutions to some of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time, including biodiversity loss and climate change.

The ALUS program focuses on enabling and empowering local leadership and innovation at the farmgate, spurring the creation of nature on marginal land and implementation on modified agricultural practices that improve the environment. Additionally, ALUS connects purpose-driven businesses to help accelerate positive impacts on the working landscape.



LETTER FROM THE CEO

February 15, 2022

Since ALUS joined the United Nations Global Compact, we have strongly supported this initiative, renewing our membership each year because we firmly believe in the principles on which it is based.

The UN Global Compact's ideas are aligned with ALUS' efforts to support locally-led actions that produce ecosystem services and climate solutions through land stewardship; to work through partnerships to address environmental challenges; and to encourage development and diffusion of nature-based environmental solutions.

2021 has been a year marred by superlatives – the driest, the hottest, the most devastating – for many agricultural communities across Canada with respect to drought, wildfires, the pandemic and disruption of global supply chains. It has been a difficult time for many, yet these challenges create an even greater need and opportunity to work together across community boundaries, across provinces and countries.

Each time a new farmer or rancher embraces the ALUS program, they embark on a personal path towards enhanced land stewardship and resilience and to find innovative ways to address the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss. When a new community embraces the idea that farmers have a productive role to play in addressing society's greatest challenges, the strength and resilience of that community improves.

"We are very proud of our participants, who are on the frontlines of environmental stewardship."

*Bryan Gilvesy
CEO - ALUS &
New Acre Project*



When a business partners with ALUS to help scale-up the number of farmers, ranchers, acres and communities involved in land stewardship, we generate shared value for individuals, communities, the business, its stakeholder, customers and shareholders.

We commit to continue working tirelessly to support every human and community that voluntarily adopts the ALUS program as their own. We also remain committed to collaborating with businesses that share our interests, and those that are willing to work together to achieve the UN Sustainable Development goals through New Acre Project, together.

Bryan Gilvesy
CEO, ALUS

How ALUS creates long-term value for society through New Acre™ Project

Engaging private enterprises

In 2016, ALUS created New Acre Project as a platform to enable the businesses to create and invest directly in nature-based solutions delivered by farmers and ranchers that participate in the ALUS program. A corporation may invest in New Acre Project as an extension of their commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

“Nature is one of the most powerful tools we have to help communities become more resilient to the impacts of climate change. By using what already exists in nature we can help preserve the health of the environment, while also generating positive social and economic benefits.”

- Nicole Vadori, TD Bank

ALUS’ role in these partnerships is that of a matchmaker, aggregator, and to assist corporations with impact measurement, bringing purpose-driven businesses together with farmers and ranchers who are engaged in land stewardship. Nature-based solutions can be used to manage material and physical risks, benefit stakeholders, and contribute positively to environmental solutions.

The February 2021-2022 period was successful, generating over \$6.6M through partnerships to support community-based, farmer-led nature restoration / enhancement and regenerative agriculture projects. Business partnerships were tailored with each enterprise’s specific sustainability goals in mind, including the SDG targets.





Table 1 — ALUS national achievements in 2021-2022 in support of the SDGs.

2021 Outcomes	NUMBER
Nature-based projects created Nation-wide (by the acre)	6,686
Re-enrollment of nature-based projects Renewing farmers' committment	5,000
People engaged through tours and external events	4,325
Number of local leaders involved in program decisions in participating communities	300

Every dollar contributed to generate impact for businesses also generates real shared value among landowners, communities, and other partners.

New Acre Project promotes the use of the SDGs as an effective framework for impact measurement and management through the New Acre Project website. Details of how ALUS provide commentary and support in impact measurement to companies on related Sustainable Development Goals are found in Table 2 below.

How is ALUS supports enterprises to achieve SDGs through New Acre™ Project

Table 2: 2021/2022 New Acre Project Partnerships			
Corporate enterprise	Sustainability purpose & objective	Impact measurement	Related SDG
Cargill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cut beef emissions by 30% in North America climate resilience protect vibrant farming and ranching communities Restore 600 billion liters of water in priority watersheds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6,000 acres enhanced 12,578 MT CO2 # of people in watersheds affected 	   
A&W Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lower GHGs in beef supply chain support regenerative, grass-fed ranching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6,000 acres enhanced 12,578 MT CO2 # of people in watersheds affected 	   
Danone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> replenish freshwater ecosystems support pollinators lower GHG footprint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90 acres restored % increase in biodiversity 	   
Molson Coors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> restore over 2 billion litres of Canadian freshwater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volume water replenished 	   
TD Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grow and enhance green spaces transition to a low-carbon economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 450 acres of restored/enhanced projects # of trees planted 	   
Aurora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect nature and biodiversity conserve water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 acre restore/enhanced projects Biodiversity benefits Water quality impacts 	   

Measurement of Outcomes



11,594 acres of grassland
acres which provide habitats
that benefit species at risk



8,827 of water-related
projects (wetlands,
riparian buffers)



7,657 acres of
trees and shrubs



1,576 habitat
nesting structures

ENGAGING GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORKS

Amidst the Global pandemic, organizing meetings and networking has been challenging, and yet interest in nature-based solutions, biodiversity goals and New Acre Project has spiked. As well, many companies in the food and beverage sector are beginning to accelerate investment in “regenerative agriculture” as it is sometimes called, demonstrating an awareness that supply chains that involve soil, water and the bioeconomy require attention and that farmers and ranchers need to support to bridge the transition towards production that is consistent with new climate realities.

ALUS has made an effort to engage with Global Compact and related local networks to remain involved in these conversations, including the following events and actions in the COE reporting period:

- Participated in the GCNC Quarterly Network Update Call
- Attended the ‘Paving the Way for Responsible Business Conduct in the Decade of Action webinar series: - Building Resilience: The Evolving Role of Corporate Governance’ webinar
- Online B2B engagement through the CEO Water Mandate’s Water Action Hub
- Key ALUS senior staff completed Duke University’s Impact Measurement & Management for the SDGs course
- Provided commentary on SDG impact measurement to 20+ companies over the period.

Other Measurements of Outcomes for ALUS

- Creation of 6,686 acres of newly established nature-based projects (wetlands, grasslands, trees & shrubs, pollinator habitat, and enhanced grazing and hay management)
- Re-enrollment of 5,000 acres to be managed to enhance the environment (for a total of 37,700 acres of currently enrolled).
- Engaged 600 people through farm tours, to engage with, celebrate and learn from the innovations of farmers and ranchers in the program this period.
- Connected with 3,725 people through other external engagement events this period.
- Reached 140,000 people through communications, where we share stories, case studies and best practices of participants nation-wide.
- Supported 300 local leaders who participate as members of community Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) groups, who govern the ALUS program in their respective communities.



Sustainable Development Goals

EMPOWERING FARMERS, CHANGE AND CREATING SHARED VALUE

In 2020, ALUS partnered with a research group from the University of Guelph to conduct a survey of the opinions, values and behaviours of ALUS program participants. The following statistics are highlights from respondents of this survey that demonstrated the transition from within -- moving away from actions that degrade the planet's life support systems and living resources, while moving toward those that sustain and restore these systems and resources.

- 83% of participating farmers said they observed positive environmental changes on their farm first-hand as a result of the creation of their ALUS project(s)
- 82% said that financial support from the ALUS program enabled them to improve the environmental conditions on their farm
- 80% said they would recommend ALUS to their neighbours and/or other farmers.

As the world population continues to grow, much more effort and innovation will be urgently needed in order to sustainably increase agricultural production, improve the global supply chains, protect soils and biodiversity while addressing the climate. Many in the international community believe that it is possible to tackle these weighty issues without the leadership and empowerment of farmers, and are working together to achieve this goal.

The Sustainable Development Goal to “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” (SDG2) recognizes the inter linkages among supporting sustainable agriculture, empowering farmers, promoting gender equality, tackling climate change, and other issues addressed within the set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

ALUS and New Acre Project are creating a marketplace and accelerating investment equitably to help individuals create and implement the changes that will achieve these conditions.



**New AcreTM
Project**

Delivered by  **ALUS**