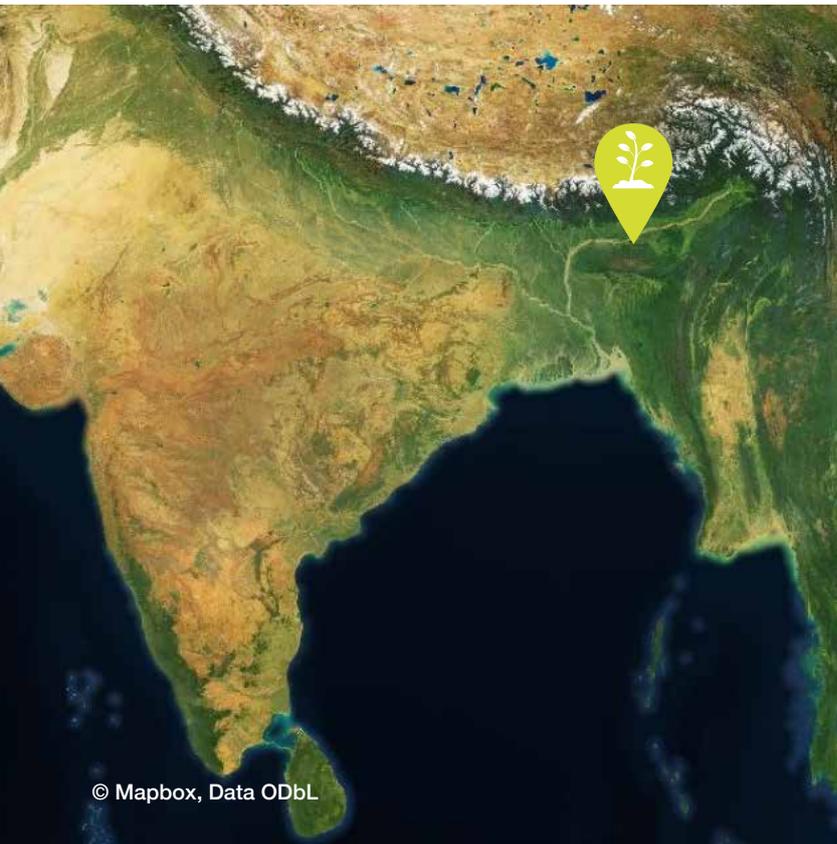


India

Supporting Khasi Communities to Regenerate Their Cloud Forest



Each WeForest project has a unique approach to cooling our earth.



In India's Khasi Hills, in the state of Meghalaya, WeForest is supporting community forest governance alongside forest restoration.



The Meghalaya state is home to forest dependent people, a global biodiversity hotspot and declining at a rate of 5% every year.

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WHY INTERVENTION IS NEEDED



PROJECT LOCATION

East Khasi Hills
Meghalaya district



THREATS

Charcoal, stone
quarrying, grazing



FOREST COVER LOSS

5% annually in
East Khasi Hills



THREATENED ANIMALS

Chinese pangolin, clouded leopard,
greater slow loris, Indian wild dog

The Khasi are traditionally a forest-dependent people, relying on the native cloud forest for shelter, firewood, medicine and food. The Khasi also value their forest for its role in protecting springs, stream beds and conserving wildlife and attach spiritual significance to areas of forest identified as sacred groves. These communities are now at risk as their valuable forest is cleared for charcoal making, stone quarrying and grazing. The Meghalaya state, or “the abode of clouds” in Sanskrit, is of international importance, recognized as one of the wettest places on earth and a biodiversity hotspot.

PROJECT GOALS AND HOW WE ACHIEVE THEM



RESTORATION APPROACH

Assisted natural regeneration and enrichment planting



ANNUAL RESTORATION POTENTIAL

498 hectares; 415,000 trees



NUMBER OF TREE SPECIES

40 native species



LIVELIHOOD SCHEMES

Tree nurseries, tea stalls, poultry, piggery, ecotourism



PROJECT PARTNERS

Ka Synjuk Ki Hima Arliang
Wah Umiam Mawphlang
Welfare Society

WeForest partners with a federation of 10 indigenous governments and 62 Khasi villages with traditional forest conservation values and management structures. The intervention areas are restored through assisted natural regeneration, which involves enrichment planting, thinning, weeding and the creation of fire lines. The federation delivers strategies for Khasi communities to tackle poverty and unsustainable forest exploitation and engage directly in forest restoration. These strategies include the establishment of community-based nurseries to supply indigenous saplings for planting. The Khasi are one of the world's few matrilineal societies so women are well represented in the project.

ENGAGING KHASI COMMUNITIES IN FOREST PROTECTION

WeForest supports members of self-help groups and farmer's clubs through training and financial support to pursue ecotourism initiatives, animal husbandry, food establishments and tree nurseries. To promote wider community changes, grants are provided to invest in pig and poultry farms to promote a shift in diet away from beef, a more environmentally damaging source of protein. WeForest also subsidizes fuel efficient cooking stoves to encourage a reduction in fuelwood consumption. Individuals engaged directly in forest restoration and awareness raising are also empowered through training and financial support. These include local working committees, who are tasked with local scale project management, as well as other community members and youth volunteers, in charge of the forestry activities and awareness raising. WeForest also provides direct employment opportunities in the form of regional community facilitators, forestry managers, accountants, assistants etc.

MAIN TREE SPECIES

Alnus nepalensis
Castanopsis indica
Exbucklandia populnea
Myrica esculenta
Pinus kesiya
Prunus nepalensis
Schima khasiana

IMPACT OF 1 MILLION TREES



AREA RESTORED

1200 hectares



CO₂ STORED

203,962 tons¹



FAMILIES ENGAGED

26,000 people

THE COST OF INACTION

Around 90% of the forests of Meghalaya are under the control of indigenous Khasi communities who, despite their traditional conservation values, require support to protect their forest. Without this support, the loss of forest will have dramatic consequences for future Khasi generations.

¹This is an estimate of the CO₂ stored after 20 years of growth.

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