



## **Eco-Libris Assessment – First year of Operation (July 2007 – July 2008)**

**The Alliance for International Reforestation (AIR)**

**Prepared by: Dr. Anne Hallum, Director**

### **1. General Information**

- 1.1 Name of organization: **The Alliance for International Reforestation** ([www.stetson.edu/org/air](http://www.stetson.edu/org/air))
- 1.2 Name of Director: **Dr. Anne Hallum**
- 1.3 Year of establishment: **1992**
- 1.4 Registered in (country): **USA**
- 1.5 Countries of operation: **Guatemala**
- 1.6 No. of trees planted so far: **3 million** (including 1 million Colorado Mangrove in 1992 and 1993; and 2 million since that time in Chimaltenango & Solola)
- 1.7 No. of trees planted in the 12 months ending on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008: **143,500**
- 1.8 Average survival rate of trees: **90%** (trees that do not survive are replaced)



Women who work at AIR's nursery in San Andres ,Itzapa, Guatemala, which is supported by Eco-Libris. AIR has worked here for six years, producing and planting tens of thousands of trees.

**2. Eco-Libris tree planting's operations (these questions refer to the trees planted on Eco-Libris behalf): 25,350**

2.1 Out of total number of 25,350 trees and as of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, how many trees have been planted? How many are still growing as seedlings in nurseries and how many are at prior stage (seedlings haven't been purchased yet)? *All of these have been planted*

2.2 In what countries/areas the trees were planted? Please fill in the excel table and be specific as possible. *All are in Dept. of Chimaltenango, Guatemala (see excel table - [http://www.ecolibris.net/AIR\\_Assessment\\_Excel\\_Table.pdf](http://www.ecolibris.net/AIR_Assessment_Excel_Table.pdf))*

2.3 Please provide the planting schedule in these areas (when the seedlings are planted in nurseries, what are the months of planting, etc.) *Seed bags are filled with seeds during January-Feb.; and planted on mountain slopes in May, June, July (rainy season)*

2.4 What species were planted, what is the genetic source (country of origin) of each species? *See excel table; I believe all are Guatemalan except Eucalipto from Australia (We only plant a few of these because they are a natural insecticide, and also provide medicine for colds, so residents like them near their houses) and Cipres Romano.*

2.5 How many hectares were planted as mixed forest? Mixed of how many species? *See excel table for no. of each species planted; they are planted in a mixed forest except for areas that are Pino Triste forest, and even here we include a few Llamo.*

2.6 How many hectares were planted as monoculture? *Only about 7,000 pine trees [We only planted the pine trees in monoculture because they were part of those replacing an old pine forest which had been illegally clear-cut. If other species also appear naturally, they remain to improve diversity]*

2.7 How many hectares were planted for agro-forestry uses? *About 5,000 trees*

2.8 What is the involvement of local communities with these planting activities? What are the social benefits of these specific trees that where planted, in present and in the future? The local communities are involved from the first day—they elect committees to help with the professional AIR staff in deciding what to plant where (which is why we cannot predict precisely for any donors where trees will be planted) *The local residents work in training and in the nurseries and on mountain slopes year round - it is the secret to AIR's very high tree survival rate, over many years.*

2.9 Are there any specific environmental benefits for the plantings in these specific areas? *The specific benefits are enormous, particularly in this mountainous region: Trees prevent soil*

erosion; protect water springs, and rivers and streams below from filling with silt; prevent mudslides; they rebuild the soil with nutrients; they provide habit for birds and small mammals that we have seen return; combat climate change. The specific benefit that is particularly important for these areas is prevention of soil erosion/mudslides. The loss of top soil is enormous on deforested mountain slopes, so the trees are crucial

2.10 What is the management plan for the next five years for the trees that were already planted during the last year? What is the management plan for the next twenty years? AIR staff and villagers replace tree seedlings that die in the first year. Over five years, we will trim lower branches for greater growth; we cut out any diseased trees; and if they are too dense, we will very selectively thin them. Over the next twenty years, we continue to visit occasionally with residents to see the mature forests, and encourage their protection.

Specific schedule for management: the technicians visit their older Planted Areas at least once a year (in between working in 5 new areas). If there are signs of diseased trees or areas too dense, they will return more frequently, every six months or so to remove these trees and replace any diseased ones. Schedules are made every month for each technician.

2.11 Do you plant other species, which are not trees, in the same planting area? (Shrubs, Herbaceous, etc.) If you do, which species? What life form? Yes, we plant grasses to combat soil erosion in particularly steep areas. We also have a few medicinal gardens next to homes, using indigenous knowledge.

2.12 Out of the trees that were planted: \_\_\_\_\_ (number) trees were in "clean/ new" areas, \_\_\_\_\_ (number) trees were planted as fillings in areas with former plantations, \_\_\_\_\_ (number) trees were planted as fillings in areas with natural vegetation. I have not asked for this level of detail from AIR's staff, but from my observations, it would be about 1/3 in each type.

2.13 Did you plant non native species? Which species? How many trees? 180 Eucalipto trees; and 2390 Cipres Romano trees for windbreaks.

2.14 you are most welcome to add more details that you find important or interesting for us and for our customers. *In 2.8 above, I noted the importance of local participation, which is vital. However, it is also the reason that the number of trees in "Reforestation" or in "agro-forestry" is almost impossible for us to predict—the residents make these decisions along with AIR staff, during the year. We have appreciated this collaboration and the publicity you have given AIR, as well as the funds.*

### 3. Ensuring the planting quality

With regards to our collaboration in our first year of operation, please choose for each characteristic shown in the table below the most suitable grade between 1-10 (1- cannot guarantee at all 10 – can fully guarantee) and add an X sign in the suitable cell. These grades should indicate your ability to ensure the quality of these characteristics. Please provide further explanations whenever necessary below the table.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Additionality										X
Planting the trees primarily as a mixed forest and not monoculture species								X		
Full collaboration with local communities										X
Usage of native species								X		
Planting within one year from the payment (at least in the seed bags!)										X
Ensuring trees planted on behalf of Eco-Libris will not be cut down									X	

Excel table can be found on this link:

[http://www.ecolibris.net/AIR\\_Assessment\\_Excel\\_Table.pdf](http://www.ecolibris.net/AIR_Assessment_Excel_Table.pdf)

#### Eco-Libris comments:

We thank AIR for their full cooperation in the preparation of the assessment and their willingness to provide all the requested details. Overall we are satisfied with the performance of AIR and believe that their commitment to high sustainable standards is maintained. We look forward to continuing our work together.

Two specific issues we will address in our future work with AIR:

1. We would like to make sure that our funding would not be allocated to heterogenic and monoculture plantations.
2. Non-native species (Eucalipto and Cipres Romano) will be removed from the tree nurseries that are specifically supported by Eco-Libris