

“Green Card” in Morocco : A partnership between the *Crédit Agricole* bank in Morocco and the High Commissariat for Water, Forests and the Fight against Desertification

Pictures:

The *Crédit Agricole du Maroc* booth during the 5th Mediterranean Forest Week in Agadir (Morocco).

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On November 26, 2015, the *Crédit Agricole du Maroc* (CAM) and the High Commissariat for Water, Forests and the Fight against Desertification (HCWFFAD) signed a Memorandum of Intent concerning Partnerships for Moroccan Forests (PMF), along with a convention for partnership in the funding of projects aimed at the conservation and development of forest ecosystems in Morocco.

Set up at the initiative of the HCWFFAD, the aim of the PMF is to foster the voluntary participation of businesses in the national effort to restore and preserve forest ecosystems. The Memorandum of Intent enabled the *Crédit Agricole du Maroc* to express its commitment to the principles of the PMF and its desire to participate in the effective implementation of concrete action towards environmental conservation, the rational management of natural resources and the improvement of the living conditions of the local populations. It should be noted that forests play an essential role in regulating climate systems thanks to their capacity to act as a carbon sink and they also help combat desertification and restore forest ecosystems.

As to the convention, its purpose was to provide a framework for partnership between the CAM and the HCWFFAD to establish the mechanisms for payment for ecosystemic services and the development

of sources of funding for projects related to the conservation and development of forest ecosystems.

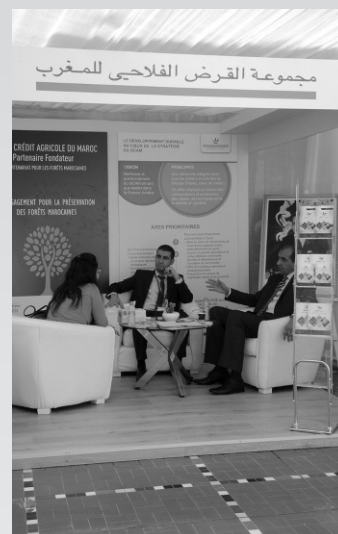
In this context, the CAM set up the innovative device of the “Green Card” which enables a part of the commissions/fees due to be paid using bank cards that generate no extra costs for the client. In this way clients can contribute to the financing of sustainable forestry projects merely by using the CAM card, incurring no extra cost.

Additionally, the partnership gives prime importance to the socio-economic dimension by financing projects aimed at creating added value and improving the living conditions of the local inhabitants in forested and woodland areas. The partnership was formed within the framework of the CAM’s commitments in the field of sustainable development.

Parallel to the COP22 in 2016, the HCWFFAD launched a massive operation to plant 1,000,000 trees in a single day in which the CAM took part thanks to the funds accumulated by the Green Cards. This operation made it possible to position sustainable forests at the very core of national preoccupations.

Cooperation between the CAM and the HCWFFAD can also play the role of catalyst in attracting new partners

by kindling an enhanced awareness, developing interfaces across economic sectors and, also, by diversifying the financial resources dedicated to the conservation of Morocco’s forests.



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