Tree-Planting Code of Ethics   ©

Michael Thau of Plant-It 2020

1. Quality is always more important than profitability. In practice, this means that the choices made during every aspect of the establishment phase must be those universally agreed upon by Certified Arborists, Silviculturists and similar tree experts to be the best choices for maximizing the health and survivability of the trees. It also means that we will not *cut corners* in any other aspects of our business practice.

2. Sustainable forestry[1] practice is far more than a slogan. We believe that tree and forest experts should design every tree-planting event so that there is the absolute minimum harm to the local and larger eco-system while providing the maximum long-term benefit. One effect is that we will generate as much pressure and influence as possible to ensure that the least damaging methods of logging will be used in the future if the tree-planting location is one where logging may or will occur.

3. Having a good, long-term, survival rate for every tree-planting project we do is critically important to us. We do not engage in tree-planting projects where the survival rate is less than 50% and we have an absolute minimum of 50%-60% in the harshest and most difficult locations. Our strong preference as an organization is to fund and participate in tree-planting projects that have estimated, long-term survival rates of greater than 70% in difficult locations (such as mountain tops) and greater than 80% in regular locations. Whenever possible, we try to determine survival rates through in-person inspection, aerial reconnaissance, and satellite analysis.

4. We take a non-nuanced, strong stance against eco-terrorism. We also do absolutely everything possible to make sure that no material and non-material support from our organization ever finds its way into the hands of terrorists[2] or criminal organizations. We will never hire or work with someone who supports or condones any form of eco-terrorism or any other form of terrorism.

5. As a nonprofit, we believe that the public has a right to know about any and all advocacy our organization engages in whether it be ecological, political, social, religious, etc. Our stances should be clearly communicated in detail and easily found on our website along with how much money (hard and soft costs) is spent in this effort along with to whom the money was/is spent.

6. Tree-planting foundations frequently work with municipalities and other government groups in the normal course of business. We believe that if any of the members of our Board of Directors, any employees or the tree-planting organization as a whole has any relationships or partnerships with any

government entity that may appear to go beyond the normal course of business, that the public should be informed of the precise nature of the partnership and activities via an easily found location on the tree-planting organization's website. This is meant to reduce corruption.

7. Any educational materials or programs we create or support will be strictly science-based. All content will be sourced from excellent sources. Scientifically controversial topics will be presented with sourced, multiple perspectives having equal weight whenever possible.

8. If we plant-a-tree for a set contribution amount, we will never use trees for that promotion that a) we received for free or deep discount (60% or greater); b) seedlings given away, or c) seedlings in which we only cover part of the total purchase price.

9. We will always communicate on our website our complete contact information including physical mailing address, email address and telephone number; the name of our Executive Director, and our IRS number.

A Note From Plant-It 2020
All tree-planting organizations who formally adopt the above 'Tree-Planting Code of Ethics' without any change and who then post it on their website will be recognized both on the Plant-It 2020 website as well as on the growforests.org website as conforming to the highest standards of ethical forestry practice.

DEFINITIONS

[1]. **Sustainable Forestry** is defined as: *To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products with the conservation of soil, air and water quality, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitat, recreation, and aesthetics.*

2005-2009 Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard. Page 3, point 1. Page 15-definitions. sfiprogram.org/

[2]. **Terrorism** is defined as: *'politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience'.*

Title 22, Section 2656f(d) of the United States Code. Also in the 2002 publication Patterns of Global Terrorism, the U.S. Department of State.