

# Sol Nascente

## Fostering Communities of Trees and People

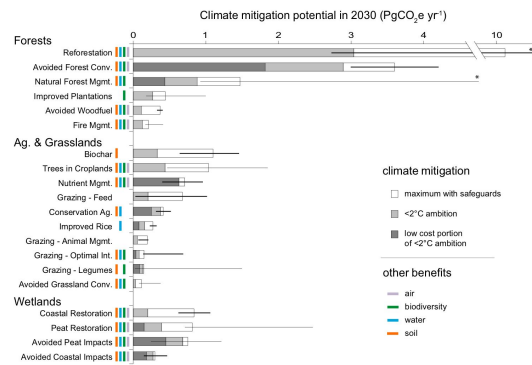
Sol Nascente is a regenerative initiative that longs to reforest the north of Portugal and Spain by proving that a forest can be ecologically sound as well as wildly productive.

Our mission is to take degraded lands and to transform them into flourishing forest communities. To acquire lands weakened by generations of neglect, manage them with regenerative agroforestry to build soil and resist wildfire. And in the same space, nest several forest productions which we then process into goods with a high added value. Simultaneously yielding natural beauty, carbon credits, conservation of biodiversity, ecosystem services, and the very forest models which tie them together.

Through diversified yields, we catalyze a new trend in which people don't simply return to rural life, but embark on a new form of country living where healthy forests are synonymous with a healthy rural economy. We demonstrate a clear alternative forestry, capable of reinvigorating local communities and incentivizing a lifestyle in which people manage and protect forests. In the end, the only thing capable of preventing wildfire is human action. It's community participation which can directly reverse the underlying cause of wildfire: systemic abandonment of the countryside.<sup>1</sup>

In our region, where a single hectare might have a dozen different owners, reforestation initiatives are limited by the number of people they can work with. So, we offer our models for free as open-source for others to replicate. Our goal isn't merely to reforest the region ourselves, but to teach and inspire others to regenerate the land while turning a profit. To see our small-scale forest models widely adopted, creating a network of true bottom-up large-scale reforestation that reinvigorates the bioregion.

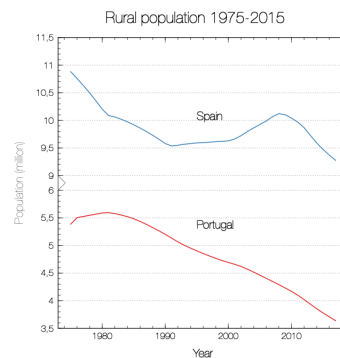
<sup>1</sup>[The Portuguese Forests](#), Mendes 2007,



Climate mitigation potential. Source: PNAS, [Natural climate solutions](#), Griscom et al. (2017)

## Ecologic Technology

We build soil using organic inputs and composts made from locally available waste materials and native microorganisms. And we design forests based on symbiotic interdependence between species and imitate the layers of a natural forest to optimally use sunlight to overlap productions in the same space. In this way, we increase both output and resilience, forming highly productive forest ecosystems that resist fire and form the center of a new economy which supports new rural communities.



Rural population in Portugal and Spain. Source: Worldbank, [World Development Indicators](#) (2017)

## Market landscape

Key to our approach is combining ecologic and economic resilience. We target four independent sources of income which work in synergy and allow for any single one to falter.

### Forest Production

There's a growing market for organic non-timber forest-based products, such as fruit, honey, nuts and mushrooms. But there are currently no biodiverse models proving commercial viability. Because of this, very few

people are planting fruit and nut trees, despite our region being the ideal environment for their growth.

## Ecologic Capital

To avoid the catastrophic effects of climate change, reforestation is by far the most effective technology. A healthy forest can sequester carbon, inhibit wildfires and provide ecosystem services such as clean air, water, biodiversity and proven health benefits.<sup>2,3,4</sup>

There are already projects receiving funding for either ecological<sup>5</sup> or productivity goals. We unite them, aggregating income from all sources.

## Vertical Integration

As most profits are made higher up the value chain, we can increase our yields and create local jobs by processing and conserving our goods on site. We can further increase our yields by establishing a brand with an online store and distributing directly to wealthier markets, such as cities in the region and in Northern Europe.

## Creative Economy

An increasing amount of young creatives and freelancers are no longer dependent on their location for income. As such, the countryside is a desirable alternative to city life. It lowers the cost-of-living, while residing in community and nature provide health and safety benefits as well as an increased sense of meaning. Hosting creatives as part of our communities provides a much-needed intellectual and artistic input while their incomes and investments provide a boost to the local forest economy.

## Approach

In order to manage complexity and risk we will validate various assumptions in 3 phases launching at 5 year intervals. With each independent pilot lasting 15 years, the time it

<sup>2</sup> Jose, S. (2009). [Agroforestry for Ecosystem Services and Environmental Benefits](#): An overview. *Agroforestry Systems*, 76(1), 1–10.

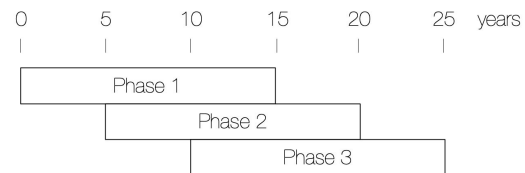
<sup>3</sup> Lopes, A. F., & Cunha-e-sá, M. A. (2014). [The Economic Value of Portuguese Forests](#) – The Effect of Tree Species on Valuation of Forest Ecosystems, (September), 1–29.

<sup>4</sup> Hansen, M. M., Jones, R., & Tocchini, K. (2017). [Shin-rin Yoku \(Forest Bathing\) and Nature-Therapy](#): A State-of-the-Art Review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 14(8).

<sup>5</sup> [mossy.earth](#), [landlifecompany.com](#)

takes for our forests to mature, the aggregate of all 3 phases will take 25 years to complete.

The first phase will validate the forest design and the practices for collaboration and community self-organisation. The second phase will validate the market potential for processed forest-based products. And the third phase will validate learning curves, demonstrating increased efficiency and large-scale collaboration between communities.



Independent phases of Sol Nascente.

## Funding

For phase 1 and 2, we rely on a combination of private investments by participants, crowd funded donations (for reforestation, carbon sequestration and community reinvigoration) and subsidies. Having demonstrated viability, the third phase will be financed entirely through private investments and (crowd)loans.

## Team

### Diego Reymondez

Diego is our forest designer. He grew up in New York from Galician parents. Five years ago he took on the management of his parents land, near Santiago, which is now a thriving forest. He has been consulting since in the design, planting and management of forests.

### Mathijs de Bruin

The architect of the project, Mathijs, migrated from Amsterdam to Northern Portugal specifically to start forest communities. Still a serial tech entrepreneur, he specialises in networking, economics, legal structures and community design.

## Contact information

<https://solnascente.life>

### Diego

[diego@solnascente.eu](mailto:diego@solnascente.eu) · +34 688 922 591

### Mathijs

[mathijs@solnascente.eu](mailto:mathijs@solnascente.eu) · +351 964 061 972

