

# Building Climate Resilient Communities in Azuero



The decimation of Panama's dry forest due to climate change is endangering local species via habitat destruction, and disenfranchising residents as it makes local farmland unusable. This project provides economic opportunities to local communities by granting them micro-contracts to grow saplings that will then be sold and planted to reforest the Azuero Peninsula. Their economic growth will fuel conservation of habitat, biodiversity and create more usable farmland for future generations.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

The forests of Panama's Azuero Peninsula are considered one of the gravest endangered ecosystems worldwide. Only 7% of Azuero's forest remains, threatening endemic wildlife like the critically-endangered Azuero Spider Monkey, creating water shortages & reducing the productivity of local farmland. Local flora and fauna are struggling to survive in patches of habitat, while residents can no longer make a living with their traditional farming methods as viable agricultural land disappears.

## HOW WILL THIS PROJECT SOLVE THE PROBLEM?

We are collaborating with elders & leaders in communities reliant on small-scale farming to create local Environmental Committees that will provide training on climate-resilient organic and regenerative agriculture, as well as offer members micro-contracts to cultivate saplings that will be sold back to Pro Eco Azuero to be planted during the 2023 reforestation season. This project provides education, economic opportunity, and conserves local habitat and clean water sources.

## POTENTIAL LONG-TERM IMPACT

This project provides sustainable income and climate-resilient education for nearly 200 rural residents of Los Santos, and grows nearly 14,000 saplings that will reforest approximately 14 hectares of riparian rainforest in Panama. This reforestation results in more farmable land and less soil erosion, restoration of local watersheds, protection of local biodiversity by rebuilding livable habitat and connecting what little habitat remains for the critically-endangered Azuero Spider Monkey.