WeForest
Making Earth Cooler

Reversing deforestation in Apuí

Mid-year report 2021

Engaging local farmers in protecting the Amazon

In 2012 the coffee farmers in Apuí, one of Amazonas State's most deforested municipalities, were producing an average of 8 bags of coffee per hectare. Today, the harvest is between 15 and 25 bags, thanks to the Apuí Agroforestry Coffee Initiative run by our local partner IDESAM.

All this is thanks to the regeneration of degraded pastures and the development of an organic coffee agroforestry system. Planting native trees between coffee bushes improves soil fertility, which increases coffee production and boosts incomes for the farmers. The project holds significant potential to reduce deforestation here, as this is chiefly driven by low incomes and poor soils.

Over the next five years, the development of 175 hectares of organic coffee agroforestry will boost the current production area by over 300% and support more than 150 families.

Our goals for 2021 in Apuí:

Raise
58 310 coffee and
9 555 native species
seedlings for the first planting season in December 2021

Begin the implementation for
35 ha
of agroforestry coffee systems

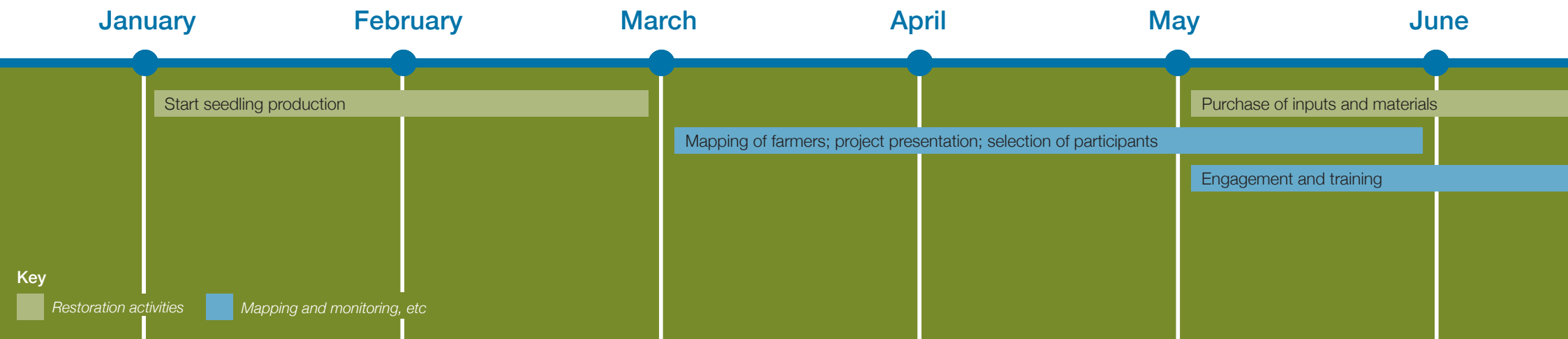
What's new in Apuí?

Recent highlights from the field

Our 35ha target is on track. As the project aims to benefit small properties run by family labour, households that already participate and want to increase their existing area of agroforestry to up to two hectares are given priority. Unable to gather all local producers at once because of COVID-19, from March until June the field team visited potential producers individually to present the project. By June, 22 local producers had been selected, with their land amounting to **37 hectares** in total – two more than this year's target. IDESAM have noticed a growing interest in participating, even among communities outside Apuí – so word is spreading!

To be ready for planting with these 22 farmers at the end of this year, seedling production started in January. Coffee will be planted at a density of about **1666 seedlings per hectare**, and the ten native tree species that will be interspersed with the coffee will be planted at an average of **273 seedlings per hectare** (slightly less than our estimated average of 300 per hectare). This means that for 35 hectares, **9 555 native seedlings** and **58 310 coffee seedlings** will be needed.

Café Apuí Agroflorestal is the first coffee in Amazonas State to be cultivated in an agroforestry system.

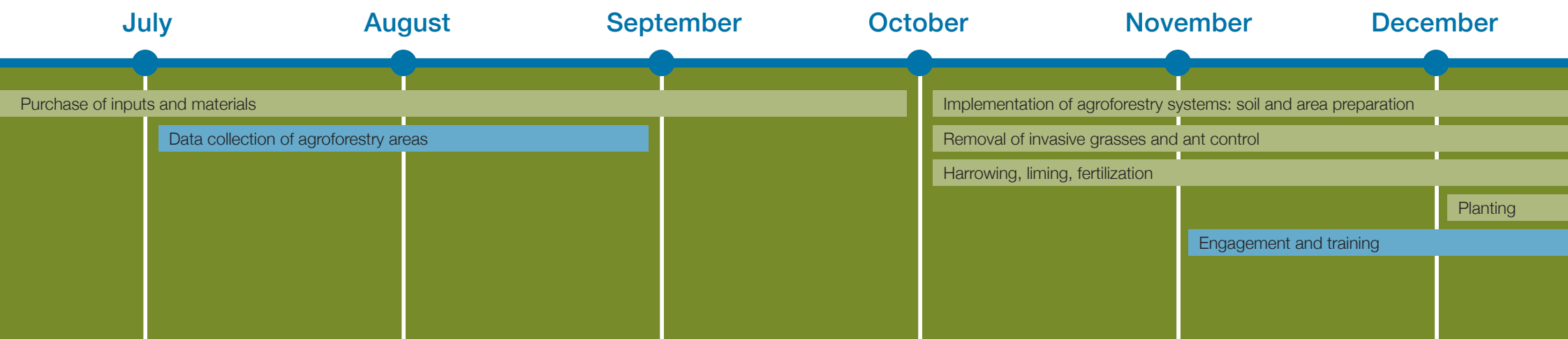


Selected because it offered a more competitive price and better quality seedlings than more local nurseries, the Amazon Nursery in Porto Velho – 600km away – will produce the coffee seedlings and 8 of the ten native tree species. The remaining two species, Ingá and Pitanga, will be provided by the Apuí Municipal Environment Department.

COVID-19 has led to a steep increase in costs, both for seedlings and other materials such as fertilizer. The **Apuí Municipal Environment Department** and the **Amazon Nursery** (left) will deliver all the seedlings to the project from November. Meanwhile, the team has been busy sourcing the other materials needed for planting season. We need 80 tons of limestone, 8 tons of phosphate and 600kg of green manure.

The serious COVID-19 situation in Brazil this year has meant that face-to-face meetings have become difficult, so we don't yet have the mapped areas as GPS coordinates or pictures of the **new farmers** that will take part in the first planting season. We expect this to be resolved soon, as the number of vaccinated people is increasing in Brazil, especially within the PA Rio Juma area. All IDESAM's field staff are already vaccinated.

Monitoring and evaluation plans are underway. A questionnaire for participating farmers will capture baseline information on their socio-economic conditions upon signing their partnership agreement with the project. Three years later, and then every two years after that, follow up questionnaires will monitor the management of the agroforestry systems and changes to indicators such as annual income.



What's next?

- July and August: Agreements with the selected producers will be signed, and the baseline monitoring information collected. Then IDESAM technicians will define where the agroforestry systems will be situated and train the small farmers on agroecological practices and coffee production.
- August: field visits to map the land parcels under restoration.
- October: soil preparation for planting begins.
- November: delivery of seedlings starts.
- December to January: planting season.

What is agroforestry?

Agroforestry combines agriculture and forestry; environmentally and socially-appropriate trees and shrubs are grown around or among crops or pastureland. It plays a critical role in successful forest restoration by:

- reducing the pressure on forest resources and incentivising sustainable forest management by alleviating poverty;
- compensating the loss of access to forest resources;
- ensuring reliable incomes to fund sustainable forest management.

IDESAM's work in Apuí started in 2012, with each producer receiving support to recover 1 hectare of coffee plantation in an agroforestry system, with native trees for shade including jatobas and mahogany, as well as species whose fruits and seeds could be collected and sold, such as cocoa, açaí, Brazil nut, andiroba and copaiba. Regenerating coffee systems has doubled productivity in the region and enabled farmers to earn income from coffee and look to the future of essential oil production from native trees. Creating value in standing productive forests can prevent their degradation and destruction.

Please visit our **Why and How** webpage for more information.

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Stay up-to-date with our interactive Apuí map, and check out the photos on Flickr.