

CASE STUDY 18

Saving endangered rainforest

Who: Birmingham International Airport

Where: United Kingdom

What: Airport protects 180 acres of Brazilian rainforest

When: 2008

Why: Offsetting CO₂ emissions from airport buildings

Project

Birmingham International Airport (BIA) has invested £20,000 to protect 180 acres of endangered rainforest in Brazil, locking-in nearly 50,000 tonnes of CO₂ - the equivalent used by the airport's buildings over two years. To make this happen, the airport worked with Cool Earth, a charity that protects endangered rainforest from deforestation, an activity which accounts for up to 25% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions; a share greater than that produced by the entire transport sector.

The area of rainforest being protected is in an area called Democracia, which lies on the northerly bank of the Rio Madeira river and is at the frontier of destruction. Loggers began cutting timber in that area in 2005, but since Cool Earth secured the forest, the area will be protected for at least the next 25 years. BIA's protection of 200 acres will also save 4,000 mature trees, over 17,000 saplings, 16 endangered animals, 322 types of plant and over 11,000 species of insect and worm.

Working with the communities

The sponsorship also includes purchasing classroom equipment, solar powered internet, and a boat for a school in the heart of the Amazon called 'Escola Estadual', which serves communities in the state of Mato Grosso.

To enhance this initiative and deliver benefits to the airport's local community, BIA and Cool Earth have been working with Small Heath School and Sixth Form College in Birmingham to build the initiative into the school's curriculum, and over the last four months, students have been learning about all things Brazilian, including studies in culture, environment, language, sport, history, arts, music and cuisine.

About Cool Earth

Rainforests covers 6% of the earth's land surface. Tropical rainforest - in the Amazon, in Central Africa and in South East Asia - is most at risk from deforestation. Each year, 50 million acres - an area the size of the United Kingdom - are cut down, emitting around 6 billion tonnes of CO₂ which is up to 25% of total human CO₂ emissions (the aviation industry accounts for around 2%, by comparison). Cool Earth was launched in June 2007, with the support of Sir David Attenborough and Sir Nicholas Stern, in order to purchase endangered rainforest and keep it in local trusts, locking in the CO₂ that would otherwise be released if the rainforest was burnt down. The charity has become Europe's fastest growing environmental movement and has already secured more than 35,000 acres of the world's most endangered rainforests. www.coolearth.org



Company profile:

Birmingham International is the UK's sixth largest airport and has the highest proportion of business traffic second only to Heathrow. In 2006, it handled over nine million passengers through its two terminals.

Over 50 airlines operate scheduled and charter services to more than 100 destinations. Birmingham is one of the most accessible Airports in Europe. It lies at the centre of the UK's motorway network and is adjacent to Birmingham International Rail Station.

www.bhx.co.uk



Birmingham Airport has not only secured the endangered rainforest, but is working with schools and communities in the region to provide much needed equipment.

