



FINAL PRESS RELEASE

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Accor Hotels launches pioneering plan for partnerships with UK eco-farms

Guests will fund 200,000 trees to support sustainable farming

Accor Hotels announced today that its Plant for the Planet programme will fund 200,000 trees in the UK in a pioneering project designed to promote sustainable food production and nurture links between hotels, guests and farms.

Europe's largest hotel group marked the first anniversary of its PLANET 21 sustainability strategy by revealing **plans to finance up to 50 projects across the UK** by the end of 2015, planting trees on farms in smart ways that cut costs, raise yields and improve the environment. The programme also aims to engage Accor's employees and guests on sustainability.

Plant for the Planet is financed by money saved when guests choose to reuse towels rather than send them to be washed. Since 2008, thanks to their responsible behavior, Accor has planted **over 3 million trees worldwide – around 1500 each day**. In the UK 72% of the group's hotels take part in the programme and in five years they have funded more than 247,000 trees in Romania.

However, from 2013 Plant for the Planet will focus on schemes planting trees in smart ways which maximise their impact in the same countries as the hotels that fund them. The programme – thought to be **unique in the hospitality industry and the biggest of its kind in the UK** – will allow hotels to build close links with their communities, develop strong partnerships with local farms and preserve the environment.

Sophie Flak, Accor's Executive Vice president for Sustainable Development and the Accor Académie, said: "Plant for the Planet is at the heart of our sustainability programme and we believe it can make a real impact. Worldwide we aim to launch 21 projects by the end of 2013 and we expect to finance 200,000 trees in three years in the UK alone.

"Plant for the Planet will cut our energy and water consumption thanks to laundry savings, support organic and low-impact farmers, and involve our guests in pioneering a sustainable food system. This new initiative demonstrates our commitment to responsible growth which generates shared value for all."

Taking Plant for the Planet to new heights

Accor has forged a **new global partnership with Pur Projet**, an expert in developing community forestation projects, to take Plant for the Planet to a more ambitious level, maximising the quality and impact of its tree planting, integrating the programme more fully into Accor's businesses, and enabling its hotels to play a more active role within their communities.

The Woodland Trust is managing the programme in the UK, with help from the **Soil Association and Organic Research Centre**, and expects to launch schemes on 10 farms this year. It is thought to be the UK's biggest programme to pioneer commercial models of using trees in farming across a range of farming systems and environments.

Woodland Trust partnerships manager Helen Chesshire said: "We are delighted that Accor is supporting a step change in thinking to help **develop commercial models of agroforestry** in a wide range of farms, producing a variety of crops and animals, in very different conditions. These projects aim to demonstrate the benefits of organic, local and sustainable farming, and provide practical models which we hope will be widely copied.

"It's about making trees work for the farm to deliver a range of benefits. They can improve productivity, reduce spending on fertilisers and make farms more resilient to extreme weather. Trees thoughtfully integrated into farms can deliver real business benefit, and enhance the environment, and thanks to Accor we'll be able to offer tree-planting to even more farmers."

The Woodland Trust will provide trees free to farmers accompanied by expert advice tailored to each farm's needs and circumstances.

Thoughtful tree planting can help improve the conditions for growing crops and raising animals, delivering a range of environmental benefits which can also improve productivity on farms.

When planted in the right places, trees can help farmers stabilise and enrich soils, improve water efficiency in crops, increase resilience against drought, and reduce flood risk. They provide shade and shelter for livestock, and encourage pollinating insects, and also offer an additional source of income from fruit, nuts and timber. They also benefit the wider ecosystem by improving biodiversity, providing wildlife habitats and locking away carbon.

Tristan Lecomte, founder and CEO of Pur Projet, said: "Plant for the Planet establishes Accor as a global pioneer of ecosystem preservation, with a vision of sustainable hospitality in which hotels actively help to preserve their regional environment. Our aim is to have at least **one reforestation project in the majority of Accor host countries by 2015** and my goal is to help integrate those into the group's core values and activities."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Accor

Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, is present in 92 countries with more than 3,500 hotels and 450,000 rooms. Accor's broad portfolio of hotel brands - Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Grand Mercure, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Adagio, ibis, ibis Styles, ibis budget and hotelF1 - provide an extensive offer from luxury to budget. With more than 160,000 employees in Accor brand hotels worldwide, the Group offers its clients and partners 45 years of know-how and expertise. Accor is the fourth largest hotel group in the UK, with 197 hotels.

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About Pur Projet

PUR PROJET develops community-based agroforestry projects, in partnership with small-scale, organic & fair-trade farmers, and with the support of companies willing to integrate socio-environmental dimensions into their activities. Pur Projet helps these companies with the progressive integration of social and environmental issues into their supply chains and core activities, with the reduction of their impact on the environment, and with the preservation of the ecosystems in which they operate. The projects, which are deeply integrated into companies' processes, act positively on climate, water, biodiversity, and more globally on the preservation of territories and the socioeconomic development of the populations.

About The Woodland Trust

The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity championing native woods and trees. It has more than 300,000 members and supporters and its three key aims are: i) to enable the creation of more native woods and places rich in trees ii) to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future iii) to inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees. Established in 1972, the Woodland Trust now has over 1,000 sites in its care covering approximately 20,000 hectares (50,000 acres). Access to its sites is free.

The Woodland Trust now offers a range of mechanisms to inspire and enable large organisations, schools, community groups and individuals to plant trees on their own land.