



SEED Initiative

promoting entrepreneurship for sustainable development

Founding Partners



LOW CARBON WINNER 2014

Proplanet transforms materials that are hard-to-recycle, such as long-life Tetra Pak and plastified paper, into paper fibre, sustainable construction materials, and urban furniture, thereby reducing pressure on landfills. Through biodegradable food packaging with FSC certification, it helps to substitute plastics.



Proplanet, Colombia

BUSINESS MODEL

Proplanet undertakes research to develop processes that transform hard-to-recycle materials. The raw materials are sourced from local collection centres and transformed in Proplanet's production facility. The three product lines – food packaging, construction materials, and paper fibres – are sold to retailers, catering companies, and local paper factories.

Proplanet offers customers sustainable products of prime quality. Currently it is expanding its biodegradable food packaging line to include food packaging that is resistant to refrigeration, thereby substituting plastic packaging.

ENTERPRISE FAST FACTS

Location	Antioquia
Year founded	2011
Sector	Sustainable consumption and production (recycling)
Product/Service	Recycled food packaging, construction materials, urban furniture and paper fibre

Contact Ms. Natalia Uribe Rios

✉ gerencia@proplanet.com.co

✉ www.proplanet.com.co

Social impacts:

- Promoting gender equality by employing women at all levels, including in executive management.
- Supplying construction materials for priority housing.
- Contributing tiles for the construction of a new collection centre.
- Raising awareness in the community and among waste collectors on correct waste separation.

Environmental impacts:

- Replacing non-biodegradable packaging, like plastic or polystyrene, with paper packaging that biodegrades in four months.
- Recycling waste that is normally not recycled, e.g. currently 30t of Tetra Pak per month.
- Reducing energy consumption, ensuring a closed water cycle and zero-waste production.

Economic impacts:

- Generating 21 jobs in the enterprise and additional income sources for more than 100 waste collectors.
- Creating demand for used Tetra Paks, which previously were of no value to waste collectors.
- Opening up markets and extending the product range of Proplanet.

” Proplanet was conceived as a means to process waste and produce products which are environmentally friendly and protect our planet, generating sustainability and profitability.

Scaling up activities:

- Invest in new equipment to improve energy efficiency, reduce operating costs, and to utilise the recycled paper fibre instead of selling it to the paper industry, thus increasing its value for Proplanet and diversifying the company's product portfolio.
- Establish recycling bins as a new business line and expanding the biodegradable food packaging line made from FSC-certified virgin fibre to include cold resistant food packaging.
- Increase Proplanet's market presence to acquire new customers and extend market demand in order to raise the number of employees from 21 to 32 and the amount of recycled Tetra Pak from 360 t to 720 t a year within the next year.
- Start exporting to other countries in Latin America, mainly for the food packaging line.



” We started with the idea of producing biodegradable packaging for food locally as 90 % is imported. After this we started to work with Tetra Pak on recycling long-life cartons.



Partnership

• **Proplanet** is a business which develops processes to recycle hard-to-recycle materials and manufactures the final products.

• **EMPRENDER PARA LA VIDA**, a co-operation of the business incubator CREAME and the metropolitan area Valle de Aburrá which promotes environmental entrepreneurship, has provided business support to Proplanet since 2013.

• **Tetra Pak Andina** has loaned Proplanet equipment under a loan-for-use agreement in order to help increase their rate of recycling.



Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

The 2014 SEED Low Carbon Awards are largely supported by the International Climate Initiative (ICI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs who while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion. SEED provides these entrepreneurs with know-how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making. For more information please write to info@seedinit.org or visit:

www.seedinit.org

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