

## **Reforestation Project, Quinta da Feiteirinha; Pincho, near Bensafrim, Algarve**

A Rocha, Cruzinha; Chris and Tricia Wells; St Vincents Chaplaincy (plus others to be identified). 11<sup>th</sup> October 22 onwards.

Possible partners. A Rocha Prayer Group and their Churches, Friends of A Rocha, Portugal Anglican Churches, Eco Church movement in Portugal, Diocese in Europe.

### **Overview**

A Project to promote tree growth and biodiversity in Feiteirinha Farm, Pincho, Algarve.

### **The Problem**

Protecting existing forests is a primary goal of reforestation campaigns, [Half the trees](#) that once covered the planet since the start of civilization have been lost, mostly to the expansion of agriculture. Between 2014 and 2018, old-growth tropical forests were destroyed at an average annual rate of [860,000 hectares](#); tropical deforestation has accelerated by 44% in the last decade. This means [huge carbon emissions](#).

<https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/nature/lessons-from-rush-for-reforestation-projects/>

In addition, there is a severe problem with drought throughout Europe and particularly in Western Algarve. In addition to the obvious problems this brings to humans and to farming, it also reduces our ability to fight forest fires, and promotes flooding and loss of topsoil. We are now in our sixth year of drought. 2021 was the second hottest year on record (second only to 1931 in recorded times)

### **Objectives**

Deforestation is a problem for carbon dioxide absorption worldwide. The severe drought in Europe and the Algarve threatens continuing growth of flora, and risks increasing forest fires which damage the forest structure further (refs).

We believe there is an opportunity to link reforestation, land preservation and promotion of biodiversity throughout the Algarve and subsequently Portugal.

A successful project will lead on absorption of carbon dioxide, work towards lessening climate change, and will reset and encourage the water cycle, discourage forest fires, and protect soil and property. It will allow people to increase their enjoyment and leisure time in a healthy and fulfilling natural environment in which they can reflect on the beauty and mystery of nature and creation.

## **Needs**

- 1) Land (initial parcel, Quinta da Feiteirinha). A successful project should encourage further similar A Rocha projects throughout Portugal and Europe using a similar model.
- 2) Water (lakes/bore holes). Perhaps the biggest deficiency due to drought. Permission for a bore hole has been sought.
- 3) Irrigation, pumps, pipes. We are concerned that in times of drought, trees planted without adequate initial irrigation may die or fail to flourish, slowing or halting the nascent project. Chris and Tricia may have spare irrigation pipes, according to the size of the project.
- 4) Labour for clearing and planting, maintenance.
- 5) Land clearing, machinery
- 6) Trees, selection and planting. Machinery, finance, manpower.
- 7) Maintenance. Looking after what we have achieved, logging the changes

## **Development**

Plans of land, digital GIS with GPS points, has now been completed.

An initial survey of the land has now been completed. Review of topography, present trees and bushes, birds, insects, flora.

Results are awaited

Memorandum of understanding to ring-fence land if reforestation takes place (action Chris, Tricia). For continuity and preservation of trees and forest. With A Rocha and any other partners. Needs to allow water and electricity on the land to reach adjoining house, and to continue the existing blueberry farm whilst viable.

## **Possible future exercises**

In depth surveys for birds, insects and possible mammals

Possible student/volunteer attachment to consider mammals

Design of Transformation Plan

Landscaping, taking goals into consideration

Choice of trees

Acquisition of resources

- a) human
- b) water
- c) equipment
- d) funding
- e) trees

Keeping in mind

- 1) Photos at all stages (all)

- 2) Publicity (Tricia)
- 3) Communication (Marcial, Tricia)
- 4) Fundraising (churches, public, grants) (Marcial, Chris)

**Next immediate steps**

- 1) MOU
- 2) Await map, survey results
- 3) Date of next meeting- within six weeks.