



“BUTTERFLY EFFECT PROJECT” – 4th EDITION

**"MAN AND TREES:
A RELATIONSHIP FOR LIFE"**

Reforestation project

**Competition for young people, students and associations
with active projects and video works**

Against global warming

PLANT A PLANT, NOW!

Soon the favourite colour of all children will be green, because their future on this planet will depend on the colour green. Respect for the world of plants, trees, forests will be taught and learnt in the same way we use soap to wash our hands today, but it will not only be a guarantee of good health, it will become a mantra of survival.

This competition offers all young people the opportunity to catch up with the times, which does not mean having the latest smartphone in your pocket, but a handful of seeds to plant, to stop an incontrovertible scientific fact: climate change. Understanding the value of one more tree in your backyard, one more park in the city where you live, one more wood in the surrounding countryside, one more forest in our mountains is not just a step forward, but the step that sets a still body in motion.

From the time-lapse of a seed being born, a flower blooming or a fruit growing and changing colour, one realises that these “plants” are nothing more than very “slow animals”. They live in another time dimension, they use different clocks from ours, but that does not mean they do not affect us. Their time is our future and we owe them our time now. If we were even to reason with the selfishness that distinguishes us as human beings, let us remember that in the end it is not the plants that need us but we need them, tremendously. They will continue to be there, we... will depend on them.

Starting from these strong motivations, we want to propose this awareness-raising competition to all young people who, with a small gesture, will contribute to a great result.

Giulio Corazza

“I have the feeling that the real importance of the plants for human beings’ life is not fully perceived by the majority of people. Of course, everyone knows - or at least I hope so – that we can breathe thanks to the oxygen produced by plants and that the entire food chain, and therefore the food that nourishes all the animals on Earth, is based on plants. But how many people have the clear idea that oil, coal, gas and all the so-called non-renewable energy resources are nothing more than a different form of the sun’s energy fixed by plants millions of years ago? How many know that the active ingredients of our medicines are largely of plant origin? Or that wood, thanks to its surprising characteristics, is still the most widely used building material in many areas of the world? Our life, as well as that of any other animal form on this planet, depends on the plant world.”

Plants consume very little energy,

have a modular architecture,

a distributed intelligence

and no command centre:

there is nothing better on earth to be inspired by.

Stefano Mancuso - A world-renowned scientist and professor at the University of Florence, he heads the International Laboratory of Plant Neurobiology (LINV)

*il mondo
di Tommaso* 

A banal observation is that forests have existed for millions of years, long before human beings. Furthermore, life on our planet has evolved to the present day thanks largely to the presence of the plant world, which has created the conditions for extraordinary complexity and biodiversity. Thus, the plant world is at the basis of all life and all the complex relationships between countless forms of living beings. But since mankind began interacting with the environment, half of the forests have disappeared because of it.

The alarm that scientists and environmentalists have been communicating for dozens of years is that the climate is changing at an impressive speed, that global warming is a phenomenon that seems to be out of control, and that the speed of the current change is mainly caused by the type of development and lifestyle of the richest countries that are doing little or nothing to acknowledge their mistakes and finally change course. We must start from a premise: life on Earth will not disappear, it has already suffered no less than five mass extinctions, with even more than 90% of life forms disappearing, but each time it has recovered. Scientists warn us that we are heading for the sixth extinction, first caused by mankind itself, but when life resumes its evolution after the catastrophe, we will most likely be gone.

We must act now to make humans realize that the solution lies in individual awareness, that the responsibility lies with all of us and that everyone can do something, starting with themselves and their own lives, without using the excuse that one person alone counts for nothing. We should take our example from the forest, where every tree plays its part and cooperates in maintaining life, creating the conditions for all components to survive and evolve. We interpret the forest as a collection of individual trees because we focus on the stems and leaves, without taking into consideration what we do not see because it is under the ground; in reality, the roots interact, intertwine, merge, communicate with each other (Prof. Stefano Mancuso is teaching us this), they work for the survival not only of the individual tree but of the forest community. Everything is reused for the common good, dead wood or last season's leaves become nourishment for current and future generations. Changing course is possible, imitating the forest that preserves and regenerates itself and enriches life. If we have eliminated half of the forests that exist naturally on the planet, we can lay the foundations for a different relationship with Mother Earth by trying to make up for the mistakes we have made so far, thus by planting and tending trees, to restore the forests we have eliminated.

We can do many other things, changing our lifestyle, starting with our diet, consuming less and better, using truly renewable energy, but we should start with the plant world, with its most evolved and complex form, the forest. Again quoting Stefano Mancuso, if we were able to plant 1,000 billion trees on the entire planet, an entirely possible and achievable goal if only there were the will to do so, we would be able to put a big brake on climate change and make a big contribution to the human race's chances of survival.

Toio de Savorgnani - Environmentalist and writer, has dedicated his life to the protection of the Cansiglio forest in Veneto

*il mondo
di Tommaso* 

On the map of European forests there is an empty space: the Venetian Po Valley. It is not because of the territory or the climate: in about 2000 years men have almost completely eliminated the forest mantle that covered it. Against climate warming and air pollution, it is necessary to act on road and air traffic and on emissions. Industrial reconversion, urban regeneration, changes in consumption are urgently needed. Moreover, woods, urban and extra-urban green areas, parks, gardens, rows of trees, hedges, shrubs are an extraordinary resource.

In the last years, something, even though not much, has changed in the Veneto region, thanks to increased awareness of the importance of woods around the cities. The surface of woods is increased ten times, reaching 500 hectares. The objective developed in 2017 is to reforest at least 5000 hectares of Venetian plain by 2050, reaching therefore a wooded area similar to that existing at the Serenissima period. Remnants of ancient lowland woods, with habitat, flora and fauna of eminent naturalistic importance, have been included in EU Natura 2000 and identified as Special Areas of Conservation. The Regional Forestry Service and some municipalities take care of these areas in order to improve their composition and structure. But everything seems to have stopped. An important change is urgently required! Let's reforest!

Through photosynthesis, a wood stores the CO₂ that cause the greenhouse effect. Reforestation in urban and sub-urban areas is an essential help: by 2030 we must reduce greenhouse gas emission by 50%, as recommended by the IPCC and required by the 2015 Paris Agreement. A wooden area enhances the quality of a city and effectively mitigates the "heat island effect", caused by impermeable urban areas, with buildings, industrial areas, roads and asphalt and air pollution and fine particulates such as PM₁₀ and 2,5 in the autumn-winter period, caused by vehicle emissions, heating systems and because of the climate situation in the plain, worsening because of global warming.

Rightly composed woods are needed to enhance the biodiversity degree also near cities. A radical change in public policy is needed to encourage the reforestation in the plain areas, through new forests and also a careful management and maintenance of existing forests, involving professional figures such as forest officers, naturalists, agronomists, biologists and ecologists. Thus...plant a tree, better three, plant a garden. Plant an idea!

Michele Boato - Director of "Ecoistituto del Veneto Alex Langer"

This contest, at national and international level, is open to young people up to 35 years, who can participate individually, in school groups, inter-school and private groups and associations.

N° 5 prizes will be awarded to reforestation projects accompanied with a video presentation. This year contest aims to communicate the important role played by trees in the process of slowing down climate change. The stimulus of the contest is to realize a reforestation project, to plant trees and take care of them. Trees will increase the richness and beauty of the territory and, moreover, they will teach us that living in contact with nature, respecting it, improves our life quality.

Registration deadline is on 31 december 2022.

If you are interested, please read the contest description on our website at the following link <https://www.ilmondoditomaso.org/it/butterfly-effect-project-2022>, where you can also find the application form. The official poster is attached to this e-mail.

We kindly ask you to promote this competition to anybody that could be interested.

Thank you and best regards



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The award ceremony will occur at **Fenderl Park**,
Via del Meril n. 13, Vittorio Veneto (TV), Italy
on **1-2 April 2023**

Registration deadline: 31 December 2022
Projects submission deadline: 31 January 2023

For information and registration: Il Mondo di Tommaso odv - Via Manzana 82 - Vittorio Veneto
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