



PRESS RELEASE

Commonland welcomes royal visit

Loess plateau example for the world

- Damaged ecosystems can be restored
- Climate ready for worldwide investment in landscape restoration
- Commonland approach inspired by China experience

AMSTERDAM 27 OCTOBER 2015 – As part of the royal visit to China, King Willem-Alexander’s schedule includes a day visit to the Loess plateau. Situated in China’s north the plateau measures an area about the size of France and harbors the world’s largest landscape recovery project. Within the space of 20 years the Chinese government has restored an area roughly the size of the Netherlands, turning what was once a waste land into a healthy landscape. As part of the royal company representatives of Wageningen University and Commonland will be visiting the area. Commonland is committed to worldwide landscape restoration and draws inspiration from the experiences of this Chinese mega project that is a shining example to the world.

Healthy ecosystems form the basis of all life on earth. Around 20% of the world’s ecosystems is under threat from deforestation and exhaustion. The cost to the global community: USD 10.6 billion per year, the equivalent of 17% of global GDP. This decline can be reversed by actively restoring landscapes. Commonland is an internationally operating organization based in Amsterdam that is committed to landscape recovery. It adheres to the principle that landscape recovery not only yields ecological profits but also delivers monetary gains: work and income for the



people in affected areas. Landscape restoration potentially delivers an important contribution to climate stability, water shortage, safety, (e.g. protection from floods and landslides) and sustainable food production.

Ambitious

The Loess plateau in China currently ranks as the biggest landscape recovery in the world, but ambitions go further. Commonland believes that the restoration of ecosystems holds massive opportunities for sustainable economic development. To enable worldwide restoration projects Commonland acts as a bridge between farmers, landowners and governments, and business partners and investors. To this end, Commonland works with leading international partners such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and United Nations (UNCCD and UNEP).

4 returns

Commonland CEO, Willem Ferwerda: “Landscape restoration delivers very real profits to our economies, environment, and climate. We speak of ‘4 returns’. First, it restores hope and purpose in people. Second, in a healthy landscape, people can work and this creates jobs. Third, a restored biodiversity renders soil and water improvements. Fourth, long term it delivers monetary gains as productivity in restored areas starts to pick up.”

Commonland are creating an investment fund that is to enable large scale landscape restoration projects based on the ‘4 returns’ principle. Millions of hectares of land in all continents require restoration. Commonland itself is currently active in several large areas in Africa, Europe and Australia.

Commonland was founded by the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management, Rotterdam School of Management – Erasmus University and investors and works closely with reputable scientists and experts, international organizations such as IUCN, WBCSD, UNCCD, UNEP, Wageningen University and The Economics of Land Degradation Initiative (ELD) as well as with business and industry.

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