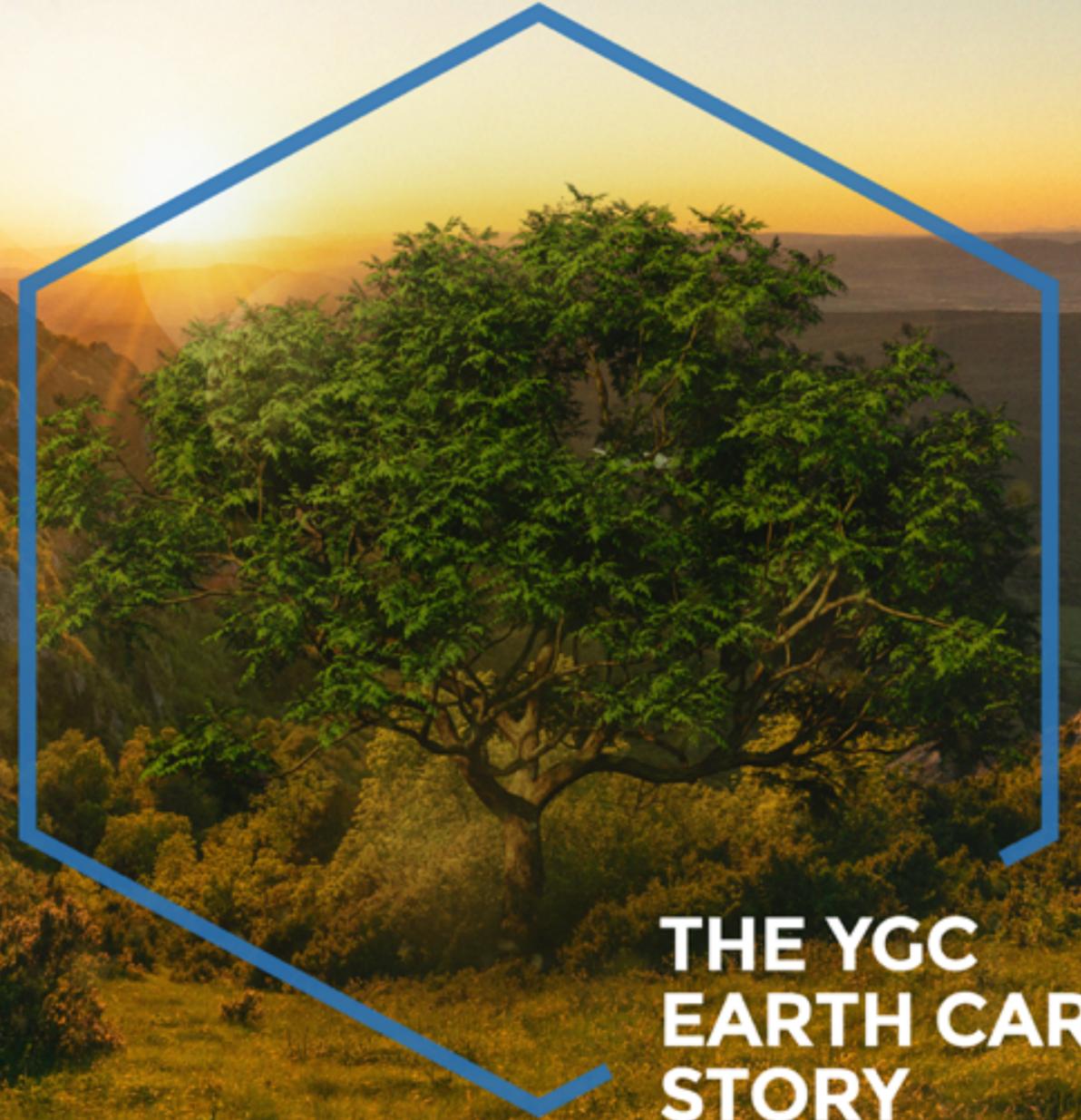




 A DECADE OF CHANGE

Celebrating a Decade of Change



**THE YGC
EARTH CARE
STORY**

THE YGC EARTH CARE STORY



HELEN YUCHENGC0 DEE
CHAIRPERSON

The Yuchengco Group
of Companies (YGC)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

The Yuchengco Group of Companies takes pride in being a leader, innovator and nation-builder — with the latter being the highest standard that we strive for when developing initiatives and services for the Filipino. We seek solutions that are not only meaningful but sustainable.

Through our initiatives, like the YGC Earth Care Project, we aim to underline the weight of our decisions and show others how we must be responsible and accountable stewards of the environment.

“ The best time
to plant a tree
was 20 years ago. The
second best time
is now.

What we take, we must give back – ensuring balance, peace, stability, and sustainability. Remember, the actions we take today have a direct consequence on our tomorrow. And this impact is not limited to our own personal sphere, it affects us all.

And with this, we thank our dedicated partners, namely the DENR for the 100 hectares that they have entrusted to us for this project and for continuously sharing their expertise on forest management, and to the indigenous people of Mt. Bangkaan who have warmly embraced this project from the start and have faithfully nurtured and protected the trees as their own.

Lastly, I would like to commend our YGC Earth Care Mountaineers - the volunteers from different YGC companies who have selflessly shared their time and energy in ensuring that we maintain this fine balance, protecting our present and our futures.

Thank you for your commitment!





THE ORIGINS OF THE HOUSE OF YUCHENGCO

FIRST LIGHT

The **Yuchengco Group of Companies**, is more widely known in business circles by its acronym, YGC. From its precursor, the China Insurance and Surety Company, a small insurance firm holding office in a modest two-storey shophouse, the group has grown into one of Southeast Asia's largest conglomerates **with over 40 corporations and employing more than 14,000 people.**

The Group focuses on the areas of insurance and financial services, and operates through the following main corporate enterprises and a philanthropic foundation:

The **Malayan Insurance, RCBC, House of Investments, and AY Foundation.**



The other pioneering company of YGC, **Grepalife**, has entered into a joint venture with Sunlife (the biggest life insurer in the country) and is now known as **Sunlife Grepa Financial Inc.**

YGC, through **House of Investments** have also expanded its holdings into construction (EEI), education (MAPUA), pharmaceuticals (HI-EISAI), Car Dealerships (Honda, Isuzu, Geely), energy and power (Petro Energy Resources Corp.) and services (Manila Memorial Park).

As one of the leading conglomerates in the country, YGC has embarked on several corporate social responsibility programs, and one of this is the **YGC Earth Care Program** which once again **showcased the strength of synergy within YGC.**

When people of different backgrounds and skills work together, they create a power greater than the sum of their individual abilities.

THIS IS THE STRENGTH OF SYNERGY.

THIS IS YGC.

THE PROJECT



IN 2011

THE YGC EARTH CARE PROJECT WAS BORN IN CELEBRATION OF YGC'S 100 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

Agos River in Daraitan, Tanay Rizal. An important river catchment that supports the Laiban Sub Watershed, which is part of the bigger Kaliwa Watershed.



View of Tinipak or Agos River from Maytuntong Cave entrance. © Zeus Angelo Salvo via Wikimedia Commons



“ How can we reach another 100 years of providing opportunities and changing lives if our forests are slowly being destroyed? Our country’s development is not only measured by its urban development, but also on its efforts to save the environment. YGC’s goal is to help with both.

LIWAYWAY F. GENER
YGC EARTH CARE BOARD
CHAIRMAN



The objectives of the **YGC Earth Care Project** are clear—to contribute in reforestation and watershed protection. This will not only protect the endemic species of the forest, but also benefit the well-being of our fellow Filipinos.

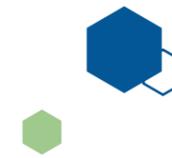
By finding the right strategy, location and partners, we envisioned to achieve two things - **reforestation and watershed protection** that will also provide benefits to nearby indigenous communities.

As an initial step for the tree-planting program, the Earth Care Board (ECB) was formed to oversee this project.

Headed by **Ms. Liwayway F. Gener of YGC CSI**, ECB is composed of members of the Group Marketing Council (GMC), representing the different YGC member companies.

In turn, the ECB appointed Earth Care Committee (ECC) members from each respective company and they came to be known as the **YGC Earth Care Mountaineers** — brave, selfless individuals who offered their time and energy to help the cause.

FINDING THE RIGHT FOREST AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Since this project requires ownership and participation of employees, our sights focused on mountain ranges near Metro Manila — the Sierra Madre.

This precious mountain range is under constant threat of deforestation. Illegal logging, mining, and other destructive activities have led to seemingly irreparable damage, affecting over 80% of its forest cover.

A majestic view of the Sierra Madre mountain range overlooking the metropolis.



WHY THE SIERRA MADRE?

- The Philippines' longest mountain range, which spans 10 provinces
- Contains 68 protected areas and 14 major water systems
- Protects the Luzon Island against incoming typhoons and other natural hazards
- Home to many rare and endemic species of plants and animals



IN FOCUS: THE SIERRA MADRE MOUNTAIN RANGE

The **Sierra Madre mountain range** spans over 540 kilometers (or 340 miles), from the province of Cagayan down to Quezon province. It is also home to the Philippines' largest protected area—the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, which is located at the northern part of the range, in the province of Isabela.

The range also encompasses watersheds that supply agricultural lands in Cagayan Valley as well as Central Luzon. It also supports major infrastructure, including irrigation dams, water utility and power plants that are serving urban settlements, including Metro Manila.

In 2006, the Sierra Madre was recognized in **UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage Sites**. Many scientists, environmentalists, and scholars have been urging the government to include the other parks within this mountain range for protection.

The land areas under the expanse of the mountain range serve as water catchments. The water collected here makes its way to water systems and dams that **supply the majority of the daily water needs of Metro Manila and nearby provinces**.

“The Sierra Madre is one of our country's richest natural sites, and one of the government's major priorities is to encourage reforestation and protect this area from illegal loggers. In behalf of the DENR, we are grateful for the help from our private and public partners.

SECRETARY ROY CIMATU
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR)





MOUNT BANGKAAN



Among the many mountains surrounding the Laiban Sub-Watershed, the DENR recommended Mt. Bangkaan as the ideal site for the Earth Care Project.

Located in Brgy. San Andres, Tanay, Rizal, Mt. Bangkaan has a mid-level elevation with numerous trekking trails, both of which make it ideal and accessible for easy mountain-climbing for both volunteers and employees and forest care.

FUN FACT!

During World War 2, the mountains of Tanay served as a guerilla base. Today, it is categorized as a Protected Area since it is part of the Kaliwa Watershed—a watershed and forestland at the same time.



MOUNT BANGKAAN AND THE LAIBAN SUB-WATERSHED

Out of the six barangays within the Laiban Sub-watershed, the ECB also chose **Brgy. San Andres.**

The other barangays were Mamuyao, Laiban, Sto. Nino, Cayabu, and Tinukan.

“ Kami ay lubos na nagpapasalamat sa suporta ng YGC sa pag-aalaga ng kalikasan dito sa Brgy. San Andres. Nakakalungkot na makita na nababawasan ng puno ang bundok ng Bangkaan. Pero sa ating pagtutulungan, maibabalik din natin ito sa kanyang nakaraang kagandahan.

MANUELITO ARAN
PRESIDENT, SAMAHAN NG MGA
MAGSASAKA NG SAN ANDRES



WHY BRGY. SAN ANDRES?



ACCESSIBILITY

It is located in Tanay, Rizal, approximately just a 2.5-hour drive from Makati City.

The 3-km stretch from the main road to the covered court used to be challenging due to rough terrain, but recently, the roads have been developed which shortened the travel time.

There are (2) trails going to the plant site. Base Camp route and Covered Court route.

01

BASE CAMP ROUTE

The Base Camp route is via the left side of the mountain and offers an easier, but longer trail. It passes through rice paddies and swamps.

02

COVERED COURT ROUTE

While the Covered Court route allows for a shorter trekking time, one has to hurdle slopes and cliffs.



LAND AREA

They can accommodate the request for 100 hectares land area



EASE OF TRAVEL

Ascending the mountain is easier because of the gradual slope.

Also, with the developed roads, travelling to the covered court (which can be used as a base) is easier.



LOCATION

It is the ideal location which would make it possible to more closely coordinate with other barangays.

TRAIL TO MT. BANGKAAN

Mount Bangkaan in Tanay, Rizal offers breathtaking views of nature, with lush forests, clear skies, and trickling streams that give life to the dynamic ecosystem.

APPROXIMATE TREKKING TIME VIA COVERED COURT ROUTE.

IF VIA BASE CAMP ROUTE, ADD 20 MINUTES:

- **Lower Plateau:** 30 minutes
- **Mid Peak:** 45 minutes to 1 hour
- **High Peak:** 1 hour and 15 minutes

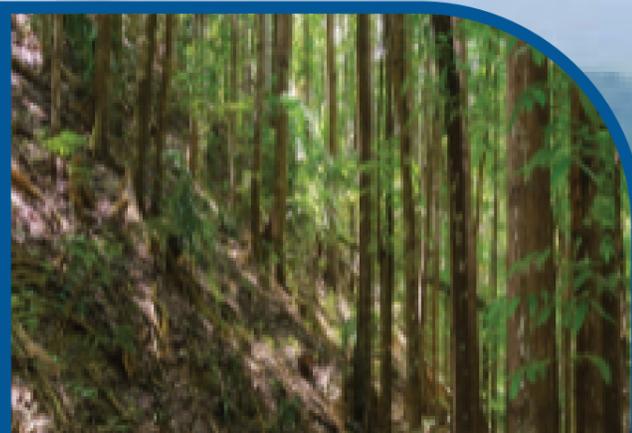
TWO TRAILS TO REACH THE PROJECT SITE:



THE YGC EARTH CARE PROGRAM BLUEPRINT

THE BLUEPRINT

Our trail to the top is set. Now it's time to draft the blueprint. With the magnitude of our goal, choosing a plant site isn't as easy as one might think. With all possible factors taken into consideration, we came up with this checklist:



**PLANTING OF
50,000 TREES
in 100 HECTARES at
MOUNT BANGKAAN**

KEY STRATEGIES:



Work hand-in-hand with the DENR for their expertise in forest management



Partner with the Indigenous People (IP) when it comes to protecting the plant site located on their ancestral lands



Implement a maintenance program with IP families to guarantee survival of at least 80% of the planted trees



Contribute to the government's green programs—Former President Noynoy Aquino's National Greening Program (2011) and President Rodrigo Duterte's Million Trees Foundation (2017)



Plant native trees to bring back the ecological balance in Mt. Bangkaan

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF MT. BANGKAAN

STRENGTHENING OUR PROTECTORS

For centuries, our country's natural resources have been protected by the Indigenous People (IPs). Same could be said for our plant site – Mt. Bangkaan. This area has been safeguarded by the IPs, the Dumagats and Remontados, being their ancestral lands.

In order for our project to make a real difference, we made sure that

we respect the local community by partnering with the IPs. If anyone cares about these mountains and the trees that result from our project, it has to be our IP partners.

To represent the IPs, we partnered with a community-based organization – the Samahan ng mga Magsasaka ng San Andres Inc (SAMASAI). YGC is grateful for their warm acceptance of the program, most notably their community leaders— Domingo “Ka Inggó” Dela Rosa and Manuelito “Ka Lito” Aran. Dela Rosa’s wife was the barangay chairman when the project started and Aran is the president of the SAMASAI.

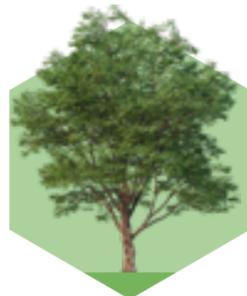
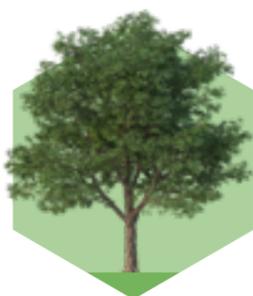
Up to this date, our partner organization and community have remained committed to caring for the trees, some of which they planted alongside us and are now towering at 20 to 28 feet.



One of our hardworking partner is **Antonio “Ka Tony” Ibanez**. He belongs to the **Dumagats and Remontados of Tanay, Rizal** whose ancestry dates back to the Negrito ethnolinguistic group who opted to live in the mountains to avoid Spanish subjugation.

PHILIPPINE NATIVE TREES

For this project to be successful, it's important to plant Philippine Native Trees, which are endemic to the country. As these trees are built for the temperature and terrain, they have a higher chance of survival.



NARRA

BANABA

MOLAVE

ACACIA

MAHOGANY

KALUMPIT

KUPANG





THE YGC EARTH CARE MOUNTAINEERS DIFFERENT COLORS, ONE PASSION

THE GREEN ARMY.

Also called the YGC Earth Care Mountaineers composed of representatives from various YGC sponsoring companies. Since the inception of the project in 2011, they have had one goal which has sustained them over the past decade — to revive Mt. Bangkaan through reforestation.

MONITOR AND PROTECT.

After the seedlings have been planted, the Green Army was tasked to monitor and protect the development of the trees. They regularly conduct site inspections, inventory, and scientific assessment of the woodland areas assigned to them.

YGC EARTH CARE MOUNTAINEERS.

Over the years, the YGC Earth Care Mountaineers have selflessly devoted their time and energy towards ensuring the success of the YGC Centennial Forest. Working in partnership with the IP communities, they've nurtured the saplings and seen them grow into sturdy wood that has contributed to the vibrant habitat.

THE YGC GREEN ARMY IN ACTION



“ A sense of ownership is vital to participation in any endeavor. People are more inclined to do their best when they can see that their work is valued and they are contributing to the overall objective. Our employees' involvement in the Earth Care project is important, but we also want them to see and feel it themselves.”

LIWAYWAY F. GENER
YGC EARTH CARE BOARD
CHAIRMAN



MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

NURTURING CONTINUED GROWTH



In any reforestation projects, mere planting of tree saplings is not enough. Trees need constant and proper care in order to thrive and grow. As such, we signed a Maintenance Agreement with our partner IP communities for the continued care and protection of the planted saplings.

Our brave and hardworking partners — along with the YGC Earth Care Mountaineers — are tasked with conducting regular strip clearing, fertilizing the woodland, maintaining the fire break establishment, and taking overall care of the trees. In return, YGC provided financial assistance to our partners for their dedication and effort.



STRIP CLEARING AT THE PLANTING AREA . . .

The Maintenance Agreement is a breakthrough that led to the success of the Program. The combined forces of the IPs, the YGC Mountaineers and YGC CSI were all directed towards winning this game.

MAJOR MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES



STRIP CLEARING

Removal of weeds and grasses along the strips



BIOLOGICAL FENCING

The planting of fire-resistant plant like kakawate along the perimeter



FERTILIZER APPLICATION

Essential nutrients to help plants grow faster and healthy.



FIREBREAK ESTABLISHMENT

A four-meter wide vegetation-free strips at the borders of each woodland.

PHASE 1: START OF ACTIVE VOLUNTEERISM

The YGC Earth Care Project had its humble beginnings, with only a handful of volunteers most of whom are still getting their feet wet at that time with regards to tree-planting. Though short in number, the first batch of volunteers showed grit and determination by steadily familiarizing themselves with the terrain and getting along and working with the Indigenous People (IP) living in the area.

Their efforts started a wave of active volunteerism among YGC employees and their number ballooned to more than a hundred. Thus, in October 2011, the Phase 1 of the project took off and signaled the start of what will become the YGC Centennial Forest.

From top to bottom:

1. Meeting of YGC Volunteers at Brgy. San Andres,
2. IP partners leading the way towards the site;
3. Volunteers having a quick lunch together during their short stop



PHASE 2: REACHING THE TOP

PLANTING AT THE HIGHEST PEAK

Last September 2012, the second stage of the project was undertaken covering another 20 hectares. With more than a hundred YGC Earth Care Mountaineers working hand in hand, the project was already in full swing.

Another 10,000 tree saplings were planted for this phase which highly relied on organic growth. We deemed it necessary to plant on mountain cliffs as the trees that will survive will play a vital role in preventing landslides and soil erosion in the future.



THROUGH SLOPES AND CLIFFS, THEY MARCHED ON

For the second phase, the plant site location became a little more challenging as this covered the summit and further side of the mountain. Our volunteers and partners were faced with a tiring and difficult terrain, but they bravely maneuvered the cliffs, slopes, and muddy trails.

Undeterred, the team's enthusiasm and excitement fueled their resolve to reach the highest peak and complete the tree planting activity.

THE SUMMIT, AT LAST

(Planting in Phase 2)



At last, the YGC team reached the peak of Mt. Bangkaan. After a well-deserved celebration, the YGC Earth Care Mountaineers and our IP partners immediately went back to work and planted another 10,000 Philippine native tree saplings.

The team—composed of volunteers from RCBC, RCBC Bankard, Malayan Insurance, Mapua, and House of Investments—diligently and carefully finished the assigned 20 hectares. It was an impressive and tiring undertaking; but each team understood the significance of their task.



PHASE 3: ALL SET TO EXPLORE THE MIDDLE PLATEAU



We've reached the top, but there's new heights to be reached! In August 2015, the YGC team marched forward to cover **Mt. Bangkaan's lower plateau**.

Armed with the valuable knowledge and learnings acquired from the first two stages, our invigorated team of over a hundred mountaineers charged up the mountain and **planted another 10,000 trees**.

Our IP partner families also joined us on our mission, and were assigned a total of 18 hectares of land.

For this phase, the team planted primarily **Narra tree** saplings. Based on our experience, while completing the first two phases, the Narra variety has proven to be more resilient and had a higher rate of survival than the other types of saplings.



Majority in Phase 3 are **Narra trees**. Shown above are narra trees in **RCBC, EEI and Mapua Woodlands** together with the assigned Katutubos and YGC Mountaineers.



A DECADE OF COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO NATION BUILDING

As of today, a total of 23,000 trees covering 58 hectares are being managed by YGC through 11 IP partner families.

The 10-year-old YGC trees in Phase 1 are now standing high at Mt. Bangkaan, some of which are now 20 to 28 feet high, a living testament to YGC's commitment to promote biodiversity, protect our watersheds through reforestation, and contribute to the well-being of fellow Filipinos and our country's economic development.

OCT 2021: AFTER 10 YEARS

23,000	Trees
58	Hectares
11	IP Families
10	Year Old Trees
20-28	Feet in Height

Onward to our regular quarterly visits to the YGC Centennial Forest. The YGC Mountaineers and our partner IP families trekking the path to Phase 1.

OUR PROGRESS IN MT. BANGKAAN IS A LIVING TESTAMENT TO YGC'S STEADFAST COMMITMENT

PROTECTING WATERSHEDS THROUGH REFORESTATION

Trees filter and regulate flow of water, especially during rains and storms. Their interception removes pollutants from going into our watersheds.

BOOSTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Forest resources are essential in reducing greenhouse gases. With trees, we can help meet our country's pledge to help reduce the effects of climate change. Actively helping with our global commitments will greatly boost our country's economy.



NATION-BUILDING

We are partnering with the government to help protect the Sierra Madre because YGC firmly believes that developing our forests by protecting them will vastly contribute to the nation's overall growth

SAFEGUARDING BIODIVERSITY

Apart from saving human lives, YGC is also invested in guarding our flora and fauna. Among the many endemic species living in the Sierra Madre mountain range are the Philippine Eagle, Isabela Oriole, and the Green-faced Parrotfinch.

CREATING A BETTER WORLD FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

YGC believes that our efforts today will help build a better, cleaner, and greener world for future generations – one that is safe from the drastic effects of climate change.



MT. BANGKAAN TODAY



Mt. Bangkaan in 2011, prior to the YGC Earth Care Project

The once denuded mountain is now teeming with life of flora and fauna. Endemic native trees which dominated our reforestation efforts in the last 10 years are now providing significant contribution in watershed protection and in safeguarding biodiversity by recovering and expanding the forest habitats of plants and animals.

COMING BACK TO LIFE

When trees are destroyed, an integral piece of the forest ecosystem disappears suddenly.

Mt. Bangkaan, and a great portion of the whole Sierra Madre mountain range have experienced denigration of forest cover, which have resulted to the destruction of habitat of animals that depend on the trees, forcing them to flee their safe haven.

This greatly decreased their population as they became more accessible to hunters and poachers. Over the years, their numbers began to dwindle and some eventually went extinct.

With a renewed forest cover at Mt. Bangkaan, we are overwhelmed with joy with sightings of endemic mammals and birds that are now slowly coming back to their natural habitat. This further fuels our resolve to continue in nurturing the YGC Centennial Forest which has now become a cradle of life for the endemic animals and birds of Tanay.



Philippine Palm Civet (musang)



Top: Yellow-vented Bulbul (luklak)
Left: A Red-crested Malkoha
Right: Jungle Fowl (Labuyo)
Bottom: Common Sun Skink (bubuli)



SHAPING THE FUTURE

By 2023, the YGC Centennial Forest will already cover 100 hectares of forest land and will have planted 50,000 tree saplings.



MOVING FORWARD TO NEXT PHASES ...

Our final two phases bring our project to its final stretch.

In 2023, Phase 4 of the Earth Care Project aims to cover 20 hectares with 10,000 tree saplings.

And Phase 5 will cover an additional 22 hectares with 11,000 tree saplings. To preserve biodiversity, we will continue to plant native trees.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

PHASE	Elevation	Target Date	No. of hectares	No. of Trees
4	High-Peak	Oct. 2023	20	10,000
5	Mid	Oct. 2024	22	11,000

Our previous phases were successful and proof lies in the 58 sprawling hectares full of amazing native trees. But no experience is perfect and every moment is an opportunity to learn.

Armed with the learnings that we have gained from the past, and with the continuing help of the DENR and our IP partners, we are more than ready to once again brave the heights of Mt. Bangkaan.

While we are experienced, none of this will be easy. But we charge forward knowing that the seeds of change we plant today will benefit and save our future generations.

“ We are YGC.

And we proudly present the result of our small collective effort – the **YGC Earth Care Project**, the beautiful chapter that gave birth to **YGC Centennial Forest**.

NARRA WOODLANDS

Sponsor: RCBC, Bankard & EEI

**THE BLOOMING OF THE NARRA TREES**

In the next 5 years, the Narra trees will start to bloom.

Though the flowers are short lived, they are quite noticeable as the whole canopy becomes filled with fragrant tiny golden yellow flowers.



MAHOGANY WOODLAND

Sponsor: Mapua



The Mahogany trees when fully grown up and grouped together are a showcase in itself.

This is Bohol's Mahogany Forest, one of its best tourist attraction.

Photo Credits: jonnymelon.com/man-made-forest-bohol/

**MOLAVE
WOODLANDS**

Sponsor:
MALAYAN INSURANCE



The Molave tree is known for its strength and resiliency. Thus, it is widely used for wood furniture works.



KALUMPIT WOODLAND

Sponsor: HOUSE OF INVESTMENTS



The fruit of this tree has been referred to as "cherries" by Filipinos. They can be eaten raw, but should be allowed to ripen and soften first — best to wait till they start shrivelling like raisins.

Photo Credits: sylviatramos.blog/kupang/



KUPANG WOODLANDS

Sponsor: Honda



Kupang is a **very large tree** growing to a height of 25 to 40 meters.

Leaves are evenly bipinnate, 30 to 80 centimeters long.

Photo Credits: sylviatramos.blog/kupang/



**TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM,
YOU MAY REACH US AT:**

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