



## Oro Verde : Colombia

Certification of environmentally - and socially-responsible gold and platinum production

### Project description

Since 2000, Oro Verde has reversed environmental degradation caused by uncontrolled mining in the Chocó Bioregion, by developing certified responsible mining practices. The partnership, consisting of two national NGOs and two grassroots organisations, also reduces social exclusion by strengthening local miners and facilitating market access for them.



### Business model

Oro Verde has created the basis for the world's first local certification scheme for precious metals and has propelled a worldwide fair-trade movement around responsible small-scale mining.

Gold and platinum are extracted responsibly by artisanal miners who comply with strict ecological standards, therefore protecting the Chocó Bioregion. These products are sold under the Oro Verde brand name.

The metals are sold to ethical jewellers in green and fair-trade markets mainly in Europe and North America.

### Scaling up activities

- Begin a 4-year process of expanding the initiative to new communities; involve around 700 more miners in the scheme to increase the initiative's impact and guarantee a constant supply of precious metals
- Strengthen community organisations by training and helping them to create and support miners' producer groups
- Set up a specialised procurement chain for the distribution of the gold
- Certify production under the international labelling scheme FAIRMINED + Eco (fair trade gold) inspired by Oro Verde
- Develop market opportunities for Oro Verde in green and fair international markets niches
- Add market value through the Oro Verde brand.

### Immediate needs

- Expert support for marketing
- Expert support for licensing of the Oro Verde trademark
- Funding partners to support scale-up.





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### Partnership

- **AMICHOCÓ** strengthens and formalises the producer groups; develops new markets; and connects the local miners with national and international partners.
- The Community Councils of Tadó and Condoto, **ASOCASAN** and **COCOMACOIRO** represent the local mining communities; supervise, guide and coordinate ground activities; participate in decision making processes; and co-own the Oro Verde Brand.
- **FUNDAMOJARRAS** supports the Community Councils and co-owns the Oro Verde Brand.



### Social, environmental and economic impacts

**Social impact:** The programme empowers communities by helping them to use, protect and gain control over their territory. The compliance of the social, economic, environmental and labour standards of the certification also results in improved working and living conditions.

**Environmental impact:** Oro Verde preserves a world's biodiversity reservoir by fostering sustainable use of natural resources between the mining communities.

In contrast to normal commercial mining practices, Oro Verde uses neither mercury nor cyanide, so miners and the tropical rainforest are protected.

**Economic impact:** Oro Verde provides communities with alternatives to diversify their income and with complementary benefits such as training to improve managerial skills.

### Contact

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### SEED Partners

SEED is hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Other current partners are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature); and the governments of Germany, India, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.



### About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs that while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion.

SEED provides these social entrepreneurs with know how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making.

More information: [www.seedinit.org](http://www.seedinit.org)

### SEED Secretariat

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