Brazilian cosmetics co. purchases carbon offsets in CSR initiative

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A Brazilian rainforest tribe has reportedly partnered with cosmetics giant Natura Cosméticos in a carbon offset deal that will help the company advance its corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals and the tribe's plan to create a sustainable economy. Natura purchased 120,000 tons of carbon offsets from the Suruí of the Amazon, and the company's director of sustainability said that it is now offsetting 100 percent of its emissions. The money will be used to preserve the rainforest and the indigenous culture. According to a news source, the Suruí project aims to prevent the emission of approximately 5 million tons of carbon that would otherwise be released under current deforestation trends. The credits have been certified under the Verified Carbon Standard, and Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Alliance.

The initiative is apparently the first-ever REDD+ (reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation, plus sustainable forest management) project conceived and developed by indigenous people. Chief Almir Narayamoga Suruí was quoted as saying, "REDD+ is a bridge between the indigenous world and the non-indigenous world, so it's an appropriate way to begin this process. It creates a vehicle through which the capitalist system can recognize the value of standing forests, and indigenous people can be rewarded for preserving them." The Suruí lost much of their territory to logging, and the Suruí chief approached a U.S. environmental organization for help in reforestation. The tribe's four clans and 25 villages have since imposed and enforced a logging moratorium and will use proceeds from the carbon offset project to blend traditional land-use practices, ecotourism and non-timber forest product harvesting with modern scientific methods and procedures. *See Business Wire and mongabay.com*, September 10, 2013.