

Keynote Lecture

SURBAMBÚ: A PRACTICAL CASE OF BUSINESS INTEGRATION BETWEEN PLANTATIONS AND INDUSTRY

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Abstract

In Mexico bamboo grows in many aspects; forestry, plantations, propagation, evaluation not only in native but also in exotic bamboo species with high economical potential, construction, biomass production, charcoal, clean energy, engineered wood and cellulose.

Surbambú, the most powerful Mexican company of the current times was created for six partners who believed in the properties of bamboo and the potential to make large projects with them in a sustainable way.

This conference shows the principles or philosophy and the way how Surbambú became the leading bamboo company in Mexico and one of the most important in America.

Introduction

I feel if we continue saying and writing that bamboo is a wonderful plant that traps large amounts of carbon dioxide, regulates water currents, controls erosion and hosts flora and fauna, they will be continue admired but not important.

I feel that use bamboo poles in construction, bicycles, handicrafts, little houses, is very important, but with that kind of uses the bamboos will be continue admire but not important.

In the examples mentioned above, the amount of stems harvested in the field is very small, with the sad aggravating factor that the cut is made only once. Under such circumstances, the bamboo will continue to remain in the forests, without use, because the market for them is very limited. It is not known what to cut them, their use under such considerations is very low, and therefore the people of the field do not see, nor will see in the bamboo a plant that will generate wealth, large amounts of labor and therefore elevation of the level of life, which represents an important social impact.

It is industrialization and large projects that can be made with bamboo that will bring it to its true level. In these, hundreds of thousands are used, and maybe millions of stems a year, but most decisively, continuously because a company needs raw material not only one year, but all the years of its existence. When we do that, the bamboo will be loved, admired and respected.

After being a researcher, I went to the natural forests, then I entered into commercial plantations, and now my struggle is that in America we move on to the realization of large industrial projects that revolutionize bamboo in all its facets, but let the rural people begin to improve their standard of living.

I was one of the pioneers of the laminates in Colombia where I actively participate personally investing money, but now with the advance of the industry in the East of the hemisphere, I have dedicated myself to follow this process that we can replicate and adjust for our countries in America.

To achieve it countless trips and deep studies have been made that show that this is the step that is needed and that we must arrive quickly. The detailed studies already exist and as a consequence, Mexico has just initiated big plantations linked to the industrial processes.

Surbambu has now plantations, a bamboo strips factory producing to export to United States and is establishing a pilot factory to produce bamboo pellets.

Philosophy of Surbambú.

In Mexico, bamboos are studied and working for only 25 years. However, in only that short period of time has been possible to make great development. Now, Mexico becoming one of the most outstanding countries in the Americas, with the firm vision of being one of the most important in the world in a few more years.

In Mexico, Surbambú is the most important bamboo company and was created with five important principles where all the projects carried out must consider.

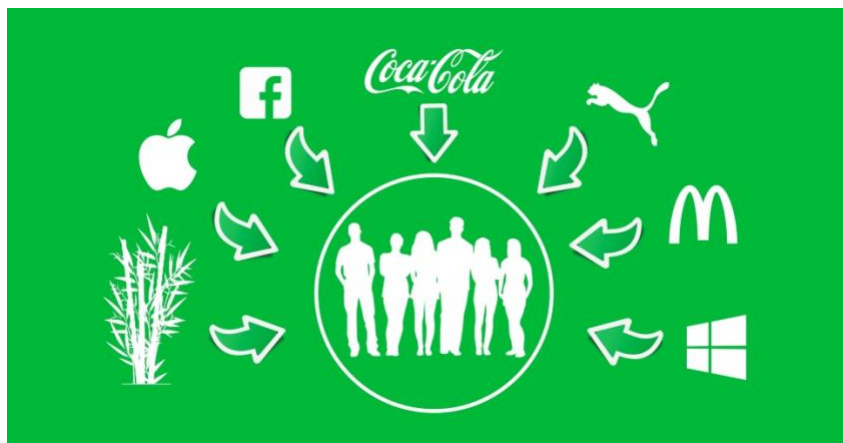
Sustainability.



Sustainability is not just planting bamboo for its environmental properties

A project is sustainable when it joins the improvement of the environment, helps the society and generates money. When those three aspects are united, any project is really sustainable and can be replicated several times.

Massiveness



Massiveness means that one product reaches the masses, thousands of customers on permanent basis. For bamboo to be really important, the products generated must be massive.

If a bamboo project arises as the generation of something massive, there will be always people working in the field every day, every month and every year. Similarly, people who work in the industry producing massive products will also work every day, months and years.

For a bamboo project to be successful it must be massive. It must reach the masses and should be sold products all the days.

Sow the appropriate bamboo species according to industrial objective



It is necessary to know what kind of bamboo should be planted as a producer of the correct raw material for an industrial project. It is incorrect sow only one kind of bamboo and with it wants to do everything in the industrial process. Sow an incorrect bamboo for a special industrial project is a big mistake.

Plantations linked to industries



A high degree of success is ensured when the bamboo plantation is linked with an industrial process.

That does not mean that a large plantation has to do it. A small plantation can be made and linked as a raw material producer to an industrial process as a social housing or charcoal production. Or make a medium plantation linked to a factory that produces engineered wood. It is possible to make a bigger plantation and linked it to a pellet production plant or bioethanol. A large one can be done making to produce raw material for a factory generating cellulose and long fiber paper.

Business plan



Before to start a project, always, the business plan must be done. Writing a business plan is very important because it brings so much value to the project. The business plan is not just a tool to raise capital or to appear before institutions that support entrepreneurial activity; It is a process that helps entrepreneurs get more knowledge of their business ideas. The discipline of the planning process, if well done, helps to evaluate the opportunity and allows to shape a business model to exploit it.

The strength and success of Surbambú is the human team

The success of a company like Surbambú is due to the fact that a team of expert professionals joined in each of its strengths.

There is a person highly specialized in international management, another person is specialized in all bamboo aspects bamboo, another is specialized in industrial process, another in administrative and finance aspects. The union of strengths created a strong team that made investors believe in Surbambú.

Results

In two years of work the Surbambú company has created.

Bought a 2,200 ha in Campeche State where the company is planting 900 ha of bamboo. The other 1,300 ha are intended for the conservation of native vegetation and wild animals, including the jaguar.

Created a plant of production of strips with high quality to export to the United States for the realization of engineered wood.

It is establishing a bamboo pellets factory.

It is close in union with investors from the United States to purchase 6,300 hectares for the planting of bamboo as a raw material producer for an engineered wood production.