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Ex-Nasa man to plant one billion trees a year using drones

The system could be a serious boost for the planet's forests

- [Christopher Hooton @christophhooton](#)
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A drone start-up is going to counter industrial scale deforestation using industrial scale reforestation.

[BioCarbon Engineering](#) wants to use drones for good, using the technology to seed up to one billion trees a year, all without having to set foot on the ground.

26 billion trees are currently being burned down every year while only 15 billion are replanted. If successful, the initiative could help [address](#) this shortfall in a big way.

Drones should streamline reforestation considerably, with hand-planting being slow and expensive.

"The only way we're going to take on these age-old problems is with techniques that weren't available to us before," [CEO](#) and former Nasa-engineer Lauren Fletcher said. "By using this approach we can meet the scale of the problem out there."

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The drones will fire pods containing pre-germinated seeds at the ground

BioCarbon's system for planting is really quite **sophisticated**, and should provide better uptake than traditional dry seeding by air.

First, drones flies above an area and report on its potential for restoration, then they descend to two or three metres above ground and fire out pods containing seeds that are pre-germinated and covered in a nutritious hydrogel.

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Fletcher doesn't pretend that the method is as good as hand-sowing, but it's a hell of a lot quicker.

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