



# Stories from Colombia



## Riccardo Alessandrini - Forestry Manager

Even for someone like me who has travelled so much over the years, the variety of fruit grown in Colombia is impressive. That is why I am so proud of the work that Treedom is doing in this country, allowing future generations to taste such wonderful things too.

We currently have two different projects in Colombia, but I am confident that the country can become a strategic hub for working throughout South America. And we have made a great start, because the first of our projects is in Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta, which is a vast area where the altitude favours planting native species, such as the Pink Cedar, Guayaba, Guanàbana and Criollo Cacao.

Biodiversity was the main focus of the first project that we started in Colombia, with the support of ENVIRONOMICA, an Italian NGO that was already active in the region. The Colombian government is doing all it can to restore the biodiversity that existed here prior to the introduction of intensive agriculture, which often served the interests of drug traffickers.

“ The nursery we built here is located very high up on the terraces that were created to mine gold. The climb is so steep that when we reached the top, my heart rate was over 160 beats per minute. ”



But it has been worth it, because alongside reforestation, we are committed to **providing local communities with a legal alternative for earning money.**

We have also recently launched a project with Fundación Reselva, a Colombian non-profit association with whom we have been planting coffee and cocoa, supporting farmers throughout the process. **Training and passing on knowledge are key aspects that can make a difference.** For example, farmers learn how to ferment the pulp surrounding the cocoa beans, as this enhances their colouration and aroma. Through this simple process, they are able to resell the cocoa at a higher price, safeguarding the value of their work.

Both project areas are located in **very important archaeological areas near the mysterious Ciudad Perdida**, a special place for the Kogi, Arhuaco and Wiwa people, because it was the political heartland of their ancestors.

And what better place to put down roots for the future than the sacred places of the past?

**Riccardo Alessandrini**  
Forestry Manager Treedom

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