WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Ensures a reliable harvest year after year from the same plot of land with minimal labor required
- Recreates natural forest floor conditions
- Biological weed control with no pesticides or herbicides by out-competing aggressive/invasive grasses that typically dominate farmers’ plots
- Protects water sources and pruned Inga trees provide fuel for cooking
- Prevents erosion and loss of fertility while keeping farmers from abandoning soil-depleted plots to clear new rainforest
- Sequesters carbon

Inga Alley Cropping is the foundation of an agroforestry system which is low-input, debt-free and a scientifically-proven model which is capable of yielding food-security in basic grains, together with a reliable income from cash crops.

Inga Foundation supports local farmers with Inga seedlings. As more families see the benefits of this “Land for Life” system, the farmers assist neighbors with planting Inga trees on their own land. Families gain food security. Alley Cropping is a simple, proven, ‘bottom-up’ approach to significant carbon reduction and food production. As this system scales up to thousands of families in the tropics, the results will be the model for resilience, sustainability, and species protection.

Mike Hands and four trustees formed the Inga Foundation, a UK charity (reg. #124688) to expand Inga alley-cropping. The Inga Foundation has established scientific expertise supported by trials, the infrastructure and contacts to establish further growth of this system in Honduras and beyond. Over 95% of all donations support the scaling up of our nurseries and farms. Volunteers in the USA formed a sister Inga Foundation as a 501(c)(3) in 2016 to support the Inga model in all tropical regions.

CONTACT US AT:
101 Mortimer Drive, Evington, VA 24550

TO LEARN MORE

Visit our US website ingatree.org
Email us at ingatrees@gmail.com
Donations may be made on the website.

The Inga Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity, Tax ID 81-3758746. Your USA gift is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

2018-Katerva Top 100 Finalist
2018-Finalist for Water Food Air Award
2018-Harvard Planetary Health Annual Meeting, Edinburgh, Mike Hands-side session speaker
2018-Selected as MIT “Synergistic Solutions” finalist

In May 2017, Mike Hands was selected as a finalist for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology SOLVE CoLab Climate competition in partnership with the United Nations Academic Impact.

In November 2017, Mike Hands was honored with the 3rd Organic Farming Innovation Award (OFIA) at the 19th Organic World Congress (OWC) in New Delhi, India for the “Land for Life” Project in Honduras. The OWC highlighted Inga alley-cropping as an innovative, real-world solution to promote sustainable agricultural practices.

In October 2016, Inga was selected as one of three finalists for the Energy Globe World Awards in the Earth Category.

LINKS
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/science/environment-jan-junel1-upinsmoke_06-09

Mike Hands, Finalist, 2014; The St. Andrews Prize for the Environment from ConocoPhillips:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytP8upvPASs

PREVENTING EROSION
SAVING THE WORLD

ingatree.org (US website)
ingafoundation.org (UK website)

PRESERVING RAINFORESTS AND THEIR HABITATS
PROVIDING FOOD SECURITY
SEQUESTERS CARBON
Inga Foundation is pioneering the revolutionary agricultural system to address one of the world’s massive environmental and food-insecurity problems.

Our mission is to end rainforest destruction and the practice of slash and burn agriculture by replacing it with a sustainable, organic and low-cost alternative: Inga Alley Cropping. We are working to help subsistence farmers in humid tropics transform their agriculture from Slash and Burn, an unsustainable rainforest destruction method, to zones with sustainable rural livelihoods and soil-improving Inga trees.

WHAT IS SLASH AND BURN?

Millions of families use Slash and Burn as a subsistence farming technique to grow their food each year. Farmers cut down and burn a patch of forest to create an area of fertile soil on which to grow their crops. However, the tropical climate strips the bare soil of its nutrients, and after the first two years of successful crops, the crop fails completely during the third year, forcing farmers to continue clearing fresh areas of the rainforest just to survive.

*Slash and Burn contributes around 2 billion tons of carbon annually to the atmosphere—more than all global transport combined.*

WHAT IS INGA ALLEY CROPPING?

This revolutionary alternative to Slash and Burn was developed by Inga Foundation’s director, Mike Hands. Through his research and partnership with Cambridge University, he has discovered the beneficial uses of the genus Inga. It is a nitrogen-fixing tree species perfect for Alley Cropping to maintain soil fertility and good harvests each year. Through Alley Cropping, farmers plant their crops between rows of Inga trees to gain long-term food security, thereby breaking the cycle of Slash and Burn.

Inga trees are pruned at chest height once the Inga alleys have developed. At this stage, branches are stripped of leaves to be used as mulch for soil protection and to prevent further weed growth while larger branches are used as firewood. The crop is then planted through the fresh mulch. As the crop grows, the Inga grows simultaneously to provide the crop shade and protection from the sun. Once fully matured, the crop is harvested while the Inga trees are left to grow until the next planting season. With the arrival of the next season, the whole cycle is to be repeated, beginning with pruning the Inga tree alleys once more.