

VIA AM Launches Carbon Neutral Share Class To Support Katingan Mentaya Project

5 November 2021 [Greg Winterton](#)

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Paris-based systematic investment manager VIA AM is supporting the Katingan Mentaya Project in Borneo, Indonesia through a new carbon-neutral share class of its VIA Smart-Equity Europe fund. VIA AM will buy eligible / audited carbon rights linked to the Katingan Mantaya Project; the manager and the investor both share the compensation effort - the investor pays slightly increased management fees (+ 0.05%), while VIA AM reduces its margin by an amount at least equivalent to this.

The Katingan Mentaya Project aims to protect and restore 157,875 hectares of peatland ecosystems on the island of Borneo in Indonesia, provide local communities with sustainable sources of income and ultimately fight against global climate change. This is the world's largest emission reduction forest project of its kind, avoiding around eight million tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) being released in the atmosphere per year, equivalent to taking 2,000,000 cars off the road.

Peat swamp forests are incredibly carbon-rich and, by preventing the conversion of natural forests to plantations, the project avoids the emission of nearly half a billion tonnes of CO₂ in the atmosphere. The area protected is also rich in biodiversity, home to more than 4,000 orangutans alongside twelve other endangered species.

Another key aspect of the project is financing sustainable development and agricultural projects in the 34 villages surrounding the project area, with hundreds of people receiving training as part of the project's activities, as well as improved access to education.

The Katingan Mentaya Project has been selected in partnership with Judo Cares, an independent specialist, advising VIA AM on choosing the best carbon offsetting programmes.

Laurent Pla, Co-Founder of VIA AM and Fund Manager, commented: “While we remain focused on maximising long-term returns for our investors, we understand how active management can have a positive impact on combating climate change challenges. Together with our partners at Judo Cares, we have selected the Katingan Mentaya carbon offset project, not only for its effective carbon neutral approach, but also for its commitment towards preserving biodiversity and supporting local communities.”

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