

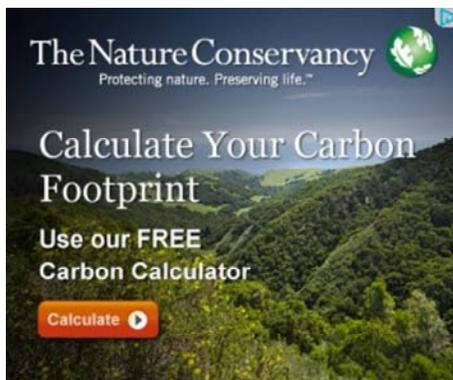
## Planktos Ecosystems

### Planktos Restores Ecosystems and Slows Climate Change

Removing CO<sub>2</sub> from our oceans and atmosphere by healing the seas, growing new climate forests, and erasing carbon footprints.

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### Seeding the ocean to capture carbon



The reasoning for this venture is to develop plankton blooms or a large growth of planktons. This will be achieved by seeding the oceanic waters with iron that helps to stimulate the growth of planktons. As the planktons blossom, these consume the carbon dioxide, which is a greenhouse gas, thus eliminating it from the atmosphere. Planktos is not the first person to have this idea of eliminating carbon dioxide with the assistance of plankton blooms. However, the Foster City, which is a California-based company, is the first organization that plans to commercialize the research on this topic.

During the duration of the travel, the sixteen-crew members will be seeding several thousand miles of the Pacific Ocean with iron. At the end of the growing phase, some part of the plankton will die and sink to the bottom. After reaching 500 meters below the level, the planktons requisition consumed carbon dioxide for several centuries, said David Kubiak, the communications director of Planktos.

According to Kubiak, the company was interested in the planktons that sink to the depth of 500 meters. This is the required depth where the oceanic currents are sufficient to keep these out of the atmosphere for many centuries. If the planktons sink to 1000 meters, then the process is continued for millennia.

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The process of iron fertilization has been proposed and tested on other occasions in the past. Kubiak said that the challenge was to gather precise data on the bloom's biological activities and measuring the amount of carbon dioxide that is eliminated.

The company's scientists will adopt sensory equipment to track the depth to which the planktons sink and then observe the reaction caused in other ocean creatures, which include zooplankton, krill, and other plankton feeders.

The Weatherbird II, which is the Planktos boat will be stationed at the location for a period of four to six months and will study one complete cycle of the growth phase and the decaying phase. According to Kubiak, the previous attempts made to observe the effects of the iron fertilization process did not remain at the location for sufficient time.

Skepticism among environmentalists

Several experts on global warming say that the observation techniques to capture the carbon dioxide are crucial to address the climatic changes.

Early in the year, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology made huge investments in technologies to capture and sequester carbon dioxide released under the ground at coal-fired power plants. Several other projects used offshore oil and gas wells to study the phenomenon.

The company employees say that this technique is not only beneficial to address the problems arising due to climatic changes but also useful to refill the decline stock of planktons.

The level of planktons all over the globe have reduced by 10% since the 1970s. To replenish the ten percent reduction will require between three and five billion tons of the atmospheric carbon dioxide, mentioned Kubiak.

This news has created a stir among the environmentalists who have high uncertainty on the probable problems that may arise due to the huge geo-engineering proposal.

There are also questions on if the iron fertilization will significantly reduce the carbon dioxide or if the technique can qualify as the viable carbon offsets.

According to Kubiak, the company had originally planned to carry out research projects but were surprised to find the reception by the audiences from the business community.

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