

What is veritree?

veritree is a green-tech startup that partners with organizations to verify and track the impact of tree planting projects. It collects data from local planters, verifies it, and stores it on the blockchain, bringing transparency, accuracy, and traceability to restoration efforts. veritree helps businesses create customized impact portfolios, which are shared with consumers in real time, ensuring that the positive impact is both real and transformative.

veritree focuses on 4 different types of restoration projects:

- Agroforestry**
Agroforestry is a land use management system that integrates trees with crops or pasture
- Seaforestation**
Seaforestation is the restoration, planting, management, and care of underwater seaweed forests
- Mangrove Restoration**
Mangroves are trees or shrubs that grow in chiefly tropical coastal swamps that are flooded at high tide
- Terrestrial Reforestation**
Terrestrial restoration commonly starts with reestablishing plant communities typically restored from wildfires

Agroforestry Social Impact Findings

- Income**
Agroforestry has helped many tree planters overcome financial barriers by providing them with a source of income. This income enables households to meet immediate needs like food and shelter, but may sometimes take precedence over long-term agroforestry investments. Diverse/ non-native tree species can help to generate more income.
- Food Security**
Tree planters often face a choice between consuming what they produce or selling it to generate income. This balancing act between collection and consumption can impact food security in the community.
- Labor Demand**
The labor-intensive nature of tree planting can strain households, leaving little time for other important activities and sometimes discouraging participation from those already stretched thin. There is also the risk of physical health impacts due to the physicality of tree planting.
- Gender Disparities**
Women, particularly in female-headed households, often face legal, cultural and economic barriers that limit their ability to allocate land and resources for tree planting.

Key Takeaways

- Understand their Reality**
We received a valuable reminder to ensure that their work reflects the communities we serve. While developing survey questions, we were particularly mindful of cultural sensitivity, carefully collecting data that respected and preserved the safety and integrity of the communities' cultural and geographical contexts.
- “Right Way” to Collect Social Data**
There is no one-size-fits-all approach to social data collection, as each method comes with its own trade-offs when working with people. For instance, it's important to consider whether individuals feel comfortable sharing sensitive information such as their income or dietary habits.
- Corporate Culture**
Corporate culture operates at a fast pace, where the priority is getting work done quickly, with the understanding that it can be revisited later for revisions and adjustments. Additionally, corporate culture demands flexibility and the ability to adapt to the evolving needs of the organization, as roles and responsibilities may change in unexpected ways.

Seaforestation Social Impact Findings

- Income**
Kelp farming has emerged as a promising source of income, with the potential to alleviate financial barriers for many communities. The growth of upcoming kelp markets offers new opportunities for profitability, yet these markets are still developing and can be unpredictable. While this income helps meet immediate needs like food and shelter, the evolving nature of kelp markets may sometimes overshadow long-term investment in sustainable kelp farming.
- Food Security**
Kelp farmers often face a choice between using their harvest for personal consumption or selling it for profit. This decision can influence food security within their communities, as balancing these needs can be challenging.
- Traditional Knowledge Inclusion**
Incorporating traditional knowledge into kelp farming practices can enhance community engagement and build trust in the Indigenous communities. However, the exclusion or undervaluation of this knowledge can limit the effectiveness and cultural relevance of kelp farming initiatives.
- Carbon Opportunities**
Kelp farming holds significant potential for carbon sequestration, offering an important environmental benefit. However, realizing this potential requires careful management and alignment with broader environmental goals. If not properly prioritized, the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to carbon reduction efforts could be missed, limiting the full environmental impact of kelp farming.

Balance between Data Burden, Data Privacy, and Data Disclosures

Balancing the need for data collection with the importance of respecting community privacy and ensuring their geographical safety can be challenging. To address this, we explored alternative methods like using photo evidence or documenting training participation to gather essential information without placing undue burden on communities.

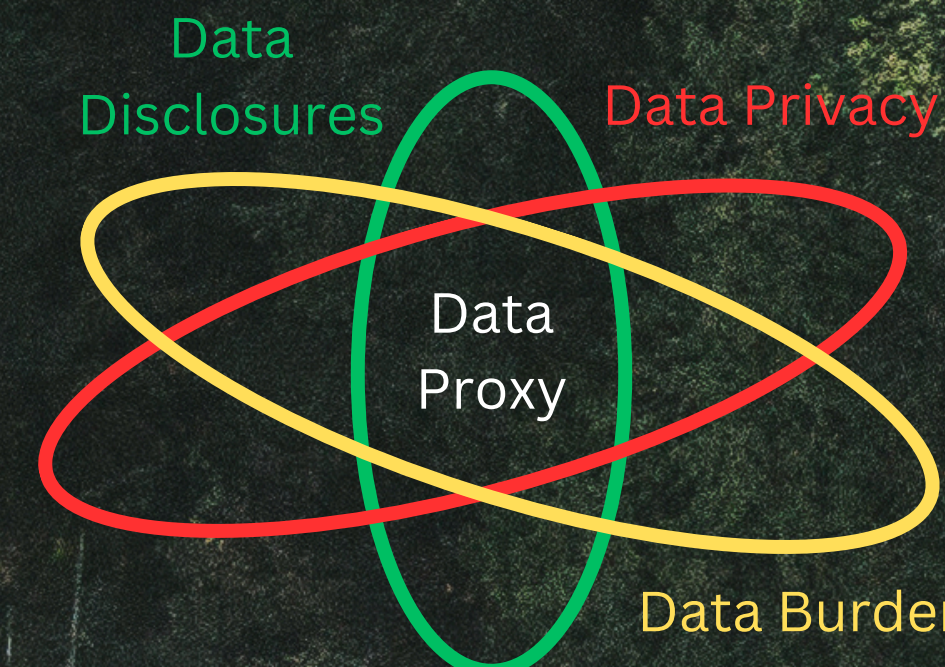


Figure 1: The diagram illustrates the competing tensions between data disclosure, data burden, and data privacy in obtaining accurate proxy data. The oval shapes represent the dynamic interplay of these challenges, with the possibility of stronger pulls signifying a greater influence of one factor over the others. Data proxy is centrally positioned, highlighting its role as the focal point where these tensions converge. The challenge lies in minimizing these pressures to achieve the most accurate and ethical data collection possible.

A Timeline of Deliverables with Photo Evidence

May

- In person visit to veritree (& tentree)!
- Understand the company and relevant areas to social impact

June

- Attempt to construct social surveys based on pre-existing materials
- Demographic Survey
- Deep dive into social impact in agroforestry (tree) planting projects
- Alterations to surveys according to research findings

July

- Deep dive into social impact in seaforestation (kelp) planting projects
- Seaweeds: an opportunity for wealth and sustainable livelihood for coastal communities
- Societal and environmental impacts of seaweed farming in relation to rural development: The case of Kibuyuni village, south coast, Kenya

August

- Conversation with Tree Planting Partner: Mother Trees
- Final Presentation: 5 Key Gaps + Suggested Solutions

September

- What are veritree competitors doing?
- Agroforestry
- Kelp

the future is restorative. the future is verified. the time to act is now.