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Kingsley Holgate's latest Land Rover expedition goes carbon-neutral

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South Africa's Kingsley Holgate adventure team has embarked on an initiative to completely offset the carbon footprint of its 30 000-kilometre Defender Transcontinental Expedition.

The Defender Transcontinental Expedition is the 40th geographic and humanitarian journey undertaken by Kingsley and his team, which left from the southern tip of the African continent at Cape Aghulas in October on its "Hot Cape to Cold Cape" route through Africa, eastern Europe and Russia to Nordkapp in the Arctic Circle in Norway, which is the most northern point of Europe.

From Nordkapp, the expedition route will turn south through western Europe and will end on the mystical Isle of Anglesey in Wales, where the first Land Rover design was sketched in the sands of Red Wharf Bay in 1947. The team will conduct humanitarian and conservation work to assist 300 000 people in sub-Saharan Africa and will support reforestation initiatives on its route to Egypt.

"As explorers, we have journeyed to every country on the African continent, and we've seen first-hand the devastating effects of deforestation and climate change over the past 30 years," said Kingsley. "Regions that were once verdant with vegetation that could sustain healthy populations of both wildlife and humans are now, in many instances, barren dustbowls that cannot support any life. We've also witnessed the destruction of tens of thousands of hectares of Africa's magnificent, centuries-old forests through indiscriminate logging and charcoal production."

As part of the expedition, Kingsley and his team have supported the planting of indigenous trees and spekboom plants to offset 100% of the expedition's carbon footprint, on the newly established 760-hectare Tanglewood conservation area in the Eastern Cape. The initiative forms part of a biodiversity restoration programme implemented by the Conservation Landscape Institute and aims to restore Albany Thicket, a key component of one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.iversity has assisted the Holgate team to accurately calculate the number of trees and plants required to offset the fuel used by the expedition's two P400 mild-hybrid Defenders on the 30-country route. As a result, Holgate and his team helped to plant 4 000 trees and spekboom plants, while expedition team member Mike Nixon contributed another 2 000 to offset the emissions of his personal Land Rover Defender.

"On a personal level, we are acutely aware that as an exploration team delivering important humanitarian aid into remote areas in Africa, we need to ensure that our expeditions do not contribute to the damage being caused by carbon emissions and global warming," continued Kingsley. "We are delighted to be part of this world-class restoration project that will continue to benefit both people and planet for a hundred years and more."

Kingsley and his team furthered their achievement by planting a garden of spekboom at the Jaguar Land Rover Experience centre in Lonehill, Johannesburg. Dubbed The Legacy Garden, this bed of plants will help to offset the emissions produced by customer test drives at the facility, and visitors to the centre are encouraged to take sprigs of the plants – which can be easily propagated from cuttings – home with them for their own gardens.

The Legacy Garden name symbolises the endless amount of carbon-absorbing plants that can originate from the initial planting, together with the legacy the Kingsley Holgate Foundation has, and will continue to build with its humanitarian expeditions.

Source: MotorPress