

Ecosia search engine fights climate change

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A brain child of "green-minded friends" in Berlin, ecosia.org is powered by Bing and Yahoo! search technology but gives at least 80 percent of its revenue to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to protect rainforests.

Ecosia has timed its official launch for Monday to coincide with the start of world climate talks in Copenhagen.

"Ecosia will definitely be the world's greenest [search engine](#)," WWF said in a statement.

"Each search with Ecosia will protect a piece of rainforest, so by making Ecosia your search engine, you can actually help the environment one search at a time."

Ecosia is banking on the same online advertising tactics that have pumped a fortune into the coffers of Internet search king Google, with the funds benefiting nature instead of investors.

Advertisers typically pay search engines for each click on sponsored links appearing on results pages.

"Thanks to sponsored links, search engines earn billions every year," said Ecosia founder Christian Kroll.

"Ecosia believes that there is a more eco-friendly way of using these huge profits and that the money should better be used to fight global warming."

The WWF estimated that over the course of a year, a typical Internet user relying on Ecosia for search queries could protect a patch of rainforest about the size of an ice hockey rink, or 2,000 square meters (21,530 square feet).

A rainforest expanse the size of Switzerland could be saved annually with money generated by one percent of the world's Internet users switching to Ecosia, according to the WWF.

More than half the world's rainforests have been destroyed in the past 50 years and the amount of rainforest burned or cut down each year is greater than the size of England, according to Ecosia.

Deforestation generates climate changing carbon dioxide while eliminating precious wildlife habitat along with trees that produce life-sustaining oxygen.

Ecosia said it is following through on its green theme by relying on data centers that run on electricity from alternative sources that do not spew heat-trapping gases.

It will be taking on powerhouse Google, a search engine so popular that the California company's name is used as a verb to refer to searching the Internet.

Unlike Google and other search engines, Ecosia promises to dump all records of users' activities after 48 hours and not mine the data for marketing purposes.

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