



Valdivian Coastal Reserve

Located within the Los Rios region of Chile, the Valdivian Coastal Reserve is an area of rich biodiversity and one of the world's last temperate rainforests. It is a priority site for the Chilean Government and one of 35 biodiversity hotspots identified by Conservation International.

An innovative global partnership between Conservation International and BHP Billiton has facilitated the conservation and ongoing management of 50,000 hectares of the Valdivian Coastal Reserve by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Situated along 35 km of Chile's Pacific coastline, the Reserve borders the Alerce Costero National Park, which was created as a result of a donation of 9,200 hectares from TNC.

BHP Billiton's US\$20 million commitment is contributing to ensuring the conservation and ongoing management of the reserve.

The objective of the Valdivian Coastal Reserve is to protect and conserve its rich and unique ecosystems, including the Olivillo trees (*Aextoxicon punctatum*) that can live up to 400 years and large areas of Alerce trees (*Fitzroya cupressoides*) similar to the enormous North American sequoias, which can live up to 4,000 years. The Reserve is also habitat for an impressive number of endemic plants and amphibians and is home to a large population of Pudú (*Pudu puda*), one of the world's smallest deer and the Darwin Fox, a critically endangered species, which was found using camera traps in the Valdivian Coastal Reserve and the adjacent Alerce Costero National Park.

The conservation of these unique forests is important not only because of the biodiversity of the area, but also for the neighbouring communities that depend on the clean water and marine ecosystems protected within the Reserve for their food and livelihoods. Moreover, TNC donated water rights and an acre of land that belonged to the Valdivian Coastal Reserve for the implementation of a Rural Drinking Water System for the communities. Also, global communities depend on forests like those found in the Valdivian Coastal Reserve to absorb and store carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas emitted by human activities.

In May 2014, the Valdivian Coastal Reserve generated Chile's first forest carbon credits certified under the Verified Carbon Standard. Not only does this signal the important role of forests in climate change mitigation, it also importantly provides an additional revenue stream which contributes to the Reserve's long-term protection.

TNC has worked with partners to make the Reserve both accessible and informative for all visitors. Recent additions and upgrades include new trails, signposts, picnic areas and parking lots.

The Reserve is an important native forest restoration pilot site, where different methodologies for removing non-native trees are being tested by scientists. This will allow the restoration of up to 1,500 hectares of the Reserve back to native temperate rainforest. It is the country's largest reforestation project, with the planting of more than 2.7 million native trees.

The conservation plan for the Reserve—designed by dozens of scientists, academics, members of the local communities, government agencies and non-profit organizations—identifies conservation priorities, monitors progress, and recommends strategies for the Reserve's continued, effective protection. Research methodology and conservation planning were developed according to TNC's strategies and guidelines. Initial steps are also being taken to establish a research centre with the University of Valdivia to further the understanding of conservation monitoring and management.

This unique global partnership between Conservation International, BHP Billiton and TNC has established a world class, financially sustainable, effective nature conservation management model at a landscape scale, and in doing so contributes towards meeting Chile's international obligations and the Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Target 11.

For more information, visit:
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