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FOREST POLICY AND FORESIGHT IN ARGENTINA

THE POWER OF FORESTS

It's the land of agro-exports, asado and Agüero. It's also the land from which one and a half million Argentinians rose up to petition for the passing of a law that would limit native deforestation from the expansion of asado-providing and export-giving agriculture.

Senators could no longer ignore the extraordinary display of civil participation, unprecedented in the parliamentary history of Argentina. It was 2007. The backdrop was a deforestation rate six times higher than the global average that Argentinian politicians had been ignoring for too long.

The Native Forest Law of 2007 finally recognised the environmental services provided by forests. It instructed provinces to incorporate clear land-use planning in their forested areas, according to three categories. Red areas denoted areas of high conservation (untouchable); yellow areas of medium conservation (sustainable use); and green areas of low conservation (transformable). As a result, all 23 Argentinian provinces established approved 'territorial plans', covering almost 20% of the country. The law also created a 'Forest Fund', which provided the means to compensate those regions that could prove they were conserving, restoring and prioritising native forests for their environmental services. Yet the Native Forest Law could not act alone; it needed a commercial companion. According to Asociación Forestal Argentina, the Commercial Forestry Law, in place since 1999, provided \$641 million in benefits and \$1.35 billion in tax reimbursements to growers who

complied with sustainability standards from its inception to 2017. It wasn't until the two laws were acting in tandem, however, that by 2010, a decreasing trend in Argentina's LULUCF emissions could finally be observed.

But decreasing LULUCF emissions did not mean the war on domestic deforestation was succeeding. In the incredibly biodiverse (and vast) Gran Chaco region, soybean farming, cattle ranching and wood fuel has teamed up to decimate 25% of its native forest in as little as 20 years. Solving vexing land-use issues requires robust enforcement, just as much as sound policy.

More recently, Argentina decided to leverage sound forestry policy foundations into market and emissions-reduction opportunities. The new kid on the block is the pioneering inter-agency ForestAr 2030. This practical manifestation of true collective action and shared vision will boost incomes, promote well-being and scale up environmental sustainability through the conservation and expansion of Argentina's forests and a forest economy that values standing native forests. At its headline objective, ForestAr will guide Argentina to two million hectares of forested land by 2030 (from 1.3 million hectares today), and the restoration of 300,000 hectares of native forest. The programme will help conserve native forests by replacing the demand for their products with commercial alternatives. And, crucially, ForestAr will also unite efforts to avoid forest conversion, promote forest restoration and sustainable management of native and cultivated forests.

To prepare ForestAr 2030 for success, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) facilitated four months of workshops with 85 key actors from different sectors to craft a common

vision for the country's forests and create an integrated conservation and development plan. The strategy identifies barriers to unleash the awesome power of forests to support

Argentina's NDC targets and contribute to its sustainable development, all while contributing to its SDG and Bonn Challenge commitments.

NATURE'S CLIMATE STATISTICS

Argentina has set a preliminary goal of expanding commercial forests from the 1.3 million hectares it has today to 2 million hectares by 2030, and to increase the ratio of commercial forest that is certified, which is currently about 50%. In economic terms, this would equate to increasing domestic wood supply from 25 million m³ to 50 million m³ per year, and – ensuring they are certified and reforestation-sourced – provide access to sustainably-sourced markets. In climate

mitigation terms, that jump would mean an increase in domestic carbon sequestration by an estimated 15.6 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (MtCO₂e).

The new approach, ForestAr 2030, has grown out of a renewed scientific understanding that forests offer the single largest natural climate solution through reforestation, conservation, restoration and improved land-management techniques. Given the agriculture and land sector is still responsible for half of Argentina's GHG emissions, there's much to do.

KEY FIGURES

Commercial forest production:

64%

Pine

26%

Eucalyptus

10%

Willow and other species

**66,000+
PEOPLE**

directly working all along the value chain.

Argentina contains

**54 MILLION
HECTARES**

of natural forest (thereof, two-thirds are found in the Chaco ecoregion), and about

**1.25 MILLION
HECTARES**

of commercial forest.

Exports from the forest economy are relatively low

**< \$675
MILLION**

given the size of Argentina's forest base.

**NATIVE
FORESTRY LAW:**

Forest Fund is mandated to be
NO LESS THAN

0.3%

of the national budget.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Under the steer of Argentina's Secretary of Environment, ForestAr 2030 will use science to enable native and harvested forests to provide NCS to mitigate climate change and help Argentina meet its NDC and SDG through the value chains associated to the forestry sector.

EXECUTING ENTITY

Argentinian government. Uniting four of the country's ministries, ForestAr 2030 will build partnerships among the forestry industry, civil society and government. The Nature Conservancy provided the scientific guidelines that underpin the platform and played a leading role in designing ForestAr and securing inter-ministerial agreements.

SDGs



LOCATION



VIDEOS & STORIES

<https://youtu.be/9HICQml7Prk>

https://youtu.be/_pKHpkB-7fU

<https://youtu.be/AM4nAinZsK4>

FUNDING

Multiple stakeholders from the private sector and government funds in coordination with the Argentinian government.

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