



Valdivian Coastal Reserve, Chile Forest Carbon Offset Opportunity

Deforestation and forest degradation is a leading cause of climate change, generating approximately 15% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and a threat to global biodiversity and millions of poor people who depend on forests for their livelihoods. By working with the private and public sectors and local communities, The Nature Conservancy aims to help cut deforestation and forest degradation in half by 2020. If you are interested in joining with us to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while preserving one of Chile's and the world's most unique forests, please read more to learn about this opportunity.

Opportunity to offset greenhouse gas emissions while helping to preserve one of Chile's and the world's last great places

The Valdivian Coastal Reserve is part of an ancient temperate rainforest rising from Chile's southern coastline. With more than half of the world's temperate rainforests gone, the 50,251 hectare (124,173 acre) Valdivian Coastal Reserve is one of the largest of these areas remaining on Earth. The Conservancy acquired the Valdivian Coastal Reserve in 2003 due to its enormous biological significance and the immediate threat to its forests, which included conversion to non-native eucalyptus plantations and deforestation related to construction of a coastal highway.

For nearly two decades, the Conservancy has been developing projects that restore and protect forest carbon all around the world. The Conservancy's actions to protect the native forest in the Valdivian Coastal Reserve will avoid the release of carbon emissions and thus form the basis of a forest carbon project that will soon be certified against the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). The VCS is widely recognized by project developers, investors and policymakers as among the most rigorous standards for forest carbon offset projects globally.





Climate Benefits

Protecting the Valdivian Coastal Reserve is expected to avoid the release of more than 350,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere

The Valdivian Coastal Reserve's old growth forests store the equivalent of more than 800 tons of carbon dioxide per hectare (324 tons per acre), some of the largest amounts of carbon per acre in the world. Without the actions to stop deforestation and conversion of these native forests, more than 350,000 tons of CO₂e emissions was estimated to have been released into the atmosphere—the equivalent of taking over 67,000 passenger vehicles off U.S. roads for one full year. The offsets from the program are expected to be verified and available for delivery by mid-2013.

Biodiversity Benefits

Saving Chile's native rainforests means saving the home of many mammals, birds and plants found nowhere else on Earth

The Valdivian Coastal Reserve is not only important because of its climate change mitigation potential, but also because of the significant ecological value it harbors. During the last Ice Age, the coastal rainforests of southern Chile provided plants and wildlife with a refuge from the freeze. As a result, the Valdivian coastal forests still harbor some of Chile's highest concentrations of species found nowhere else on Earth and provide habitat to unique and rare birds and animals.

Biological treasures in the Reserve include Olivillo trees, living up to 400 years, and Alerce trees, with a lifespan of more than 3,000 years. The Valdivian Coastal Reserve's wildlife includes: one of the world's largest woodpeckers; a small tree dwelling marsupial known as the 'mountain monkey' and considered by scientists to be a "living fossil;" the world's smallest deer called the pudú (see photo); at least 58 bird species; and several rare carnivores, such as the southern river otter.



Community Benefits

Supporting sustainable economic development for local communities

The Conservancy has been working closely with neighboring fishing villages and indigenous communities to maintain traditional land uses and to encourage compatible local economic development as part of the Valdivian Coastal Reserve's overall conservation strategy.

The Conservancy works with partners to make the Reserve both accessible and informative to all visitors, driving tourism that is crucial for the economic sustainability of local communities. Tourists represent a market for sustainably produced goods, such as locally produced organic honey and herbal teas. Recent additions and upgrades to Reserve infrastructure, including construction of new trails, signposts, and picnic areas, have significantly helped to attract more visitors to the Reserve, with a 30 percent increase between 2006 and 2009. Thus, the project not only helps fight climate change and protects biodiversity, but it also supports sustainable economic activities for local people.

Purchase credits and join with The Nature Conservancy to fight climate change and to preserve rainforests in Chile

The Conservancy is seeking financial supporters to purchase carbon credits that will be generated from the Valdivian Coastal Reserve project. Financial supporters will receive rights to verified forest carbon offsets, developed under the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). The Conservancy can “retire” these offsets on behalf of the financial supporter on a public VCS-authorized offset registry, or transfer the offsets to the registry account of the financial supporter. Supporters will be recognized not only for offsetting their carbon footprint, but also for contributing to the protection of 50,251 hectare (124,173 acre) of ancient temperate rainforest, saving numerous endemic species and unique vegetation, and supporting the economic development of local communities.

Contact us to learn more

To learn more about this opportunity or to request a Technical Summary, please contact:

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► Additional information about the Valdivian Coastal Reserve is also available at www.nature.org/chile/VCR/carbon.

PHOTOS: Pudú © Alfredo Almonacid/TNC; all others © Mark Godfrey/TNC.

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

The Nature
Conservancy



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