

BRAZIL

Restoring the Atlantic Forest



Each WeForest project makes earth cooler and empowers communities. Each project also has a unique focus. In Brazil, WeForest is restoring habitat connectivity with forest corridors. The project aims to combat the loss of forest cover and conserve this biodiversity hotspot. Biodiversity in the Atlantic Forest is under increasing threat from widespread deforestation. Today, a mere 7% of the forest still stands. Despite its diminished size it retains a large share of the worlds species. The Atlantic Forest is recognized as a global conservation priority.

WHY INTERVENTION IS NEEDED



PROJECT LOCATION

Pontal do Paranapanema,
São Paulo state



THREATS

Logging, agricultural
expansion



FOREST COVER LOSS

93% of Atlantic Forest
deforested



THREATENED ANIMALS

Black lion tamarin, tapir,
white lipped peccary

Once stretching 130 million hectares across Brazil's southeastern coast, the Atlantic Forest has been reduced to small isolated fragments. Some patches are no larger than 50 hectares. In Pontal de Paranapanema, the extent of deforestation has left 3% of the original forest standing. Despite having lost large swathes of its tree cover, the Atlantic Forest still harbors a wealth of biodiversity and has a large potential for carbon sequestration. Combatting the continued deforestation of the Atlantic Forest and safeguarding the large number of species that reside here is imperative.

RESTORING THE ATLANTIC FOREST

PROJECT GOALS AND HOW WE ACHIEVE THEM



RESTORATION APPROACH

Framework planting (60%)
Assisted natural regeneration and enrichment planting (40%)



ANNUAL RESTORATION POTENTIAL

500 hectares; 1 million trees



NUMBER OF TREE SPECIES

115 native species



PROJECT PARTNERS

IPÊ, LASTROP
IPEF; Universidade de São Paulo
IEE; Universidade Federal de São Carlos

WeForest partners with local organizations to create forest corridors between the Morro do Diabo State Park and the Iguçu National Park, where some of the few remnants of the Atlantic Forest are found. Reconnecting these parks and the isolated fragments scattered across the landscape allows fauna to access new habitats safely and breed with different populations. This is a vital step towards conserving the region's biodiversity. The location of the corridors is determined by the movement of big cat species tracked with GPS collars. Ecological surveys are carried out to assess tree species composition, tree growth and other indicators of the health of the forest corridors and camera traps are installed to monitor their functionality. WeForest partners with women-run community-based nurseries in the collection of seeds and care of seedlings and contracts members of the Landless Workers Movement to carry out the planting activities.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

WeForest joins forces with academic institutes and postgraduate researchers to conduct research on the project's ecological and socio-economic impacts. The results serve to monitor the project and will contribute to the development of a future standard for forest landscape restoration certification.

MAIN TREE SPECIES

Acacia polyphylla
Anadenanthera spp.
Cedrela fissilis
Colubrina glandulosa
Cordia trichotoma
Enterolobium contortisiliquum
Guazuma ulmifolia
Inga laurina
Inga uruguensis
Jacaranda cuspidifolia
Peltophorum dubium
Tabebuia spp.

IMPACT OF 1 MILLION TREES



AREA RESTORED

500 hectares



CO₂ STORED

158,620 tons¹



FAMILIES ENGAGED

65 gain surplus income

THE COST OF INACTION

If nothing is done to protect and restore the Atlantic Forest, this important biodiversity hotspot will continue to experience habitat degradation and biodiversity loss leading to local and global extinctions. This is not a fait accompli and WeForest is already seeing a positive impact since the project began.

¹This is an estimate of the CO₂ stored in the forest after 30 years of growth. Eduardo Ditt et al. (2010) Forest conversion and provision of ecosystem services in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest. Land Degrad. Develop. 21: 591-603.

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