

# RAINFOREST REVIEW



**RAINFOREST CONCERN:** 20 years of conservation  
**ROMANIA:** 8,000 hectares secured for Carpathian project  
**COSTA RICA:** Record number of turtles at Pacuare Reserve  
**CHILE:** New project for coastal forests of Central Chile  
**BRAZIL:** Is it too late to halt the Belo Monte dam?

WINTER 2012/13

**Costa Rica**  
Pacuare Reserve

**Colombia**  
Expanding the Pangan-Awa Corridor

**Colombia**  
New national park established

**Brazil**  
Extension of the Xixuau Reserve

**Brazil**  
Assistance for the Yawanawa

**Brazil**  
Belo Monte dam – an ecological disaster

**Peru**  
Threatened high-altitude forests of Peru

**India & Sri Lanka**  
Working with local communities

**Chile**  
Protecting the fragmented coastal forest

**Chile**  
Araucaria forests of Southern Chile

**Romania**  
Ancient Carpathian forests

**Ecuador**  
Chocó-Andean Corridor

**Panama**  
Turtle conservation

## 20 years of conservation work!



It's hard to believe but we will celebrate Rainforest Concern's 20th birthday in November 2013. Since we first started conservation work in Costa Rica in 1993, Rainforest Concern has helped to protect over two million hectares of native forests and the vast biodiversity they contain. In this time we have worked with 21 partner organisations and 8 indigenous tribes in 12 different countries.

The methods of conservation have included land purchase to create private wildlife reserves in southern Chile, Ecuador and Romania; the registration of ancestral indigenous territories, such as in the Caqueta Basin in Colombia; alternative income projects; and environmental education for local communities. The charity has also facilitated academic research and sent gap year students and many other volunteers to a number of its reserves.

The scale of our work has varied enormously, from buying a few hundred hectares to extend a botanical sanctuary in India's Western Ghats, to securing protection for a new 1 million hectare national park in the Colombian Amazon.

None of this success would have been possible without constant help from you, our loyal supporters for the past two decades. Several countries are now making genuine efforts to change policy in order to protect their native forests and wildlife, particularly in Latin America. This is encouraging, however, just as we think things are changing for the better new forces start to work against environmental conservation. The most dramatic example must surely be the rapid industrialisation of China and India, with a combined population of over 2.5 billion and an insatiable demand for natural resources, has placed even greater pressure on the world's remaining forests and wildlife. So sadly we cannot afford to relax.

We currently have over 12,000 supporters on our mailing list. These are made up of people who make regular monthly or annual donations, those who give from time to time and those who have supported us on a single occasion. It is a particularly difficult time to ask people to give to charitable causes, but if each one of you donated just £5 a month more this would raise a staggering additional £720,000 every year for the rainforests!

A regular donation, however modest, helps put the charity in a position to plan ahead and obtain better long-term results. Please continue to help us so we can celebrate another 20 years of conservation success in 2033! You can do this most easily by completing the attached form – whether you are a regular supporter or not.

Finally, I wish to apologise for the long delay in publishing this edition of Rainforest Review. 2012 was a challenging year for us and we relocated the office from London to Bath, with the inevitable upheaval and change of staff. I hope that you will see from these pages that our work has continued as effectively as ever. We now look forward to a new year of conservation success.

Thank you for your continued and much-valued support.  
**Peter Bennett, Director**

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Cover photo by Andean Cock-of-the-Rock by Murray Cooper, found at the Neblina Reserve in Ecuador.

Rainforest Concern is grateful to British Airways for their ongoing support.



**Project partner organisations:**

Amazon Charitable Trust (UK)  
 Amazon Conservation Team (USA & Surinam)  
 Amazon Watch (Brazil & USA)  
 Aqua-Firma (UK)  
 ATREE (India)  
 AV (UK)  
 Carpathia Foundation (Romania)  
 CBZ (Chile)  
 Cristalino Ecological Foundation (Brazil)  
 DECOIN (Ecuador)  
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 Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh (UK & Chile)  
 Santa Lucia Co-operative (Ecuador)  
 The Living Rainforest (UK)  
 Universidad Austral de Valdivia (Chile)  
 Yachana Foundation (Ecuador and USA)

**We would particularly like to thank Boden and Good Gifts for their continued support for our conservation projects in Ecuador**

**Boden**  
 www.boden.co.uk/forestfun

**Good Gifts Catalogue**

www.goodgifts.org

## London Marathon and Forest of Dean Half Marathon



### The It Woodwork marathon team

Thank you to Jane Hillier, Martyn Johnson, Allison Mullen, Neil Skingley, Sally Sturgess and Gerben Visser for raising nearly £8000 for Rainforest Concern by running the London Marathon in April 2012. Also in April, a five-man team of cabinet makers from It Woodwork, a local bespoke kitchen firm based in the south west, raised £1000 by running the beautiful woody trails of the Forest of Dean Half Marathon.

Our London Marathon places are all filled for 2013; however, if you are keen to run for us please do get in touch on 01225 481151 and we will put you on our reserve list. Alternatively if you prefer to let others do the running, you can sponsor them online through [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com)!

## World record holder supports Forest Credits

In 2009, 17 year old Mike Perham became the youngest person to sail single-handed around the world.

Since acquiring his Guinness World Record, he has become an Ambassador for the Prince's Trust and also an Ambassador for UK Youth.

He now has set his sights on becoming the first person to solo circumnavigate the world by land, sea and air. This summer he is setting off on the second part of his adventure. He will be starting his epic drive from London on the 3rd July and hopes to also become the youngest person to drive solo around the world.

Mike is offsetting the carbon for his journey with Forest Credits. Mike is not only offsetting the fuel consumption for his drive, but also his ferry and plane hops between continents. His offset will be

used to support our first carbon offset project, managing and protecting the Neblina Reserve in Ecuador.

Good luck Mike! A big thank you for supporting Forest Credits and Rainforest Concern.

We'll be keeping an eye on how he's doing.

To follow Mike's journey, go to [www.mikeperham.tv](http://www.mikeperham.tv)



Mike Perham sets off

## Why Aqua-Firma and polar bears love the rainforests!

**There are many options out there for offsetting carbon emissions, but for Aqua-Firma, there is nothing more urgent than offsetting where the additional benefit of saving critical rainforest habitat is part of the formula.**



Josh Harrison / www.innovatorprints.co.uk

Aqua-Firma has recently donated £10,000 to Rainforest Concern towards the purchase and protection of cloud forest within the Chocó-Andean Rainforest Corridor. It is an area the directors of the company know very well and they appreciate just how important this area is for biodiversity. The largest portion of their donation was raised from carbon offsets the company sets aside for its Polar Voyages and flights to the Arctic and Antarctica. Whilst the company donates to Rainforest Concern to offset the emissions of each client, it also invites its clients to match this. Many Aqua-Firma clients choose to do this, putting them into a 'carbon positive' situation.

"Whilst the Arctic and Antarctica are wonderful places to visit for wildlife, marine life, glaciers and icebergs," comments Ralph Pannell, one of the Directors of Aqua-Firma, "regrettably, we often see evidence of global warming in these areas. Glaciers are visibly receding and the extent of sea ice, though highly variable, is reducing and thinning."

One of the species most at risk from climate change is the polar bear, an animal which provides one of the highlights of Aqua-Firma's Arctic Voyages and relies on sea ice to find its prey. As temperatures rise in important polar bear habitats like Spitsbergen, the season during which sea ice is prevalent shortens. "The more rainforest we lose to slash and burn," comments Ralph, "the less sea ice and fewer polar bears we can expect to see in the future. We all have a responsibility to help stem this change, which is why we try to be carbon positive with donations we channel into rainforest protection."

## Mark's 630 mile walk for the forests!

My name is Mark Anderson and I'm walking the South West Coastal Path – Britain's longest National Trail – to raise funds for Rainforest Concern – all monies raised are earmarked for the Chocó-Andean rainforest project, aiming to establish a wonderful protected corridor of forest in NW Ecuador. I am doing the walk, which is 630 miles in total, in stages.



So far I've covered around 170 miles from Poole in Dorset to Salcombe, West Devon. And here's the fact that says how that feels on your legs: 170 miles walked so far, 29,000 feet climbed (and descended). That's more or less the height of Mount Everest! Next year I'll be returning to Salcombe and hiking on to Plymouth and beyond: the trail continues around the entire Cornish and North Devon coasts to finish in Minehead, Somerset. Although it's one of the more strenuous of the UK's long-distance footpaths, it's also a very beautiful walk.

I work for a small charity myself, Sussex Oakleaf, supporting vulnerable adults to live independently in the community and to develop confidence and self-esteem, but I'm mostly indoors doing this – so getting out onto the winding trail is a tonic, and raising funds for Rainforest Concern has really added to the sense of pleasure and worthwhileness of the whole project. If you ever fancy visiting this part of the country, I'd recommend springtime when many colourful wild flowers garland the wayside; under blue skies it's a wonderful place to be. All parts of the trail are special, and most people have their favourite section. I love the Jurassic Coast in Dorset, which is a UNESCO designated World Heritage Site that combines the rugged beauty of cliffs and landslides with the softness of green hills and hedgerows. If you're interested, there is more about the hike on the fundraising page at [www.justgiving.com/markanderson-swcp](http://www.justgiving.com/markanderson-swcp)



## Rainforest Foods helps the rainforests

Rainforest Foods has expanded its support for Rainforest Concern, donating a portion of its sales to the Chocóo-Andean Corridor Project. The premium organic superfood manufacturer has worked with Rainforest Concern for three years and will now donate funds to purchase one square metre of cloud rainforest for every pack of Rainforest Foods products that is sold. This agreement will build upon the success that Rainforest Concern has had with the Corridor Project, which aims to link biologically important areas of Ecuador.

Since it began, Rainforest Foods' purpose has been to help people combine good nutrition with modern living. Realising that a return to time-rich living close to the land is just not possible, we have sourced a range of wholefoods whose exceptional nutritional richness can support modern lifestyles rather than forcing them to change. We look all around the world for these foods, and have them processed in a way that keeps as much nutrition as possible while making them convenient for you to use.

A dietary sensation with athletes, the Acai berry is available in capsule or powder form. The Acai palm is now cultivated by farmers in Brazil, where it grows under rainforest conditions and certified by the Soil Association.

Rainforest Foods is currently offering a discount to Rainforest Concern's supporters offering them 10% off the purchase of products from the Rainforest Foods website until 30th April 2013. To get the 10 percent saving please enter coupon code "cloudten" at checkout. For more information please visit [www.rainforestfoods.co.uk](http://www.rainforestfoods.co.uk)

## Prospero World's partnership with Rainforest Concern



Sita Schutt, Founder of Prospero World

Rainforest Concern has received several grants thanks to the work of Prospero World, a not-for-profit philanthropy advice service that was set up to help individual givers feel confident about and enjoy their charitable giving. The small team research charities and learn about their work, visiting projects on the ground where possible and bringing back recommendation reports for clients – mainly individuals and charitable trusts – to help them know that their donations are well spent and to find out what impact their money has had.

Prospero has now advised on more than a million pounds worth of giving and specialises mainly in finding excellent, small projects in the developing world, both in the environmental sector and more widely – education, income generation and family or community welfare are all issues that are covered in countries worldwide. At present, clients' interests are directed towards Asia and India in particular and, as we go to print, the Prospero team are in Myanmar (Burma), covering a lot of ground on a fascinating and well-timed research trip to look at some of the charities coming forward as the country opens up and it becomes easier for donors to support work in a meaningful way.

It is a badge of recognition for Rainforest Concern that Prospero are happy to recommend us to their clients, and we have received several grants as a result. Prospero's approach means that we can express our most pressing needs for funding as a charity and clients can be advised objectively on how they can really help us and what impact this will have – a good situation for both sides in a world where, too often, charity and supporter are unable to connect personally.

Recently, Prospero launched a membership club for donors to expand on this interest in more active engagement with causes. Quarterly salon-style events will bring members together to learn about topics as diverse as North Korea and the Neurology of Giving. Members will also be eligible for a review of their giving, access to recommended charities and support in their philanthropy.

If you would like to know more about Prospero and the kind of charities they recommend, or The Cornucopia Club, their website is [www.prosperoworld.org](http://www.prosperoworld.org)



## Offset your carbon and give wildlife a chance!

by Sarah Fraser, Forest Credits

Several years ago, Rainforest Concern was approached by sponsors, organisations and individuals to establish a transparent, credible, forest-based voluntary carbon offset scheme. In response, we set up Forest Credits, a not-for-profit company managed by Rainforest Concern to provide ethical offsetting delivering real results.

### Why was Forest Credits needed?

On the face of it, carbon offsetting is straightforward: polluters give money to emissions-saving projects to compensate for the polluter's activities. Projects could include renewable energy schemes or forest management projects aimed at either planting new forests or protecting endangered existing forests.

Nevertheless, over the past few years, there has been some disquiet over how carbon offsets are managed, with reports on the mismanagement of land used for carbon offsetting, and of unethical practices in the selling of carbon credits.

One solution to the issue of regulating how forest-based carbon offsets are managed is the UN REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) mechanism. However, REDD has also come under criticism for, amongst other concerns, the fact that it allows the possibility of replacing biodiversity-rich forest with high-yield plantations for a carbon benefit. REDD's lack of ability to deliver benefits other than emissions reductions is now being addressed by REDD+, which looks beyond simple carbon storage to incorporate additional measures such as protecting biodiversity and water quality and upholding the rights of indigenous communities, but it is a long process.

That's where Rainforest Concern comes in. After talking to our sponsors, we recognised that, essentially, when a company, organisation or individual wants to offset their carbon emissions, they need to know that the money they hand over will be used to manage and protect that forest long term, conserving not only the carbon

stocks in that forest, but also securing the rich flora and fauna, keeping the water cycle stable, and providing a home and livelihood for indigenous peoples. Forest Credits offers all these co-benefits.

Rainforest Concern, with its 19-year history of protecting and managing forest, therefore set up Forest Credits to provide exactly that service. Ethical and responsible, Forest Credits is a not-for-profit scheme for voluntary offsets. Our projects are managed with the same dedication and responsibility as all our forest projects, with clear, open reporting on what funds are used for, and a proven commitment to protecting forest. Our first Forest Credits project at the Neblina Reserve, Ecuador is almost 1,700 hectares. The reserve and our management plan for it were analysed and audited by Ecometrica and Carbon Auditors to assess what carbon we would be 'saving' with the project, or the carbon 'additionally' of the project. Every five years, we will be re-audited to assure our scheme participants that we are achieving the carbon savings anticipated.

Forest Credits is gradually increasing the number of offset projects it provides, and is currently looking at another project, this time in Chile, to bring the total amount of land under Forest Credits' protection to nearly 30,000 hectares.

### Who is offsetting?

We have a growing number of private individuals offsetting through Forest Credits, most of whom choose to regularly offset for trips, or just day-to-day household energy use and transport. Our online calculator lets users simply enter information about what they want to offset, the calculator works out the carbon footprint, and they can then purchase the offset online. We

send out a confirmation email and a certificate recording the offset.

A number of companies are also choosing to offset with Forest Credits. This year our thanks go out to, amongst others, John Brown Media, CMS Consulting and O'Melveny and Myers for their continued loyal support of Forest Credits. A number of travel companies, like Aqua-Firma, Andean Trails and Think Galapagos, are also offering Forest Credits to their clients to make their holidays carbon neutral.

Companies choose to offset with us because they like the co-benefits we provide to indigenous communities and the ecosystem and environment. More and more frequently, clients and shareholders also want to see evidence that companies are taking their environmental commitments seriously, and we help them to do this.

For more unusual or complicated offsets, where the online calculator is not appropriate, we often receive the raw data from companies and carry out the calculation on their behalf. We can also offer to carry out carbon audits and give advice on energy saving measures.

### Reduce your energy use

We would, of course, like to encourage everyone to offset their carbon emissions through Forest Credits! But we'd also like to see both individuals and companies making real inroads into reducing their energy and fuel use. We can all take responsibility for reducing global emissions and the impact this may have on the climate. As well as providing useful links to sites such as the Energy Saving Trust, this year we've added a page to our website full of ideas for saving energy you may not have thought of. Check them out at: [www.forestcredits.org.uk/why-forest-credits](http://www.forestcredits.org.uk/why-forest-credits)



Forest Credits™  
by Rainforest Concern

# Saving the Carpathian Forests: a further 8,000 hectares secured for permanent protection

by Christoph Promberger, director Foundation conservation Carpathian



Christoph Promberger

Wolves have a viable population although rarely seen

**Since we last reported here in Rainforest Review, much has happened and we have advanced significantly towards safeguarding large tracts of forest in the stunning Carpathian Mountains. Most important, we have increased the area of forest now under strict protection to over 14,000 ha, with an additional 7,000 ha approved for purchase.**

The restitution process for much of the vast forest of the Carpathian Mountains, which was nationalised during communism, has put severe pressure on this last wilderness of Europe. Most of the former owners or their heirs were not really interested in owning forest, but only in receiving fast cash.

As a result, many of these forests very soon ended up in the hands of logging companies. Widespread clear-cutting, even on steep slopes,

was the result. It became obvious that without intervention, hundreds of thousands of hectares would disappear within a short period of time. Even the forests within existing National Parks have been restituted and are in serious danger. The Romanian Government has done very little to support the large protected areas of the Carpathians and many of them are no longer able to withstand these severe challenges. The magnificent and wild Carpathians are in danger of losing their spirit.

In 2008, a group of dedicated conservationists, biologists and philanthropists got together to face this challenge and to develop a conservation strategy. It is always easier to promote the conservation of wilderness far away and difficult to actually work on a local level, but we all decided that it was time to establish a large European wilderness reserve. As a first step, we identified several tens of thousands of hectares around one of the existing National Parks and developed a plan to convert this

area into complete wilderness. With the help of two very generous donors, we started buying forest that came on the market inside this area. Within a short time, land owners realised we were serious buyers and sold to us rather than to logging companies. Still, we managed to keep prices low. Up to now, we have been able to secure over 14,000 ha of forest, and an additional 7,000 ha of forest and alpine meadows have been agreed for purchase with land owners.

Over the next five years, we will continue to purchase forest and alpine pastures in order to create one of Europe's largest wilderness areas. Since our network has registered the Foundation CONSERVATION CARPATHIA as a legal body for the implementation of the project, we have contacted various conservation organisations and business people to support this project. A first pledge from Rainforest Concern has already brought substantial funding, which has helped to continue the purchase of forest. It is clear that we need to receive support on all levels – in such a big project, every cent counts.

In November 2011, we leased a 15,000 ha hunting concession in the project area with the



Board members and donors meet in June 2012

objective of stopping all hunting and creating a safe haven for wildlife. Over the coming years, we intend to purchase neighbouring concessions to increase the hunting-free area to over 50,000 ha. A first wildlife survey has revealed very low ungulate numbers, likely due to heavy poaching throughout the last decade, but luckily this period is now over and we expect wildlife to return to natural densities within the next ten years.

The Foundation CONSERVATION CARPATHIA has also received a large grant from the European Union to start restoration work in the degraded parts of the project area: over 2,000 ha of forest in the area had been destroyed by

clear felling, erosion has started on the skidding tracks and forest conversion has altered tree composition in some areas from the original mixed beech/fir/sycamore forests to spruce monocultures. Of course we always prefer natural processes over intensive intervention, but nevertheless need to actively help these processes to increase the speed and quality of the recovery. The riparian forests along the mountain brooks have also suffered from decades of poor management, with a significant loss of alder galleries and the construction of many control structures. Complete restoration of the original ecosystem is the goal of all these activities.

Romania is the only country in the European Union in which the government allocates no money from the state budget to the administration of protected areas. For this reason, we have taken on the task of managing two Natura 2000 sites and intend to bid for the management of a third one shortly. The Foundation CONSERVATION CARPATHIA has now hired 5 rangers to implement conservation measures on the ground and to ensure full protection of our land holdings. Further rangers and biologists will be hired in the coming months due to our increased activities.

In the last year, Rainforest Concern has supported the project with €300,000, which has been used to purchase forest in the area. Further support, however, is needed to realise this unique project, which will become a milestone in European conservation.



Christoph Promberger

# Yaigojé Apaporis Park: the continuing battle against mining

by Martin von Hildebrand, President of Gaia Amazonas



Detailed mapping of the region has never been undertaken before

Rainforest Concern has been cooperating with Gaia Amazonas over the last 3 years to protect tropical forest in the northwest Amazon: the headwaters of the Mirití River and along the Apaporis River in the Colombian Amazon. An expanse of 1,000,000 hectares of rainforest has been granted National Natural Park status, and one of the region's indigenous territories, the Mirití *resguardo*, has been expanded from 1 million to 1.5 million hectares, which protects the remaining area of forest between the *resguardo* and three adjacent National Parks.

Gaia Amazonas

The new National Natural Park, the Yaigojé Apaporis Park, which overlaps with the Yaigojé indigenous *resguardo*, was created at the request of the local indigenous people and their organisation, ACIYA (Association of Indigenous Captains of the Yaigojé Apaporis River). The shamans and elders, whose voice and guidance direct ACIYA, viewed it as a necessary strategy to prevent mining in their ancestral lands. *Resguardos* are the legal recognition of territories that have been traditionally inhabited by the indigenous people. They are the collective owners, and the *resguardos*, under Colombia's constitution and national legislation, cannot be sold or embargoed. Nevertheless, the subsoil of the *resguardos* belongs to the State. Therefore mining, if the State allows it, is a major threat to the forest and the indigenous people who live there.

The protected area status of a National Natural Park can prevent extractive industries and mining from being carried out. It was for this reason that ACIYA requested that the State establish a new Park, but with certain conditions and a type of co-management to ensure that the indigenous people continued to govern their territory. A steering committee brings together the National Natural Parks Administration and ACIYA and, by prior agreement of both parties, the State cannot take any unilateral decision nor interfere with the indigenous "Life Plans" - their own development plans, based on their cultural heritage - unless these could have a negative impact on the conservation of tropical forest. Obviously there was a lot of dialogue and negotiation before reaching these agreements, but the result is worthwhile: external threats to the *resguardo* and Park are minimised, a joint conservation strategy is agreed upon, and the indigenous people can continue living, using and protecting the forest as they have for millennia.



Wade Davis

## A Muneco ceremony

One of the main threats right now is from a Canadian mining company called Cosigo Resources. This company is interested in extracting gold from Yuisi, a sacred site of particular cultural significance for the indigenous people. Concern for the future of Yuisi is what prompted the local communities and their shamans to request that a National Natural Park be created. The sad news is that Cosigo Resources has not given up, and with a tactic of "divide and conquer" the company has supported a small group of indigenous people from the region in setting up their own organisation, ACITAVA. They are taking the National Natural Parks administration to court, claiming that there was not sufficient local consultation when the Park was created.

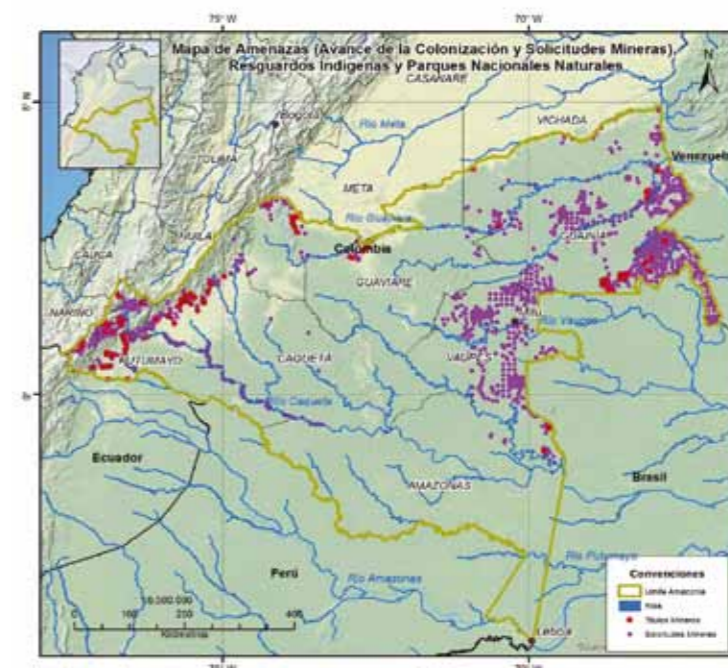


Sergio Bartelmann

## Ceremony of the Muneco

Mining is also a serious threat along the nearby Pira, Tiquie and Mirití rivers. This area of dense tropical forest is the home of 6 different ethnic groups: Makuna, Barasana, Eduria, Tuyuca, Tatuyo and Bara. Until 3 or 4 years ago, due to the presence of the FARC Guerrilla in the

Colombian Amazon, international mining companies were not present. Now, just as the threat of armed conflict subsides, there is a surge in mining companies prospecting for gold and tantalum. Over 1,500 permissions for mining have been requested in just 3 years. The Government is rightly concerned about this chaotic mining frenzy. Its first reaction was to close the doors to new mining applications. Next, it declared that the area is a strategic mining area and, as such, the highest of mining standards must be complied with (Resolution 0045-2012, National Mining Agency). The latest step has been to place a moratorium on mining over much of the Colombian Amazon (Resolution



Map showing the increasing threats from mining concessions as indicated in purple and red

1518-2012, Ministry for the Environment), citing the precautionary principle. The implication of this last resolution is that the Government, together with the indigenous people of the affected area in the Amazon, must define an environmental and cultural management plan to decide if and where mining can be carried out and according to which standards.

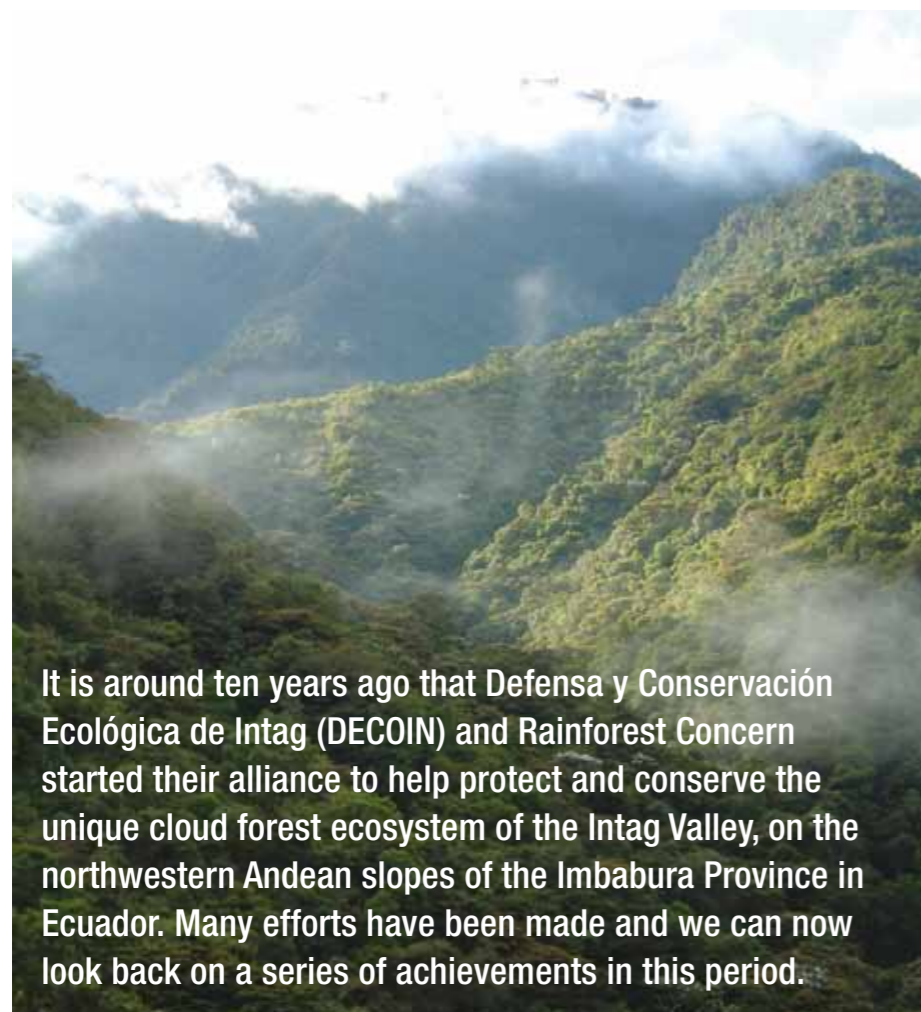
Complementary to this, the Colombian and Brazilian governments have signed an agreement to safeguard the immaterial culture of the indigenous inhabitants of the northwest Amazon. We are now part of a working group, with indigenous, non-government and government representatives, which is committed to producing a map of the region's network of Sacred Natural Sites by October 2013.

Illegal mining still exists. In theory it should be easy to control given that access is by plane only and there are few airports in the region. But despite national legislation laws and indigenous efforts to protect the forest and its sacred sites, there is a lack of political will and either a lack of policing, or widespread corruption, or both.

The next steps are simple: we will continue to support the indigenous people in defining an environmental and cultural management plan based on their systems of sacred natural sites and in collaboration with the Colombian Government.

## Expansion of the Neblina Reserve – an important link in the Chocó-Andean corridor project

by Sonja Dillman, Administrator Neblina Reserve, DECOIN



**It is around ten years ago that Defensa y Conservación Ecológica de Intag (DECOIN) and Rainforest Concern started their alliance to help protect and conserve the unique cloud forest ecosystem of the Intag Valley, on the northwestern Andean slopes of the Imbabura Province in Ecuador. Many efforts have been made and we can now look back on a series of achievements in this period.**

Some of the most valuable support that Rainforest Concern has given Intag is enabling the conservation of a significant area of cloud forest, the Neblina Reserve, now legally recognised as a Bosque Protector (Protected Forest). As you may know, the reserve is being expanded to 1,761 hectares, and there are opportunities to increase its size still further. It now makes up a significant area within the Chocó-Andean Corridor.

Currently two local forest guard groups are in charge of patrolling the area to prevent any

problems and to report news related to the Neblina Reserve. We are also very happy this year to be starting a closer cooperation with two local communities around the reserve, Huayrapungo and Azabí, using funds raised from the Forest Credits programme. These funds will be used for social development initiatives according to the priorities established by the communities.

Perhaps one of the most challenging activities carried out in the reserve has been the reforestation of 25 hectares over the last

three years, to encourage the regeneration of previously deforested areas. The DECOIN team, together with Fiona Pérez, our Rainforest Concern Country Manager, continue to represent the Neblina Reserve at key local events and to inform people about the conservation of this important area.

Nevertheless, Intag is still confronting old and new threats. Large-scale mining projects seem to be now more than ever an attractive option for the Ecuadorian State to generate income for the public wallet. The Ecuadorian Government is negotiating with the Chilean state copper company, CODELCO, to get them enthusiastic about the mining projects of Manduriacus and Junín in Intag. Just recently the Government signed its first contract to implement a large-scale mining project in southern Ecuador, and now a big hydroelectric project is being added to the list: the Ecuadorian State is planning to build around 8 large hydroelectric power plants using the waters of the Guayabamba River. Unfortunately Intag constitutes the upper part of the Guayabamba river basin and in consequence our area will be significantly affected, both ecologically and socially.

Our local communities and organisations are mobilising once again to try to stop these threats. It is also once again necessary to open a national debate about an economic model based on extractive industries like oil and mining versus a sustainable and participative model based on organic agriculture, forest management, tourism and small-scale hydroelectric projects, which are just a few of the proposals from the people of Intag. Therefore we hope and trust in our collective struggle to protect Intag and its natural habitat as it has existed during the past years with the support of Rainforest Concern. We are convinced that Small is Beautiful!

**Thank you very much and our sincere greetings to Rainforest Concern.**

## Lessons learned in the Paso Alto Protected Forest Reserve

by José Cueva, Director, Consorcio Toisan



Local school children visiting the Paso Alto Reserve

**Four years since initiating the process of declaring Paso Alto a Protected Forest Area and starting a project to assist the three surrounding communities in developing new financial alternatives, there are many achievements and lessons learnt which we would like to share.**

The principal achievement was to obtain the declaration of Protected Forest status, now legally recognised by the Ecuadorian State, which enables us to exercise all legal measures to ensure the protection of the forest. This status also permits local farmers to exonerate their farms from the many (controversial) taxes which have been put in place for areas over 25 hectares. It is important to point out that the local farmers who live around the reserve were taken by surprise by these taxes: they had gone through a lengthy process of being taught about the importance of these forests, which they needed to understand in order to get the area protected, but now these forests are being referred to as 'underused land' by the Government.

Another notable achievement is increased awareness within the communities of the importance of the forests. We do not have actual statistics on logging, but it is obvious to everyone that it has reduced drastically, to the point that

we can confirm that trees are no longer being felled for commercial gain in the Paso Alto area.

The work carried out with the young does not always bring immediate results but it does help to spread the message about why we need the forest and increase their vision and interest in conserving it, not for just economic purposes but also because it is so important for biodiversity and water supply. In terms of economic development, achievements have come from the development of agroforestry systems for coffee, fruit and timber. As reported in the previous edition of this review, these are in production and are now considered a realistic addition to families' income.

There have also been many lessons learnt. Firstly, we have proved that the communities who live in conservation areas are the most interested in protecting their patrimony, as long as there is enough information available and enough awareness has been created.

Secondly, there is no conservation if there is no alternative economy, especially when conservation means suppressing an existing income, for example from cutting down trees or creating new pastures.

Thirdly, and maybe most importantly, economic development is not just about providing alternatives, technology, materials and equipment. This is the most complicated point: economic development of isolated, marginalised and poor communities is not something that can be assumed by an organisation, NGO, or even a local government. There are socio-economic and cultural conditions that present issues that are difficult to overcome. The centralised vision of development is far from the reality of the local people: it appears that the order is to "abandon the countryside".

The education people receive in rural areas is designed as a developmental paradigm, which, instead of strengthening country life, pushes young people to abandon it in search of the ideal of material progress - and suffice to say that this is impossible for them to achieve with the basic education they have received. As a result, the rural youth are leaving their communities at an increasing rate - in Intag the rate of emigration to towns is 2% per year. The land is sold to people unknown to the community, the rural population gets older, socio-cultural development stops and the conservation of forests is threatened. And in the city, far from achieving their dream of economic development, the vast majority of migrants contribute to the increase in unemployment rates and poverty.

Moreover, the models put forward by the various state rural development agencies are focused on large business, mega hydroelectric plants, mining, agribusiness and infrastructure. These interests are totally incompatible with ordinary country life. So, the big challenge for communities and rural organisations is to set up and consolidate their own political movement capable of surviving the industrial urban onslaught. The longer we take to resolve this, the more complex the future of the forests and rural life.

# Logging presents a persistent threat to Los Cedros Reserve

by José DeCoux, Director Reserva Los Cedros

The Los Cedros Reserve in Ecuador was declared a Bosque Protector (state-protected forest) in 1994 with the intention of creating an area dedicated to habitat conservation and a buffer zone to the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve. This buffer has been more work than anticipated.



José DeCoux at Los Cedros Reserve

Throughout the years there have been numerous squatter and logger invasions which have been resolved through actions coordinated with the Ministry of Environment and the National Police. One of our constant financial needs has been providing the logistical support for these actions. There is no mechanism by which the Government is obliged to go out into the field to inspect or execute actions when it comes to loggers or squatters in protected areas where there are no roads to give ready access. This may be the greatest threat to the integrity of Ecuadorian conservation projects.

This project has dedicated much time and effort

to co-ordinating active protective measures and has been lucky to have several organisations supporting direct action. Our present efforts to coordinate a community and government response to logging pressures and squatters is underway and seeks a long-term solution.

This is a process that starts with signing a complaint to the Ministry of Environment, taking an inspection team out to verify the location and infractors, awaiting the decision to prosecute, returning with police inspectors to gather intelligence, and then the actual removal of those involved. There are no government funds for transport beyond the roads, nor food in the field, nor to prepare parkguards with knowledge of the

terrain. Funding from Rainforest Concern will be used to get commitment from the Government to provide protection.

The Los Cedros Scientific Station needs the support of volunteers who are willing to learn about living in a remote area and maintaining the infrastructure. Any volunteer who is also interested in participating in active conservation, has the physical constitution for it and the desire to learn, would be especially welcome in any capacity. These experiences have regularly given our volunteers more than they expected.

We are grateful to Rainforest concern for its ongoing support.

Some interesting facts about Bosque Protector Los Cedros:

- 6000 hectares of primary forest and 400 in rehabilitation
- 240+ bird species
- 299 species of trees in the one-hectare study area
- 3 species of primate and 5 cat species

# From India to the Amazon

by Suprabha Seshan

**For many years I held a deep wish: to see the Amazon rainforest before I die. In time, this changed. In time, I began to wish to see the Amazon before she dies.**

In August 2009 this lifelong wish came true. Thanks to Rainforest Concern and Rainforest Information Centre, I made a pilgrimage to the heart of the planet's greatest forest. I was invited by Antonio Donato Nobre, an Amazonian scientist from Brazil, who wanted a rainforest gardener from India to bring a fresh perspective to people in Brazil.

My story is a simple one. I am part of a small forest garden in India, the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary, that nurtures rainforest beings through a process called 'gardening back the biosphere'.

This process requires standing rainforest. There can be no rainforest beings, plants, animals and fungi, no fresh water, rain or cloud, without standing old-growth rainforest. Old-growth forests have been massively destroyed, but those same rainforest beings can help to heal decimated areas around standing forest, so that the whole forest can grow again. Forests need their beings. Beings need their forests. Gardening back the biosphere works on this conversation between living things and their environment and the fact that they are fundamentally one and the same.

There can be no human life without the forests (and other natural areas) of the planet. There can be no atmosphere, biosphere, hydrocycle or steady-state climate without the great forests of the Earth. Despite this, more forests have been destroyed since the dawn of the new millennium than ever before. If human beings continue with their destructive ways, there will be no forests.



Suprabha Seshan

This is where people like us come in: gardeners. We have seen that forests can and do return. But they will do so only if certain conditions are met and only with the right kind of help. With the right kind of help, the whole forest and all its beings can grow again.

We have worked for thirty years in the Western Ghats mountain range in India, protecting a small area of old growth forest and slowly restoring to forest cover adjacent areas that had been completely devastated. Where there were one or two species of exotic crop plants, or barren hillside, there are now over two thousand native species growing here.

India has lost most of her forests. The Western Ghats have lost almost all their forests. Left behind are fragments. Soon these will also go. Climate change, the global medicinal plant industry and tourism will see to this. Not to mention roads, shanty towns, waterparks, dams, shopping malls, rubbish dumps, tea plantations, phone towers, mines, real estate speculation, soil erosion, groundwater depletion, toxic run-off and invasive species.

Our work is a response to this ecocide. We have created a sanctuary for plants. Plant sanctuaries are uncommon. In India they are rare. But they are growing in number.

Three decades ago we recognised the connection between plants, water and the

health of the environment. By 1981 we had begun to rescue vulnerable plant species, giving them a refuge, safe from extraction, grazing, fires, and invasive species. 40% of the region's plant species grow here now.

Our first desperate search-and-rescue operation of individual plants became a miraculous process of regeneration: of habitat, spring water, microclimates and abundant wildlife. The plants we rescued have multiplied. Others are coming in by themselves. Evergreen rainforest rich with trees, epiphytes, shrubs, climbers, tubers and herbs is expanding. Robust plants have created specialised niches for more tender ones, creating a diverse community of rainforest life where it had been destroyed.

All this on a very small piece of land, sixty acres in size.

Rainforest beings don't come back easily. What matters is the quality and expanse of the nearest stretch of forest, the condition of land you are working with, what you do and how you do it. What matters is the promise you make: from now on, no destruction.

Rainforest wildlife is fussy. You need to listen closely to their preferences, be part of their efforts, their strategies. Mainstream scientists call this restoration ecology. We prefer the term gardening. We are gardeners in the service of forests.

I exchanged stories with people all over Brazil. But I returned haunted by the destruction of the Amazon, sick with the knowledge that this horror was being unleashed in India too. I know the odds now: for every acre restored, 100,000 have been destroyed.

At the Sanctuary there is daily affirmation that nature wants to live; plants and animals want to return.



## All-time record number of leatherback nests at Pacuare Reserve in Costa Rica

by John Denham, Founder of Endangered Wildlife Trust and Trustee of Rainforest Concern

I am writing this in July 2012 as the leatherback turtle nesting season is coming to an end, with an all-time record number of nests - 1187 to the end of June with a few more still to come. The previous highest number was 1171 in 2009. This dipped to 900 in 2010 and was down to 737 last year. This is typical of the unpredictable ups and downs of nesting numbers ever since we started counting. There seems to be a 3- to 4-year interval between the very good years, and this is accepted, though it remains unexplained, by marine biologists.



Hatchlings making a dash for the ocean

Our biologists Alvaro and Isabel came again this year and they have been supported by an excellent team of field assistants. These are young people from many countries who come as volunteers and spend up to seven months at the reserve, working almost every night on the beach taking the data from the nesting turtles. The field assistants also lead our visitors on the beach at night so that everyone can witness the whole nesting process, which for many people is the most memorable experience of their Costa Rican tour.

This season has been very hard work - with so many turtles to monitor each night, the patrols that would normally last 3 to 4 hours have become 6 to 7 hours long. Each turtle is tagged (if it is not already) and measured, and, if feasible, the eggs are counted and sometimes transferred to a man-made nest if the original one is too near the sea or in danger from poachers. The position of the nest is plotted precisely from the marker posts on the beach so that we can watch for the hatchlings 60 days later or excavate the nest if hatching is very overdue.

The reserve is not only about turtles, however, and our 1000 hectares of forest is rich in wildlife - and getting richer. A jaguar's pugmarks were positively identified on the beach recently and Alvaro was able to photograph an ocelot near the Casa Grande. Over 30 mammals and 230 birds are on our wildlife list.

Some small initiatives were begun last year. We opened a shop in the reserve to sell (without markup) the handicrafts made by local people. We started with only two suppliers but now have eight. This provides a worthwhile addition to their income and gives them an enjoyable occupation. We also started growing vegetables last year but the iguanas ate most of them! So we have moved to a more protected area and started again. Rubbish has always been a problem as there is no recycling centre near us. Now we wash and separate all rubbish from the beach and from within the reserve and take it to Bataan where a group of ladies use what they can and sell the rest. We compost anything organic.



This ocelot has been sighted several times at the reserve

We have also extended our work with local primary schools and bring small groups of children to spend time in the reserve as a first step in environmental education.

As I write this, the green turtles are starting their nesting season. There were very few last year but we always patrol until the end of September to make sure that the few that come are safe. An unprotected beach is an invitation to poachers, who value green turtles at up to US\$100 each for their meat and will kill them if given a chance - on the beach with a machete or at sea with a harpoon.

Particular thanks should go to our Co-ordinator for 2012 season, Jesse James, who did a fantastic job and will return for the coming nesting season which starts in March.

The reserve is thriving but we need more visitors and school groups as they provide our only income. Numbers have increased slightly but cannot keep pace with the cost of maintaining Pacuare as a working reserve. Please visit our website [www.turtleprotection.org](http://www.turtleprotection.org) and plan a visit, or make a donation through Rainforest Concern.



Jesse James with rescued hatchlings

## Major reduction in poaching of turtle nests

by John Denham

**Unlike Pacuare with its 1,000 hectares of tropical forest, our Panama projects were set up on beaches with a single aim: to protect leatherback turtles from the slaughter that was taking place. In Costa Rica poachers steal eggs, but in Panama they also kill leatherbacks for their meat. Twelve years ago Soropta and Sixaola beaches were sickening sights, littered with the carcasses of turtles hacked to death with machetes, their flippers cut off to be eaten.**

It is very different now. We patrol and monitor three beaches with a total length of about 15 km and - dare we say it? - the killing seems to have stopped.

Sixaola Beach, 7 km of grey sand on the border with Costa Rica, suffers from 'Tico' poachers who take the eggs from about 50 nests each year - but no killing. Fortunately, Costa Ricans do not eat leatherback meat. Sixaola is monitored and protected by a small Panamanian group comprising a leader with long experience of turtles and five local people acting as guards.

Playa Larga, a short beach of golden sand, is on the island of Bastimentos and so isolated that even hawksbill turtles, prized for their beautiful 'tortoiseshell', come and lay in safety. We have called it our Robinson Crusoe beach as the project is based around a small hut with a straw annexe on the beach, where a biologist and a field assistant, plus any volunteers, fend for themselves and protect the beach. Food is left for them once a week and they happily survive without the luxuries of a cook, flushing toilets and freshwater showers which we have at Soropta beach.

Soropta, another 7-km beach of grey sand, was the worst of the killing beaches and was the first we targeted for protection. The heavy poaching has been reduced to about 6% and only one killing has ever taken place on the stretch of beach we patrol. Every year since 2002, a biologist, a field assistant and six local guards have been manning the Soropta station.



Leatherback at Soropta beach, rarely seen in daylight

This season has seen a record number of turtles, with Sixaola and Soropta each counting nearly 650 nests. Playa Larga counted 180 leatherback nests and still to come are the nesting numbers of hawksbills for which the beach is chiefly known.

The funding of the Panama projects has become increasingly difficult and, with great regret, we have passed the responsibility for monitoring and protecting Soropta and Playa Larga beaches to the Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC), previously known as the Caribbean Conservation Corporation. Established in 1959 and always linked to the name of Archie Carr, famous ecologist, marine biologist and author, STC has a substantial operation in Costa Rica, Panama and elsewhere in the Caribbean. Cristina, our biologist based in Bocas del Toro, has been

supervising the work on our three Panamanian beaches since we started and at the same time looking after STC's several interests in the same area, so the handover from us to STC will be hardly noticeable.

Sixaola beach will remain our responsibility for the time being but on the understanding that Cristina will also cover that beach for STC within a year or two.

Rainforest Concern has been our partner in Panama from the beginning and we are most grateful for the many years of support. We pass on our work in Panama to STC with pride in the transformation that we have achieved and with every confidence that under the stewardship of the Sea Turtle Conservancy the good work will be continued.

# Protecting the fragile Zapallar forests of central Chile

by Denise Astoreca, Corporación Bosques de Zapallar



Regular immersion in sea mist sustains these forests

**The Zapallar forests are a unique coastal habitat of extraordinary biodiversity. The height of the hills where these forests exist and their proximity to the sea allow the vegetation to trap the fog produced by the cold Humboldt Current and the oncoming wind. The survival of these forests in Chile's mediterranean ecoregion is only possible due to this frequent coastal mist that is captured by the vegetation in immense quantities, forming large droplets on the foliage which then descend to the forest floor.**

These forests are today a living remnant of what a vast ecosystem used to look like in central Chile thousands of years ago. This remnant is the most valuable reserve of native flora on Chile's central coastline, with high levels of endemism. Among the tree species that have survived from pre-glacial times are the Olivillo (*Aextoxicon punctatum*), Canelo (*Drimys winteri*), Petra (*Myrceugenia exsucca*) and the endangered Belloto del Norte (*Beilschmiedia miersii*) which has been declared a Chilean Natural Monument. The broad canopies and entwined branches

shelter a dense understorey containing an abundance of climbers, ferns and herbaceous flowering plant species, many of which are endemic to Chile, together with a wide range of insects, birds, mammals and amphibians.

Adjacent to this humid forest is the dry forest known as coastal sclerophyllous forest, where you can smell the aroma of the Peumo (*Cryptocaria alba*) and Boldo (*Peumus boldus*) trees. Here, many plant species have developed adaptive characteristics similar to those found in

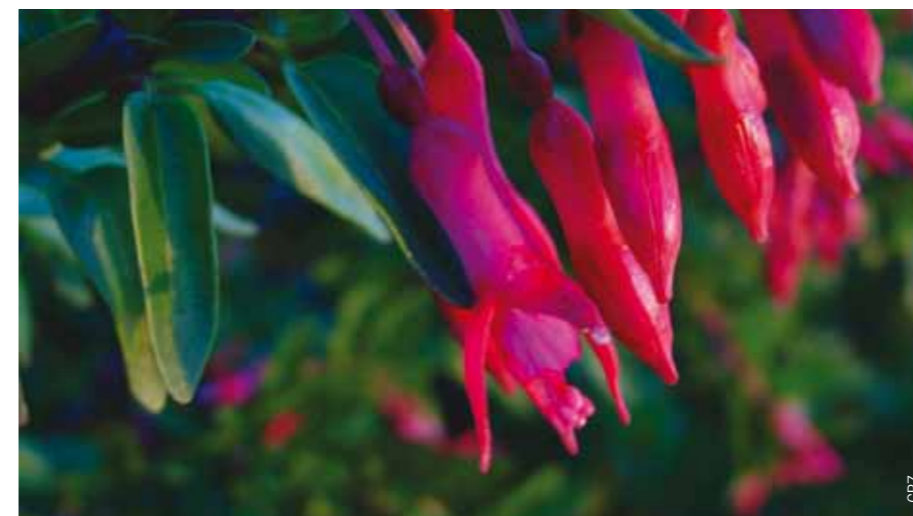
Mediterranean ecosystems in other parts of the world. These traits often include leaves covered in a waxy layer that prevents dehydration and gives off the aroma. This drier habitat is also colonised by other endemic dry-stem plants such as the Chagual (*Puya chilensis*), the Tebos cactus (*Chloris chilensis*) and the Molle tree (*Schinus molle*).

These forests, with their exceptional levels of plant biodiversity but threatened by serious levels of habitat loss, form part of an area in Chile recognised by Conservation International under their system of biodiversity hotspots.

Since 1892, several generations of property owners in the area have appreciated and valued this natural landscape and have made efforts to conserve it. However, the expansion of the neighbouring villages of Zapallar and Cachagua (due to their attractive beaches and proximity to Santiago), the roaming of cattle and other domestic animals, the introduction of exotic plant species and the inevitable pressure from developers are all threatening the integrity and conservation of this valuable habitat.

The Corporación Bosques de Zapallar (CBZ) was founded in April 2010 as a non-profit organisation by a group of people who own a property in the area, work there, or have a special interest in the forest as naturalists. The purpose of CBZ, considering the importance of this habitat, is to work with landowners and the community in the care and conservation of as much of the area as possible, keeping in mind that CBZ does not actually own the forests.

In 2011, CBZ was entrusted with the first piece of land that is part of the biological corridor it is intending to protect. The 75 hectares, known as Parque El Boldero, stand on a steep hill at the



The Palo de Yegua, a native fuchsia species

north end of Zapallar. This land has excellent intact forest but also has degraded forest, multiple trails and invading exotic plant species. At the lower boundary it meets private homes and gardens, exposing it to exotic plants and domestic animals.

In 2011, Rainforest Concern generously provided funds to commission a Management Plan and Master Plan for Parque El Boldero, which will allow CBZ to take the necessary steps to ensure the conservation and recuperation of a healthy ecosystem. Furthermore, CBZ wishes to use Parque El Boldero as an example to show to the other forest owners in the area and to have a methodology in place that can be implemented once the neighbouring proprietors are encouraged to follow suit.

In December 2011 the Master Plan was completed, including all the information and analyses required as well as the designs for three trails, a visitor and information centre, nursery and a mist monitoring project to measure the amount of water that can be obtained from the fog.

Now, thanks to the Planet Foundation and Rainforest Concern, CBZ is implementing the most urgent tasks described in the Master Plan. These include fencing the northern boundary, where cattle enter from adjacent areas, laying out the first trail to El Cristo, and starting a programme for the eradication of invasive exotic plant species in a designated area. It is CBZ's belief that to

succeed in its conservation efforts it is necessary to involve all the local community, including children. Towards this end there have been numerous excursions of school children and their teachers. For many of these children this was the first time they had ventured into a forest.

CBZ is also taking steps towards extending the conservation project beyond Parque El Boldero. This involves meetings and discussions with landowners who have expressed their wish to protect native forest on their land. One of these properties is La Ceniza, 700 hectares at the far end of the biological corridor. There are also ongoing discussions with owners of properties neighbouring Parque El Boldero who are interested in carrying out similar conservation initiatives to those of the Park. These owners are also against cattle entering their land and are concerned about invasive non-native plant species. We hope these concerns will lead to an agreement with CBZ.

With summer approaching in the southern hemisphere, this mediterranean ecoregion will begin its hot and dry season and the Zapallar forests will have to obtain water from the mist which will continue engulfing the hills as before, only less frequently. There will be more visitors, more birds, and several people working on the fencing and the new trail. There will be students working on their research projects, volunteers helping with guided tours and parents on holiday taking their children to see what a real forest looks like.

## A message from Martin Gardner MBE

Coordinator, International Conifer Conservation Programme, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

This remnant forest is the last remaining, relatively intact habitat of its kind in Chile – it has to be saved for the long-term future! The important work of Corporación Bosques de Zapallar, supported by Rainforest Concern, will not only help to protect a unique habitat, but also provides a practical model for others around the world to adopt. This project to protect the forests of Zapallar through inclusion of the local community is led by practical conservation measures which are underpinned by ongoing biodiversity research. I fully support this initiative, particularly the novel manner in which it approaches such an important conservation need. I also congratulate all concerned in the considerable achievements which are making a real difference to the conservation of this important enclave of Chile.



A visit from Zapallar school children

# Nasampulli Reserve: putting the Management Plan into action

by Professor Antonio Lara<sup>1,2</sup> and Dr Marco Cortés<sup>2,3</sup>



The winter landscape at Nasampulli

**It has been seven years since Rainforest Concern became involved in the development of the Nasampulli Reserve, aimed at conserving the Araucaria (monkey puzzle) forest ecosystems which have been present in Chile and Argentina since the Jurassic period. Other important conservation values of the Reserve are the pristine headwaters of the Trafampulli River and endemic fauna, including the Magellanic Woodpecker, the tiny Pudu, a deer only 18-20 inches tall, and the Güiña wild cat, all of which are classified as threatened species.**

We are very satisfied with the progress made during the last year. Important advances have been made in the study of introduced wild boar through monitoring with camera traps, as well as in the proposal for the establishment of a collaborative relationship between the reserve and the nearby community of Molulco. Other activities have included the restoration of an abandoned logging road, from which we have gained experience for more extensive restoration in the reserve, the reopening of some trails that had become blocked by the

re-sprouting of vegetation, and the installation of more than 20 well-designed signs to facilitate the use of the trails for self-guided hikes. The three-bedroom cabin, finished in 2010, has been furnished, equipped and improved and now it is cosy and comfortable! It sleeps 10 people and can be used in summer as well as in winter, when the area is covered by 3 to 6 feet of snow. Another important achievement is the building of a wooden platform 6 feet high which provides a safe and breath-taking close-up view of the recently discovered Trafampulli

waterfall. All of these activities are part of the Reserve's Management Plan, developed in 2009 by Montserrat Lara and Enrique Cruz (see Rainforest Review Autumn 2010).

The research on introduced wild boar and native wildlife in the reserve is being carried out with great enthusiasm by Dr Oscar Skewes from the University of Concepción. Dr Skewes' work is self-funded and involves the collaboration of three veterinary students who are doing their theses under his supervision. Carlos Castro is



Professor Antonio Lara with Peter Bennett and Hala Saffarini at the reserve

studying the rooting of wild boar, which causes a significant impact on the understorey, tree regeneration and soil. He is analysing rooting seasonality and forest type preference. Felipe Inostroza is studying the relative abundance of wild boar in Nasampulli Reserve and seasonal variation. Alex Espinoza is studying avian and non-rodent mammal biodiversity in Nasampulli. All these studies are expected to be finished by April 2013 and will provide key information for the control of wild boar.

Another important activity in April was the first attempt by a group of 11 expert hunters to control the boar population. Although the result of the hunting was disappointing because they did not see or shoot a single boar, we learned an unexpected lesson: the population of boars that was recorded in the summer by the camera traps had left the reserve! According to Dr Skewes, they were probably looking for more abundant food at lower elevations since this was a poor year for Araucaria pine seeds, *piñones*, in the reserve.

Denise Rocco from the University of Valdivia carried out the study mentioned earlier on the development of collaboration links with the Molulco community, a community made up of farmers with small properties. She completed this study for her thesis for the degree of Engineer in Conservation of Natural Resources, and it provides important information and

recommendations for establishing collaboration links with Molulco and promoting their involvement in the conservation work that we are developing in Nasampulli Reserve, as considered in the Management Plan.

In April, Peter Bennett visited and stayed overnight in the reserve with Hala Saffarini, so we had time to see the progress and discuss future plans.

In summary, it was a great year, not only for the reserve, but for strengthening the growing Nasampulli team and their individual capacities. Denise defended her thesis in May and got the maximum grade in her exam; Montserrat and Enrique are close to completing their Master's degrees in Environmental Studies at the University of Melbourne; Christian Little, also part of the team, got his PhD in Forest Sciences at Universidad Austral de Chile; Marco Cortés started his PhD on the same programme, and all of these students were awarded highly competitive grants from the Chilean Government for their studies. It has been great to incorporate Dr Skewes and his students. We are also grateful to José Miguel Gatica, finishing his studies of Food Engineer at U. Austral, who spent most of

the summer in Nasampulli doing a lot of the work mentioned, with the help of some people from Molulco and under the close supervision of Marco Cortés, who visited the reserve weekly to check on progress.



Newly completed cabin for research students

Future plans include exploring the possibility of purchasing another parcel of land to expand the reserve, joining the Forest Credits programme to increase funds available for the management of the reserve, developing a collaboration plan with the Molulco community, continuing the studies of wild boar and control of their population, as well as continuing restoration activities and trail improvement.



Pumas are occasionally encountered in the Nasampulli Reserve

# A network of trails for the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve

by Karl Yunis, Director, Parques para Chile

## Towards standards and management of the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve



Some of the most spectacular areas of the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve have limited access and need additional infrastructure and better paths and bridleways in order to generate alternative economies for members of the local community.

In June 2010, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme approved the expansion of the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve, opening up possibilities for sustainable development within the Andes of the Araucanía region of Chile. Parques para Chile has continued efforts to support rational land use on private lands found within the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve. The Namoncahue Biological Corridor has proven to be a replicable model for public-private cooperation and a living example of how private land owners can play a pivotal role in protecting key “buffer” areas around national parks and reserves.

This year Parques para Chile has established a regional network of community organisations, indigenous groups and local tourism boards in an effort to coordinate and develop new

opportunities for community involvement in the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve. The demand for, and interest in, participating in conservation-related tourism and ethnotourism is high throughout the territory, but these individuals and associations require support and training. Our recent work has focused mainly on developing linkage between private lands and public protected areas, which is key for biodiversity protection. Parques para Chile has organised workshops and town meetings supporting community participation in conservation and sustainable activities within the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve.

The landscape and culture of the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve are no doubt amongst the most diverse in Chile. The reserve boasts 11 national parks and reserves as well as several

thousand hectares of private protected areas, which together protect a diverse ecosystem home to volcanoes, ancient forests and beautiful lakes and rivers, as well as the araucaria trees which give the region its name. The outstanding cultural and ecological traits of this territory seem to imply that ecotourism and ethnotourism would be a viable job option for campesinos living near protected areas and other areas with high landscape value. Unfortunately, many of the most beautiful areas lack proper infrastructure and trails, meaning that most visitors never get to visit these special places. Therefore, campesinos more often than not turn to extractive land use. Rodrigo Calcagni, Parques para Chile’s president, is leading an effort to bring together local stakeholders in town assembly meetings as well as the whole network of participants in the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve Programme.

Other team members are leading the effort to provide methods which standardise the use of paths and the creation of adequate connectivity linking private lands and indigenous communities to national parks and reserves. This could provide a platform for new economic activity without implying the exodus of locals to population hubs.

Most of the rural population of the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve depends on subsistence farming, production of timber and firewood and the sale of cattle in order to make ends meet. This means that local residents must remain close to their land the whole year. If these farmers and their children are to participate in special interest tourism, they must do so in areas near their home, so that they can lower living costs and participate regularly in household chores and tending to the land. For this reason, tourism must connect to these people’s lives in a way that does not disrupt other economic activities already in place and at the same time offers a viable economic future to younger generations.

### Why develop a network of paths and bridleways?

Trekking, cycling, mountaineering and equestrian sports have become increasingly popular in the region, and generally these activities are top on many visitors’ lists when touring the area. At present, the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve contains many roads which take visitors to key places, economic hubs and the main tourist centres, but getting to those special places often means crossing private lands, or in other cases there is simply a lack of adequate infrastructure and social organisation, making it nearly impossible for tourists to gain access to these destinations. Parques para Chile is developing two projects with the National Park Service and the Tourism Ministry which aim at linking existing main public roads and minor rural roads to new, scenic roads, bridleways and footpaths where there are gaps in connectivity.

At present, the Regional Government does not recognise the necessity of developing paths and more ecologically sensitive means of transport

within protected areas, and, more often than not, seeks road building as the only viable option for development of the region. For this reason, it is important to offer an alternative to road building by developing a network of paths and bridleways which connect visitors and the rural population to the regional landscape in a sensible and sustainable manner. Parques para Chile is involved at regional level in the development of agreed standards for scenic roads, footpaths and bridleways, in the establishment of legal rights of way agreements for use throughout the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve, and in the development of a manual for construction and maintenance of paths, signage and infrastructure. A visitor’s atlas for the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve is also in the planning.

### Namoncahue: The Araucarias Biosphere Reserve training centre

The Namoncahue Biological Corridor will be the site of the first official “flagship” public-private path system in the Biosphere Reserve. This first set of paths will provide access to some of the Corridor’s finest landscapes, on easily passable, safe and sensitively designed paths. By building a series of footpaths and bridleways, local indigenous campesinos, rural farmers and regional tourism industry stakeholders will have a permanent site for hands-on training in the building of paths, as well as a place to receive knowledge about biodiversity, field biology, local and regional history and how to communicate important aspects of the natural and cultural landscape to visitors whilst promoting the conservation of nature. These flagship paths developed within the Namoncahue Biological Corridor will be used as a prototype network,



Site restoration in progress with construction of refuge for student accommodation



Mapuche guides participate in a “geotagging” expedition

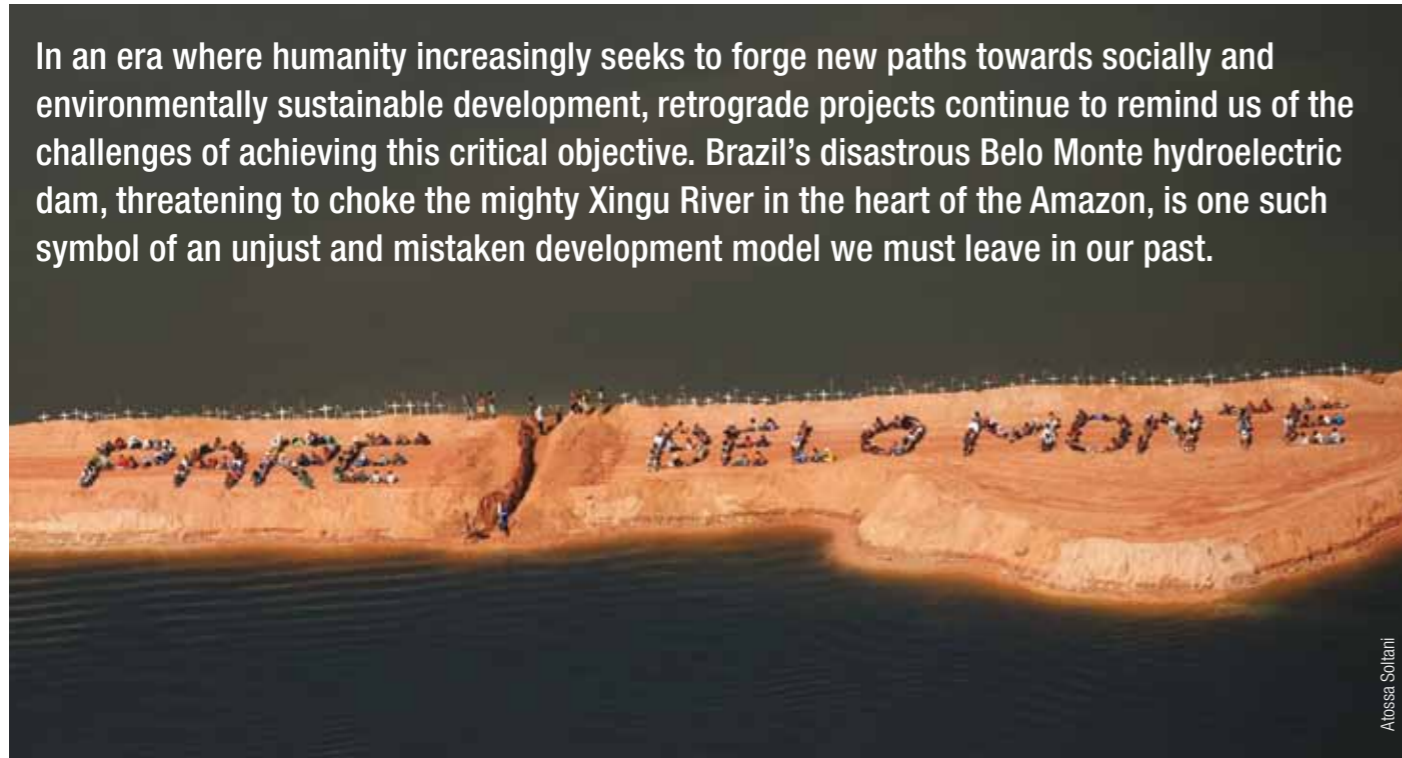
providing a real-life example of how to apply standards in the development, maintenance and use of paths. Participants in the training courses will come away with concrete knowledge of how to develop a system of paths to Biosphere Reserve standards and will receive continued support for implementation in their home counties.

Infrastructure built with funds received from the Planet Foundation and Rainforest Concern is being used to house 20 students during each field-based training seminar. This summer alone Namoncahue will host over 60 students and we look forward to expanding the programme in the near future in order to accommodate over 100 students per year. We are looking forward to the development of special interest tourism standards and training of the local community in order to reach sustainability and conservation goals within the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve for future generations. More information on the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve can be found on our website: [www.rbaraucarias.cl](http://www.rbaraucarias.cl)

# A stand against the Belo Monte dam: potential disaster for the Brazil's Xingu and their forests

by Christian Poirier, Amazon Watch

In an era where humanity increasingly seeks to forge new paths towards socially and environmentally sustainable development, retrograde projects continue to remind us of the challenges of achieving this critical objective. Brazil's disastrous Belo Monte hydroelectric dam, threatening to choke the mighty Xingu River in the heart of the Amazon, is one such symbol of an unjust and mistaken development model we must leave in our past.



**STOP BELO MONTE.** A dramatic human protest on a sand spit on the Xingu River

This monstrous mega-dam, planned to be the world's third largest, was conceived during Brazil's military dictatorship and continues to bear the mark of an authoritarian government determined to dam the Xingu at any cost, steamrolling human rights and environmental protection along the way. Yet the Dilma Rousseff Government's determination to push Belo Monte forward has been vigorously confronted by tenacious resistance from Brazilian and international civil society determined to preserve this vital river and its peoples from destruction. Indeed, the struggle to halt Belo Monte represents much more than saving one of the region's most important tributaries: this is a battle against setting a precedent that threatens

the peoples and ecosystems of the Amazon. The Belo Monte complex is designed to divert 80% of the Xingu's flow into a massive series of canals and dykes in order to feed the dam's powerhouse, causing a permanent drought on the river's 100km-long "Big Bend" and affecting dozens of riverine and traditional communities, including the Juruna and Arara indigenous peoples. The river's diverse fish species, a crucial staple for local peoples, have precipitously declined since the dam construction started, portending calamity for those who depend on the Xingu's life-giving waters. Belo Monte also threatens to flood an area of 668 km<sup>2</sup>, including 400 km<sup>2</sup> of the region's remaining forests and a third of the city of Altamira, driving over

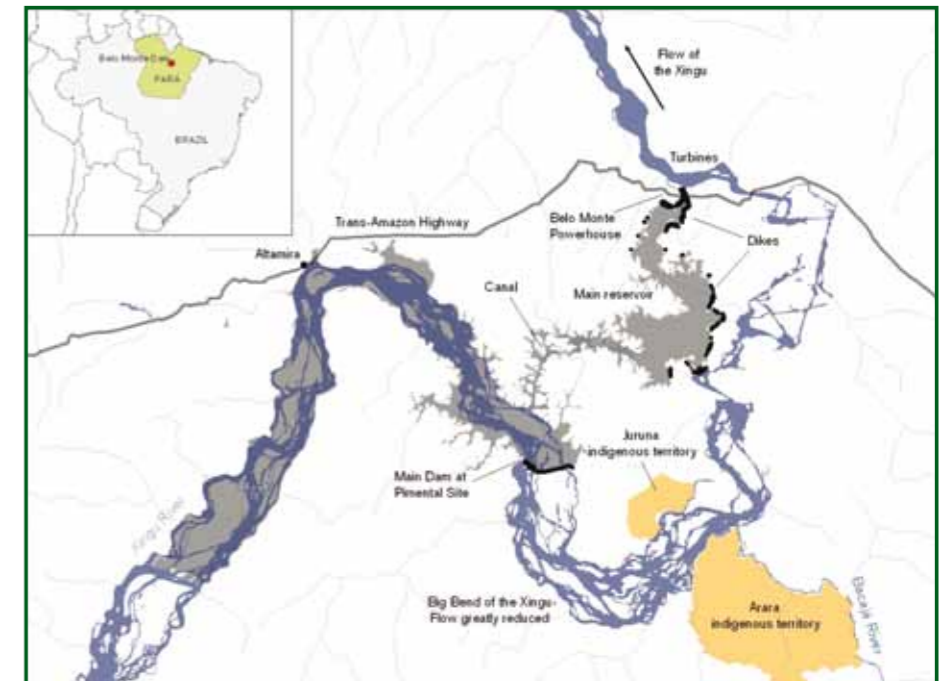
40,000 people from their homes. Hydroelectric energy is touted as both a solution to Brazil's periodic blackouts and as a "clean development" approach to global climate change. However, research has shown that Belo Monte's reservoirs will generate enormous quantities of methane, a greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>. In addition, the project is expected to bring over 100,000 migrants to the region, many of whom will be driven to resort to illegal logging and cattle ranching, the two main causes of deforestation in the Amazon, while fueling social tensions as they push into indigenous territories and protected areas to carve out a livelihood.

The R\$30 billion (£9.2 billion) dam is claimed by the Brazilian Government to be a solution to the country's growing energy needs. Yet the project is scandalously inefficient, generating only 39% of its energy capacity year round. Belo Monte exposes Brazil's overdependence on the development of hydroelectric energy, extracted from the Amazon's wild rivers with unacceptable socio-environmental costs, while viable alternatives for clean energy production from solar, wind and biomass, coupled with the implementation of energy efficiency measures, could spare additional river basins from the tragedy currently befalling the Xingu.

Belo Monte has been mired in controversy and incessantly challenged because the project blatantly violates the Brazilian Constitution, Brazilian law and international conventions. In particular, its failure to properly consult affected indigenous populations has led to several lawsuits in Brazilian courts and received precautionary measures from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Yet the Federal Government has repeatedly used its power to dodge responsibility, defer justice and strong-arm the project forward.

Local communities from the Xingu have responded to the destruction of their river and affront to their rights by staging courageous occupation activities that have repeatedly paralysed the dam's construction. Led by indigenous peoples and fishermen and accompanied by members of Amazon Watch, these occupations have delayed the project but have not succeeded in stopping it altogether. Unless resistance can again stand against Belo Monte, it could definitively dam the Xingu in a matter of weeks.

Brazilian and international civil society has responded to such injustice by launching the Belo Monte: Justice Now! Campaign. Amazon Watch is waging the international campaign alongside organisational ally International Rivers and in solidarity with our Brazilian partners. We are calling for legal accountability for Belo Monte, requesting that judges issue definitive rulings on the slew of lawsuits still pending in



**Map of the dam project design.** Courtesy of International Rivers

Brazilian courts. If the rule of law is followed, these lawsuits could halt the Belo Monte Dam.

The time has come to stand with the people of the Amazon who demand their human rights and ways of life not be sacrificed for a dubious and short-sighted development model. This is a

struggle for the future of the Amazon with major repercussions on all our lives. Longstanding support from Rainforest Concern has helped sustain this critical campaign, and today we are calling on the international community to join Amazon Watch by donating to help us reach our \$50,000 goal for the Xingu Urgent Action Fund.



**Chief Raoni of the Kayapo people has fought to protect the Xingu and its forests for over 30 years**

**For the past five years Rainforest Concern has supported both organisations, Amazon Watch and International Rivers, in their campaigns to prevent the construction of the Belo Monte dam.**

### Thanks to all our school supporters for their hard work this year learning about rainforests and fundraising for Rainforest Concern.


We are delighted that so many children continue to get excited about rainforests and all the animals and plants that live in them. Yet again the creativity involved in their fundraising has amazed us – art displays, coffee, cake and craft sales, non-uniform events and sponsored runs, to name just a few! Schools have managed to raise nearly £6,000 in total over the past year.

Particular congratulations to Nonsuch High School who raised £1,286 through a 'Green Week' event; Year 6, George Watson College who raised £1,284; Year 2, Yerbury Primary School who raised £1,223 with a 'Fun Run'; and Year 6, Christ Church C of E Primary School who have raised £950 over the last 2 years, most recently through a 'Rainforest Boogie' in April. If you are inspired to try fundraising for the rainforest, you can sponsor your own acre for £50 and in return we will send you a certificate to put up on your classroom wall or at home. Your sponsorship will help save the lives of thousands of trees and animals, many of which are endangered. You can find more information about sponsoring an acre on our website at [www.rainforestconcern.org](http://www.rainforestconcern.org)

Rainforest Day

On Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, our Year 5s spent a whole day doing a variety of activities to complete their Geography work on the rainforests. A local artist, Josie Chisholm, came in to show the children how to make felt using merino wool. They then completed a beautiful wall hanging of a rainforest scene, which will be exhibited in the Reception area of our school. The children tasted rainforest fruits and designed their own cocktails. They had an opportunity to film a pledge to support the work being done by organizations such as Fair Trade, The Prince's Trust and the Rainforest Alliance and to encourage others to help to save the rainforests of the world.

During break time and at the end of the day, we held our own Rainforest Café to try to raise enough funds to buy an acre or two of protected rainforest. The sale of tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits was a great success and we managed to raise a total of £410 which we are donating to Rainforest Concerns.



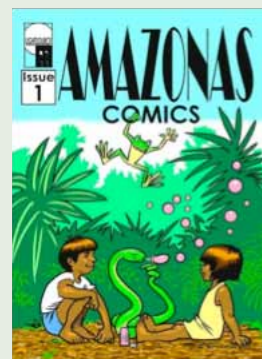

Cherry Garden Primary School rainforest display



Cherry Garden Primary School Yr 6 turned their classroom into a rainforest



Cherry Garden Primary School rainforest display



### A comic for the children of the Amazon!

John Erasmus and Yousaf Ali Khan have just created an entertaining and educational comic about the Amazon rainforest for children both in the UK and Brazil - produced in both English and Portuguese. Thanks to the Amazon Charitable Trust, 200 copies of Amazonas Comics: Issue 1 will soon be heading to the children of the Xixuau communities in Roraima province, deep in the Amazon basin.

You can download the comic in English from Rainforest Concern's website at [www.rainforestconcern.org/education\\_resources/resources\\_for\\_schools](http://www.rainforestconcern.org/education_resources/resources_for_schools) or to send your feedback to John and Yousaf, visit [amazonascomics.com](http://amazonascomics.com). We think you will agree it is a beautiful comic with lots of fun activities for children!

## Polylepis reforestation projects gain official protected area status



ECOAN has strengthened its community-run Polylepis reforestation programme in the Peruvian Vilcanota Highlands by obtaining government recognition for several of its

projects as Private Conservation Areas (ACPs): Qosqocchuarina Reserve in the community of Rumira Sondormayo, Choquechaca (Ollanta) Reserve and Abra Malaga Reserve. More

community-run reserves are being added to this programme. These areas are recognised by the Government as part of the Protected Areas System of Peru (SERNANP) and are managed by local communities to protect the local biodiversity, provide opportunities for scientific research, education and local eco-tourism compatible with the objectives of conservation.

The Abra Malaga Reserve has a large number of endemic birds, which attracts foreign tourists. These tourists now pay for a guide from the local community when they visit the reserve, so this community is benefiting economically from the improved conservation of its woodlands. This official status also helps communities in their discussions with other government agencies and provides a clearer framework for management, as, until now, things have been done on an informal basis.

## Become a member of Rainforest Concern

If you're not a member of Rainforest Concern, then please join us by completing the form below. If you are already a member, then perhaps you can encourage a friend to follow your example!

You might like to consider leaving a lasting legacy to the projects of Rainforest Concern in your will. We will be happy to provide details upon request.

**Please tick one box only**

Member: Sponsoring 1 acre each year  £5 per month  £60 annually

Friend: Sponsoring 2 acres each year  £10 per month  £120 annually

Guardian: Sponsorship 6 acres each year  £25 per month  £300 annually

Benefactor: Sponsoring 12 acres each year  £50 per month  £600 annually

Name  Title

Address

Postcode

Email

I would prefer to make a simple donation of £

**STANDING ORDER FORM**

I wish to pay monthly/yearly by standing order (please delete as appropriate):

Name and full address of your bank

To:  The Manager  Bank/Building Society

Address  Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Account No.  Sort Code

Instruction to your Bank - Please pay to Barclays Bank, 20-29-90, 50793086. Ref: RCSO.

On  day  month  year the sum of £

and the same amount on the same day of each month/year (please delete) until further notice

Signature  Date

After one year's membership, Rainforest Concern Benefactors are entitled to two days free accommodation, meals and guided tours at one of our lodges in Ecuador. Guardians are entitled to this after two years' membership

All our supporters receive an attractive certificate recording the level of their membership, our magazine Rainforest Review and regular updates. Guardians and Benefactors will receive a Rainforest Concern T-Shirt (XL/L/M, Lady fit S, M, L, Child size 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11) Please circle appropriate size. Please tick if T-Shirt NOT required.

Please tick if thank you letter is not required.

Please tick if you would like to receive our newsletter and any updates in emails instead of by post.

*giftaid it* You can make your donation worth even more! For every pound you give to us, we get an extra 28 pence from the Inland Revenue. All you need to do is tick the box.

I would like all donations I have made since 6 April 2000 and all donations in the future to be Gift Aid until I notify you otherwise.

To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must be at least equal the amount we will claim in the tax year and you need to give us your home address.

If you wish to sponsor an acre as a gift for someone, please telephone us on 01225 481151 or visit [www.rainforestconcern.org](http://www.rainforestconcern.org) and click "Sponsor an acre online".

Please do carry on sending in your letters, pictures and photos and we will try to include as many as possible on our website and in our next newsletter!



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