



CHILE

Creation of the Biosphere Reserve

by Karl Yunis, Director of Parques Para Chile

During 2008 Parques para Chile has focussed much of its attention on linking the value of biodiversity conservation with local economic development. We have done this within the framework of the UNESCO sponsored Araucarias Biosphere Reserve project. The Namoncahue Biological Corridor, managed by Parques para Chile and Chile's Park Service, and the Nasampulli Reserve project managed by Fitzroya Society and Austral University are located within the core and buffer zones of the Biosphere Reserve. Both provide clear examples of how public and private sector can coordinate efforts in order to establish important new protected areas that benefit the lives of local stakeholders.

The Araucarias Biosphere Reserve framework is an excellent way to promote sustainability and social equity whilst at the same time expand protection for species and ecosystems that lack adequate representation in protected areas.

Parques para Chile has developed a public-private management plan for the Reserve, which involves working at the local level to develop zoning and planning commissions, which reach accords for land management within the reserve.



Karl Yunis and Marcelo Ringeling of Parques Para Chile

These accords enable us to identify priorities for sustainable economic development, identify and adequately protect priority conservation areas and develop a portfolio of sustainable economic activities and products, which will then be certified as official products and services of the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve.

The management of the area for sustainable production of livestock, forest resources, tourism and ecological services is one of the most important aspects in the development of the management plan for the reserve. Parques para Chile has reached important accords with regional government leaders.

One of the main focuses for sustainable development will be the development of a territorial management plan for buffer zone areas of the reserve, which are important corridors for biodiversity. In these areas, Parques para Chile will continue to work alongside the Ministry of Agriculture in order to develop carrying capacity standards for grazing, forestry and other activities so that these do not have a negative impact on wildlife within the buffer zones that surround national parks and reserves.

Economic alternatives, carbon offsets and ecological services

Many rural indigenous communities within the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve live in remote areas where tourism, one of the Reserve's main industries, is not a viable economic option. These groups are among the poorest rural communities in Chile, and there is much social unrest, partly due to the dire economic situation that most communities find themselves in. For this reason community reforestation programmes, within indigenous lands and adjacent private protected areas, are a viable means in which newly planted native forests can effectively sequester carbon whilst at the same create needed income for indigenous groups.

Parques para Chile is currently working on a Carbon offset scheme that would involve the participation of two indigenous communities located adjacent to the Nasampulli Reserve and the Namoncahue Biological Corridor. Carbon offsetting should not only create direct environmental change but also produce economic benefits for local communities. Most local farmers and foresters are not aware of the impacts that deforestation and non-sustainable grazing has on natural ecosystems in Chile.



View towards Volcan Villarica