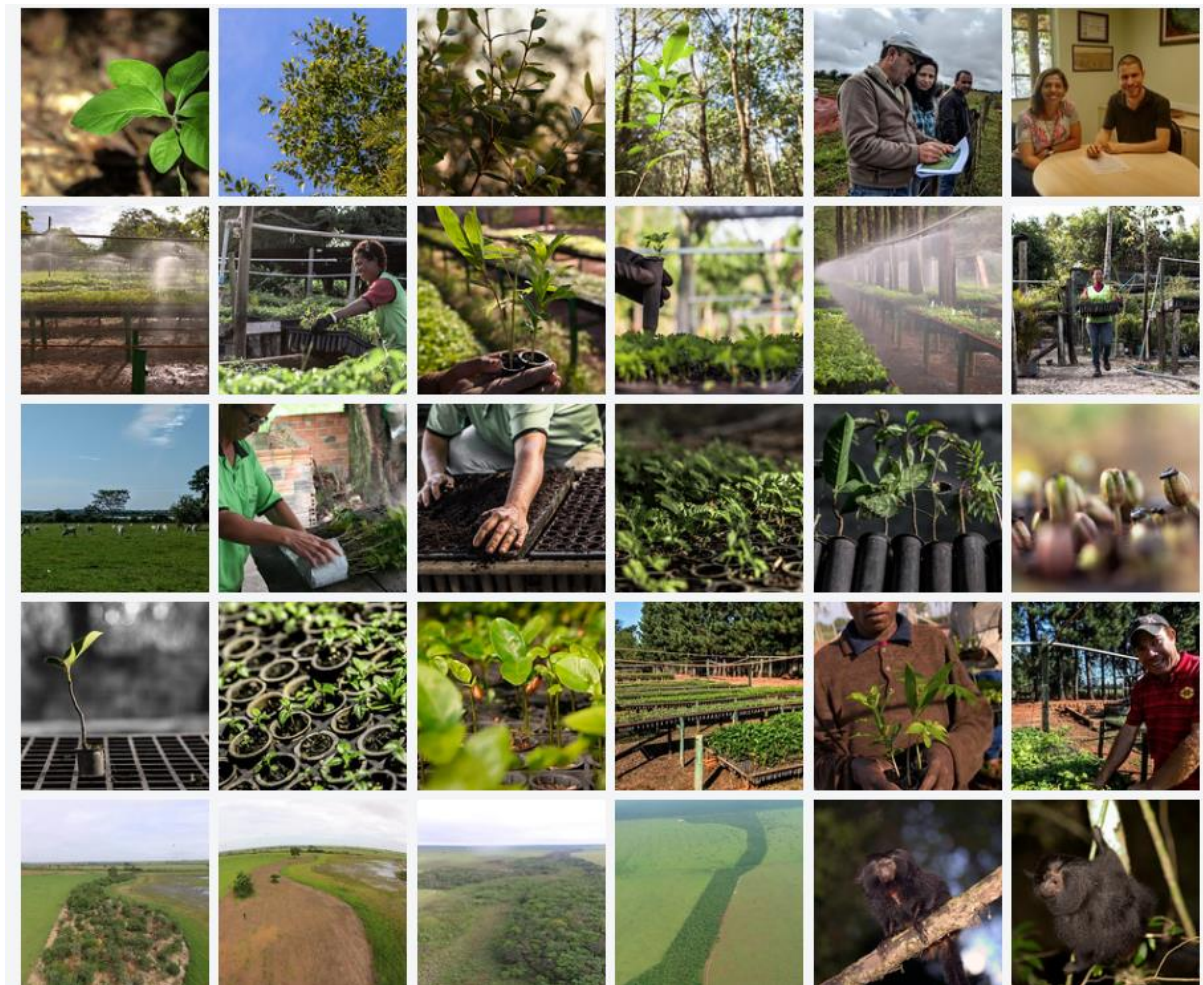


# Brazil Wildlife Corridors

Restoring the Atlantic Forest to bring back wildlife

Annual Update 2019



The Atlantic Forest stretches from the state of Rio Grande do Norte to the state of Rio Grande do Sul and is now a forest in name only. 20 years ago, it was 6 times the size of the United Kingdom, and since then has lost over 80% of its original forest cover largely because of agricultural expansion.

No other large tropical forest ecosystem has suffered as much loss as the Atlantic Forest and it is now one of the most threatened biomes in the world. The forest that remains has been reduced to green fragments, often with great distances between them. As a consequence, many plant and animal species in this biodiversity hotspot are marked as endangered, vulnerable or near threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).



*An aerial view of part of the project area in the Atlantic Forest*

WeForest with its partner Instituto de Pesquisas Ecológicas (IPE) is restoring land and planting trees in the Pontal do Paranapanema region to reconnect these forest patches, creating corridors for animals such as the endangered black lion tamarin so that they can thrive again.

This project began in 2014 and since then your support has contributed to:

- Restoring and protecting 862ha that will become wildlife corridors connecting remaining patches of forests. That's over 1,000 football pitches and almost 1.8 million trees being regenerated!
- Regenerating over 125 species of tree
- Supporting local community nurseries providing employment
- Benefiting over 840 families involved in: nurseries, planting and replanting, fencing, transportation, maintenance, weeding, training, monitoring, environmental education as well as scientific surveys.

**This report shares an update of our progress during 2019.**

**Thank you for all your support!**

## Our Results

### Forestry

We began restoring another 300ha (360 football fields!) in 2019, making it a total of 862 ha since 2014.



*A view of one of the forest corridors*

**A big variety of species and different restoration methods.** Over 125 different (including 100 native) tree species are transforming these landscapes to date through **ANR (Assisted Natural Regeneration)**, a technique that accelerates the natural recovery of degraded forest areas through the protection and maintenance of young trees that emerge/sprout after disturbances such as fire or cattle grazing;

and **framework**

**planting** which is used to recover highly degraded areas where natural regeneration is limited. A high-density planting of around 100 different species are chosen for their characteristics e.g., fast growth, food source for wildlife etc.

### Community Engagement

8 nurseries provide seedlings for the project and companies that implement forest restoration. They are owned and managed by local communities of settlers and small farmers and a total of 11 females and 16 males are employed.



*One of the community nurseries*

### Carbon Sink

The total area of restoration to date can expect to sequester 273,254t CO<sub>2</sub> over 30 years assuming no disturbance from fires. This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of over 1,000 European citizens each and every year<sup>1</sup>.

### Biodiversity conservation

At least 100 native species are planted across our restoration sites and we aim for at least 40 in each restoration site.

**How do we know animals are returning to the area?** This cactus is a spontaneous regeneration in our planting site - local nurseries didn't produce this species and we didn't plant it! It indicates that animals who consume this species' edible fruits have been visiting. This item was probably pollinated by bats, who are attracted by the strong-smelling white flowers.



*Evidence of wildlife – a new cactus*

<sup>1</sup> According to EU figures the average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are 8.8tCO<sub>2</sub> per person per year [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/T2020\\_RD300](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/T2020_RD300)

## 2019 at a Glance

Fires did not only happen in the Amazon in the summer of 2019, they also happened where we work in the Mata Atlantica. Our 104ha planting in Santo Antonio settlement burned, through suspected deliberate fire. It represents 12% of our restoration area. WeForest is discussing with its partner IPE and local communities how to recover the damaged forest. While this is still in the very early stages, we believe that working with the local community to develop a forest-based productive area will mean a more resilient and valuable ecosystem for the local community to ensure its long-term care. Once plans are clear, our tree guarantee fund will be released to support the regeneration of the site.



*The burned area being invaded by grasses*

**Planting season.** January and February are the final months of the planting season, that started in November the previous year. Seedlings were produced by community-based nurseries run by local women entrepreneurs developing financial independence. In 2019, we asked the nurseries to rate their overall perception of the project restoration activities and were very pleased to receive ratings between 7 and 10. We heard positive feedback on the pricing and the capacity building in our project.



*Active planting in the field*

**Adding agroforestry to the project.** In early 2019 we began planning for 2020 and beyond. A new conservation and restoration strategy is underway based on priority areas. Discussions with landowners

led the team to identify the potential to **protect** existing important forest patches by creating private reserves. These private reserves would be registered as conservation areas under Brazilian law and are permanent so can't be allocated to other land uses even if land ownership changes. 2020 will also begin to develop agroforestry components to the restoration strategy! **Agroforestry** plays an important role in forest regeneration because farmers have an economic interest in maintaining the land, since trees like coffee provide income. In our project area there have traditionally been no households involved in agroforestry but in 2019, 55 farmers expressed interest to develop agroforestry on their lands.



*Agroforestry – integrating trees on farms*

**Be prepared for nature to intervene.** We have to be prepared to change our course when things don't work out: during an evaluation of an area (25ha) assigned for natural regeneration the results showed that it wasn't making the progress we expected after 3 years. We identified a new site of equivalent size to compensate for this area, and the original site will be recommended for framework (active) planting.

**Do more for the poorest people.** The University of São Paulo (USP) collected socioeconomic data from stakeholders in the project landscapes to develop targeted strategies for income generation and inclusion of marginalized groups and gender inclusion as the project progresses.



### Coming up in 2020

- January and February: planting season continues.
- June 2020 is when the next survey takes place. We conduct forestry surveys every 2 years to assess the carbon (through biomass growth) There are 62 permanent plots to quantify tree abundance, richness, composition and carbon stocks.
- In addition to field measurements, work will begin on collecting LiDAR data (using lasers to remotely measure the canopy cover and structure as well as carbon stocks) with support from University of São Paulo and IPE.
- Establishment of private reserves with landowners + development of an agroforestry strategy will begin.
- November 2020: Active planting starts again.

For more information on our project in Brazil

<https://www.weforest.org/project/brazil-wildlife-corridors>

For more high-quality photos from Brazil [Click Here](#)