

# Pontal, Brazil

Restoring the Atlantic Forest  
to bring back wildlife



© IPÊ

Mid-year update 2024

# Pontal, Brazil



## Project status

Over **1300 hectares** under restoration

More than **2.6 million trees** protected & growing



**The Atlantic Forest (Mata Atlântica) – which stretches along South America’s Atlantic coast and inland as far as Paraguay – teems with unique plant and animal species. Once a lush, green swathe six times the size of the UK, it has lost more than 80% of its original forest cover due to agricultural expansion.**

In Brazil’s Pontal do Paranapanema, we’re working with IPÊ to restore the forest, bring back wildlife and support communities to make a living from restoring and protecting it. By reconnecting the second largest Protected Area in the Interior Atlantic Forest – the Morro do Diabo State Park – to other forest fragments, we’re creating more space and migration routes so that endangered species can thrive again.

In our restoration areas, maintenance activities – such as control of invasive grasses – is ongoing. Overall, the areas are looking healthy, maintenance is on track, and natural regeneration is good. The images above show Categero Farm in the project’s east corridor, where 74 ha of tree planting took place in 2022. The top picture shows the view in August 2022, eight months after the area was planted, and the bottom is the same view in January 2024. The results speak for themselves!

In the 2024-2025 planting season which begins in October, 14.7 ha will be planted to bring the project to its overall target of 1319 ha. The project is completing ten years of implementation in 2024, and we’re in the process of assessing its impact.



IPÊ has put together two field teams to work exclusively on the maintenance of our sites. As we're restoring large, continuous areas rather than smaller ones or narrow strips, our restoration here tends not to suffer from the 'edge effect', which is when wind, sun, fire, grass and other factors can affect the growth or natural regeneration of the forest. A protected core area can regenerate faster and more homogeneously, meaning that any gaps caused by seedling mortality can be left to fill themselves.

However, climate change is increasing the dry season in Brazil. In 2024, the number of fires has been higher compared to 2023. IPÊ has a fire monitoring system and fire brigades with farms in the region. Newly planted seedlings also suffer greatly from droughts, and can require rescue irrigation.

In the community nurseries, the plastic seedling tubes are being replaced by biodegradable paper tubes known as 'ecopots'. Seedlings can be transported to the field without the need to remove the container, minimizing root disturbance and transplant shock. As the paper breaks down naturally in the soil, it can add organic material back, benefiting soil health.

When we visited the nurseries earlier this year, we found that the seedlings in ecopots were in a good condition for planting. In addition, IPÊ had purchased a machine to increase the production of ecopots, which has been installed at Nivaldo's nursery in Teodoro Sampaio. It is producing the ecopots for all 11 nurseries involved.



**You'll receive an annual update in March. Meanwhile, stay up-to-date with our interactive [Pontal map](#), and check out the photos on [Flickr](#).**

**You can find an overview of all communications assets and guidance on how to communicate about your partnership with WeForest [here](#).**



[www.weforest.org](http://www.weforest.org)